

University Unitarian Church's Expression of Solidarity With Standing Rock Sioux Nation and its Resistance to the Dakota Access Pipeline

WHEREAS: The Standing Rock Sioux Nation has put out a peaceful call for action requesting support in opposing the proposed Dakota Access Pipeline that would carry up to 570,000 barrels of fracked crude oil per day for more than 1,100 miles from the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota to Illinois, passing over sensitive landscapes including treaty-protected land containing recognized cultural resources and the Missouri River, which provides drinking water for their Reservation;

WHEREAS: Despite deep opposition from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, farmers, scientists, environmental groups, and other Tribal nations, and without Tribal consultation or meaningful environmental review as required by federal law, in July, 2016 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a permit allowing construction of the fracked oil pipeline to move forward;

WHEREAS: On August 15, 2016 the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Council led by Tribal Chairman David Archambault II called on Tribal nations and Indigenous people around the world to issue resolutions in support of the Standing Rock Sioux and the Sacred Stones Camp and the call was answered by Washington State Tribal Nations including Lummi Nation, Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, Yakama Nation, Puyallup Tribe, Nisqually Indian Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and Hoh Tribe;

WHEREAS: University Unitarian Church has made care of the Earth a pillar of its social justice work stating that "we will focus on protecting the natural systems that sustain life and mitigating the impacts of unsustainable behavior":

"Our faith's longstanding spiritual call to stewardship of the Earth has truly become a moral imperative, part of our covenant with future generations. Current global consumption patterns require the land and water of 1.5 Earths, which means our planet can't regenerate the resources that sustain life. Climate change caused by fossil fuel consumption is already doing irreversible damage. Many environmental problems disproportionately affect people of color and those who are vulnerable, and increasing resource scarcity is a historical source of societal violence";

WHEREAS: The vision statement of University Unitarian Church states that "We will vocally and actively oppose injustice and stand in prophetic judgment of all that would diminish the equality and dignity of human beings or harm the web of life. We seek partnership with those who share our goals and creative dialogue with those who challenge us in our search for larger truths." [and] "We will be responsible stewards of the gifts we hold in trust, endeavoring to leave a generous and sustainable legacy for those who come after us";

WHEREAS: Other UU congregations and organizations have spoken out and committed action to support the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in its opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline, such as the Bismark-Mandan Unitarian Universalist Church (<https://www.midamericauua.org>), Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (<http://www.uusc.org/uusc-stands-solidarity-standing-rock-sioux-tribe/>), UU Youth for Climate Justice (https://www.facebook.com/uuyacj/?hc_ref=PAGES_TIMELINE), Commit2Respond (<http://www.commit2respond.org/nodapl>) and a statement released by UUA President Rev. Morales: on Wednesday, August 30th:

The construction of the massive Dakota Access pipeline, stretching from North Dakota to Illinois, is a textbook case of marginalizing minority communities in the drive to increase fossil fuel supplies. As people of faith and conscience, committed to protecting the interdependent web of all life and supporting indigenous rights, Unitarian Universalists cannot remain silent as land held sacred by our Native American siblings is threatened.

We join other faith groups and native tribes to support the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe as they oppose the construction of this dangerous pipeline. I am proud to see that Unitarian Universalists in the region are already joining the protests. But I know that more is urgently needed. I urge you to join the effort to bear public witness to the injustice in North Dakota and add your voice to oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved: University Unitarian Church supports the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and other Native American tribes in their opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline and we call on all Unitarian Universalists, other faith communities, social and environmental justice organizations and other people of conscience to raise awareness about this important struggle for Indigenous sovereignty and environmental justice and to support the Standing Rock Sioux Nation and the Sacred Stones Camp efforts in any nonviolent way they are willing and able.