

PC(USA) apology to Native Alaskans

**I saw him, the last eagle.
Someone pointed, and for a moment
We were all still.
A breeze suddenly touched us,
And in that moment my heart sank,
For someone I knew.
I think, despite hope, we all knew
So we stood there, silently.
At last, together.**

**I was there in the crowd
When the dancers stopped dancing
And the singers forgot the words.
A group of children played tag.
While an old man sat outside the circle
In his blue, foldout chair
Trying hard to hide his tears.
I didn't realize until then
How much they had taken...
How much we had let them take.**

By Noahvose

In the Confession of 1967 it states: "Congregations, individuals, or groups of Christians who exclude, dominate, or patronize their fellowmen, however subtly, resist the Spirit of God and bring contempt on the faith which they profess."

It would have been good if that Confession had been written in 1867 instead of 1967. It would have been good if the Presbyterian Church had understood that the church was in contempt of its own proclaimed faith when our missionaries came to North Slope to bring the Gospel. The church judged when it should have listened. The church declared traditions to be sinful without trying to understand them. The church named ignorance without ever learning the Native Alaskan wisdom.

The action of the General Assembly says: "In our zeal to tell you of the Good News of Jesus Christ, our hearts and minds were closed to the value of your epistemologies and lifeways... We should have affirmed the commonality between your spirituality and our understanding that God's sovereignty extends the length from East to West, with breath from North to South, with depth throughout the Earth, and with height throughout the Sky and Heavens."

As a church we declare that the family is a sacred bond and we pledge at infant baptisms to raise children as a community, yet we tore your children away from you and raised them as white Europeans.

As a church we Presbyterians say we like things done decently and in order, yet we took away all the guideposts of your life and left you without compass points in your own land.

As a church we condemned you getting your living from the sea yet did not the disciples fish?

As a church that had never survived an Alaskan winter, we thought we knew how to tell you to live.

As the Stated Clerk of the 222nd General Assembly that met in Portland, Oregon I have come to offer an apology on behalf of the whole Presbyterian Church (USA). It has taken us too long to get to this apology. Many of your people who deserve the apology the most, are gone. But late though it may be it is a sincere and humble apology that I give to you today.

May God have mercy on us, may Christ have mercy on us, may God have mercy on us.

And now may a new chapter begin.

Presbyterian Church-gum uqalunġi qanutun killukuaŋatilaaqtinġ Iñupianġiññun
Alaska-m

Tautukkiga, aqulliq tinġmiaqpak.

Iñuk tikkuagman, tavra sivikitchuamik

Aulaŋaiqsugut.

Tavraŋatchiaq anuqsraam aksikkaatigut,

Aasii tainnaġman uummatiga kataktuatun piuq,

Pisigivlugu iñuk ilisimaraġa.

Atautchimugataqtut.

Iļauruaŋaa katinŋaruani iñugni

Aŋayuruat aŋayuaigmata

Atuqtit piiguġmatigik atuutim uqalunġich.

Miqfiqtut aŋuġauraqtut.

Aŋayuqaksraq aquppiuqtuaqtillugu katinŋaruat avataanni

Aquppivluni suŋauraaqtuami imuraġaallaruami aquppiutami

Qulviñi tautuktitchailivluginġich.

Qaŋiqsivaalluktunġa, ilitchuġivaalluktunġa tavra

Qanutun manimmilġutilaanaġat...

Qanutun manimmipkaŋatilaanaġich.

Noahvose-gum aglaaŋi

Aŋaayyuvipta Confession of 1967-ŋanni inna uqaluqaqtuq: "Aŋaayyuviiġch, iñugruiññat, naagga atautchimuklutiŋ ukpiqtuat, ilautqunġitpatigik, anmuksruqpatigik, naagga pisuilġigaqfuginġich iñuuniaqatitiŋ, sukun mikigaluaqtuakun, tainna pikamiŋ akuqtunġitkaat Iļitqusigiksuana Kaatim aasii supasaġinaiqsilfugu ukpiġutiktiŋ pautagiuraġniallaan."

Nakuuniaŋagaluaqtuaq taamna Confession savaaġinakparrunġ 1867-mi, 1967-minġilaq. Nakuuniaŋagaluaqtuaq aŋaayyuvikput Presbyterian Church, kaŋiqsinagumiŋ qanutun aŋaayyuvium maliġuaŋaisilaanaġich ukpiġutiŋmiŋ sivuniŋi, tamaunġa aŋaayyuliqsit qaikamiŋ North Slope-mun uqalugiksuat qaġġisikamisigik. Aŋaayyuvikput isivġiun

Uqaluich qanutun killukuᅇatilaaqput qaisaksrautikkaluavut qanasaq qaitpaallukkivut. Imma ilauraavsi quviasuutiginiᅇaluaqtanᅇat tainnasiq uqaluk, ilauraasi piinᅇarut. Kinuᅇgautchinᅇaluaqtillugich tavra tamatkua uqaluich qaitkitka anaqapak.

Kaatiptatuq nagligilisigut, Atanipta Kurais nagligilisigut, Kaatipta nagligilisigut.

Aasii tavrᅇᅇᅇaaglaan isagutitqiksa.