



## **Land Acknowledgement Resource**

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## What is a Land Acknowledgement?

A land acknowledgement refers to statements or actions that recognize the historical context in which we inhabit this land: the colonization and genocide of Indigenous peoples and their culture. By engaging in land acknowledgements, we recognize our place within the land's history, acknowledge the ways in which we have benefited from the colonization of Indigenous peoples, and address the ongoing erasure and harm inflicted upon these communities. In essence, a land acknowledgement represents an initial step towards making reparations.

## History of the Indigenous People in Southwest Michigan

To be able to authentically acknowledge the context of the land we stand upon, it is important to learn about the history, treaties, and indigenous peoples and their culture specific to your area. Here are some sources to help with this process.

1. [Native American Bibliography](#)
2. [Indian Family History](#)
3. [Pioneer and Historical Collections](#)
4. [Michigan-Related Treaties](#)
5. [Anishinaabe Art](#)

In Southwest Michigan there are two federally recognized tribes - both of the Potawatomi tribe (Bodéwadmik). Below are their homepages.

1. Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi Indians ([Gun Lake Tribe](#))
2. Pokégnek Band of Potawatomi ([Pokagon Band](#))

Gain a deeper understanding of Native American history, including the specific history of the Potawatomi people:

1. [Potawatomi History](#)
2. [Potawatomi: Britannica](#)

## Map of Indigenous Lands

1. [Globally](#)
2. [Southwest Michigan](#) (see image below)

## Michigan's federally recognized Indian tribes



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## Tips for Land Acknowledgement Statements

1. Include the specific names of the Indigenous tribes in your area
2. Use Indigenous language and confirm pronunciations
3. Outline an intention in why you want to acknowledge the land
4. Outline the history
  - a. Do not soften your language when referencing the brutal history (truthtelling is an essential part of this process)
  - b. Do research on specific historical relations with Native peoples in your area (see page 2)
5. Use present-tense language
6. If seeking feedback on the statement by Native peoples, use the following [guidelines](#).

## Land Acknowledgement Statement Ideas

1. We acknowledge our presence in the homelands of Native peoples including the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band and the Pokégnek / Pokagon Band of Bodéwadmik / Potawatomi peoples. These lands were the territory of these Native peoples prior to their forced removal and colonial theft.
2. As we aim to express our “Love in Action for the healing of our world,” our faith community has a responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands and the histories of disposition and violence in which faith communities have participated. We are obligated to reflect on and actively address the injustice that is part of that legacy. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward in faith, love, and hope into our shared future. (*Inspired by [Faith in Place](#)*)
3. Our faith community recognizes that it exists on the land of the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band / Gun Lake Tribe of Potawatomi and the Pokégnek Bodéwadmik / Pokagon Band of Potawatomi peoples. And we commit to continue learning how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit.

## Some Faith Specific Land Acknowledgement Resources

Faith congregations can include liturgy into the land acknowledgements which can help identify your intentions with acknowledging the land. Links below are just some examples. *If there are no online resources available to assist in identifying your specific faith group for the purpose of making a land acknowledgement, consider creating one.*

1. [Christian congregations](#) (scroll down to “How To Write A Land Acknowledgement”)
2. [Jewish congregations](#)
3. [Muslim congregations](#)

## Areas to Incorporate Land Acknowledgement Statements

*These are some ideas:*

1. Bulletins
2. Websites
3. Social Media
4. Services

5. Meetings
6. Opening prayers
7. Murals
8. Signage

### **Active Forms of Land Acknowledgement**

Although having land acknowledgement statements can be a good initial step in understanding more about the people and history of your area, it is important to also think of ways that more actively stand as a land acknowledgement. Here are some ideas and examples of what others are doing.

1. Attend events hosted by the Indigenous people in your community
2. Pay voluntary tax to the federally recognized tribes in your area (see examples)
  - a. [An Episcopal congregation](#) in Madison, Wisconsin
  - b. [Shuumi Land Tax](#)
3. Advocate for tribal interests on a federal or state level
  - a. Although there are some Native tribes with sovereignty, when it comes to broader issues involving things outside of the sovereign nations, the federal government has the ultimate say

### **Land Acknowledgement Survey**

[This survey](#) created by Indigenous Land and Territorial Acknowledgement for Institutions may help you as you think about making land acknowledgements. Survey responses will be incorporated into a public spreadsheet by the creators of the survey to help them create a tool for others.

### **Further Resources**

[Native Governance Center](#)