

November Observance of Multicultural Interest

From CUMC's Multicultural Committee

National Native American Heritage Month is celebrated each year in November. It is a time to celebrate the traditions, languages and stories of Native American, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and affiliated Island communities and to ensure their rich histories and contributions continue to thrive. We celebrate the culture and heritage of these remarkable Americans who deeply enrich the quality and character of our Nation. We celebrate Indian Country with its remarkable diversity of cultures and peoples while remembering and honoring those veterans who have sacrificed so much to defend our Nation.

This year's theme at the United States Department of Interior is "Celebrating Tribal Sovereignty and Identity." Tribal sovereignty embodies the concept that any decisions about Tribes with regard to their property and citizens are made with their participation and consent. Focusing on the impacts on Indigenous communities of past relocation and forced assimilation, and past and ongoing lack of critical funding to support them should produce in us a better understanding of both their heritage and the issues facing Indigenous communities today.

Beyond the federal theme, as individuals we should use this month to learn more about Tribal Nations' histories, especially those here in Arizona. We should also work to overcome stereotypes that are largely based on literature and entertainment from the past that is framed by the "white man's" perspective.

"Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human."

In 1996, the UN General Assembly adopted [Resolution 51/95](#) proclaiming 16 November as **International Day for Tolerance**.

This action followed the adoption of a [Declaration of Principles on Tolerance](#) by UNESCO's Member States on 16 November 1995. Among other things, the [Declaration](#) affirms that tolerance is neither indulgence nor indifference. It is respect and appreciation of the rich variety of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance recognizes the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. People are naturally diverse; only tolerance can ensure the survival of mixed communities in every region of the globe.

Taken from the UNESCO website, the words above should resonate well within the U.S. in today's political environment on the eve of the election. Practice tolerance in all things.