

What might Justice look like now?

Land Ownership: **The Christian Doctrine of Discovery,**
Living Native Peoples & Us

prepared by Friends for Justice at First Congregational Church, Port Washington 2023

SESSION 1: MAY 10, 2023

LOOKING TO THE PAST & LISTENING

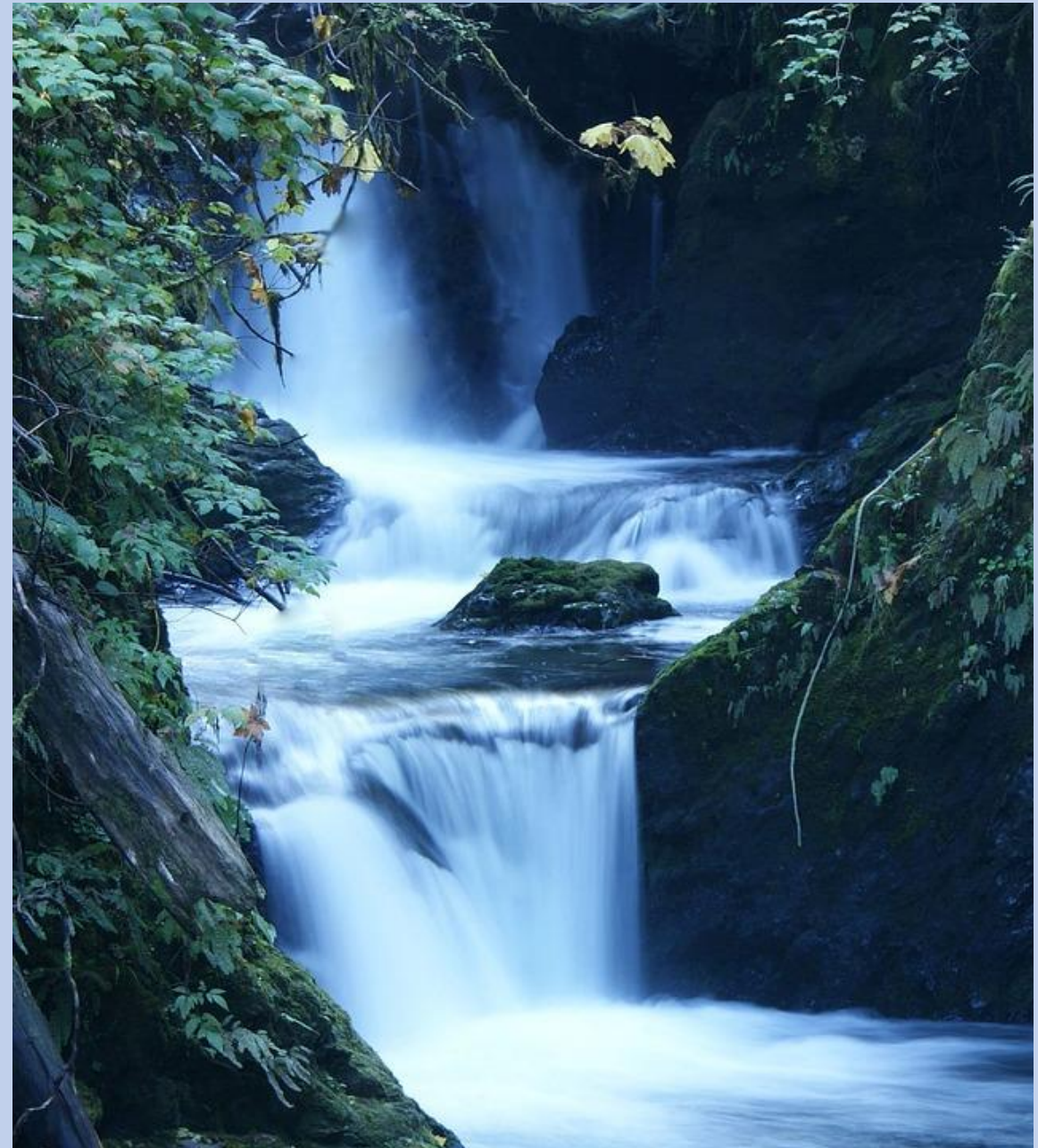
SESSION 2: MAY 24, 2023

LISTENING TO THE PRESENT & LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

**But let justice roll down like
waters and righteousness like
an ever-flowing stream** Amos 5:24

Responding to God's will, expressed in
the prophet Amos' words and Jesus'
call to love our neighbors as ourselves,
we seek to encourage and facilitate
learning and action in our
congregation that furthers a just
society and world.

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- **BACKGROUND of Friends for Justice discussion of topic:**

- April 2021
 - “Land Acknowledgement”
 - Prompted by 2019 “Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery” resolution by Wisconsin Conference UCC.
 - Which Native Peoples lived on our Church land before European Settlers?
- March 2023
 - “Land Acknowledgement” alone seems hollow
 - We need further education ourselves before taking a “next step”

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- **GOALS FOR THESE EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS**

- What is the Doctrine of Discovery & its Impact?
- Who are the Native Peoples who lived on our current church land?
 - **Listen to Native voices**: past and present
- Beyond self-education, what is the next step for *Friends for Justice*? Is there a next step?

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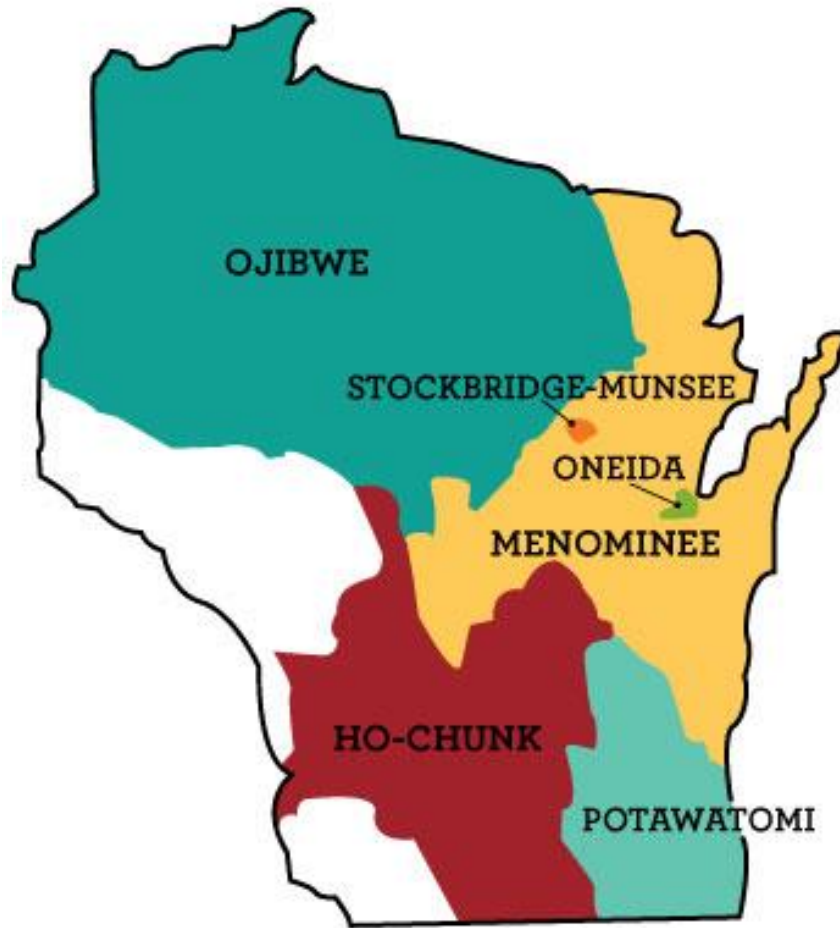
TERMINOLOGY

Indigenous = Indian = Native = First Nations

Dunbar-Ortiz, R., *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, 2014.

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(YELLOW) Traditional home of Menominee
People in WI, Since **a long time ago**



Home of First Congregational Church
131 N. Webster St, Port Washington,
WI, Since 1898



**What / Who did
Columbus “discover”?**

Oct 12, 1492:
Columbus landed on
a Caribbean island, in
current-day
Bahamas.
Indigenous Lucayan
or Taino People
called it
“Guanahani”;
possibly current “San
Salvador”.

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/columbus-makes-landfall-caribbean/>

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The Christian Doctrine of Discovery: Vatican Papal Bulls

1096 – 1300 Crusades: non-Christians = enemies of Catholic faith

1452 – Pope Nicholas V (bull: ***Romanus Pontifex***): directed King Alfonso of Portugal to "capture, vanquish, and subdue the Saracens, pagans, and other enemies of Christ," to "put them into perpetual slavery," and "to take all their possessions and property."

May, 1493 – Pope Alexander VI (bull: ***Inter Cetera***): "granting" to Spain - at the request of Ferdinand and Isabella - the right to conquer the lands which Columbus had already found, as well as any lands which Spain might "discover" in the future.

the "discovered" people should be "subjugated and brought to the faith itself." By this means, said the pope, the "Christian Empire" would be propagated.

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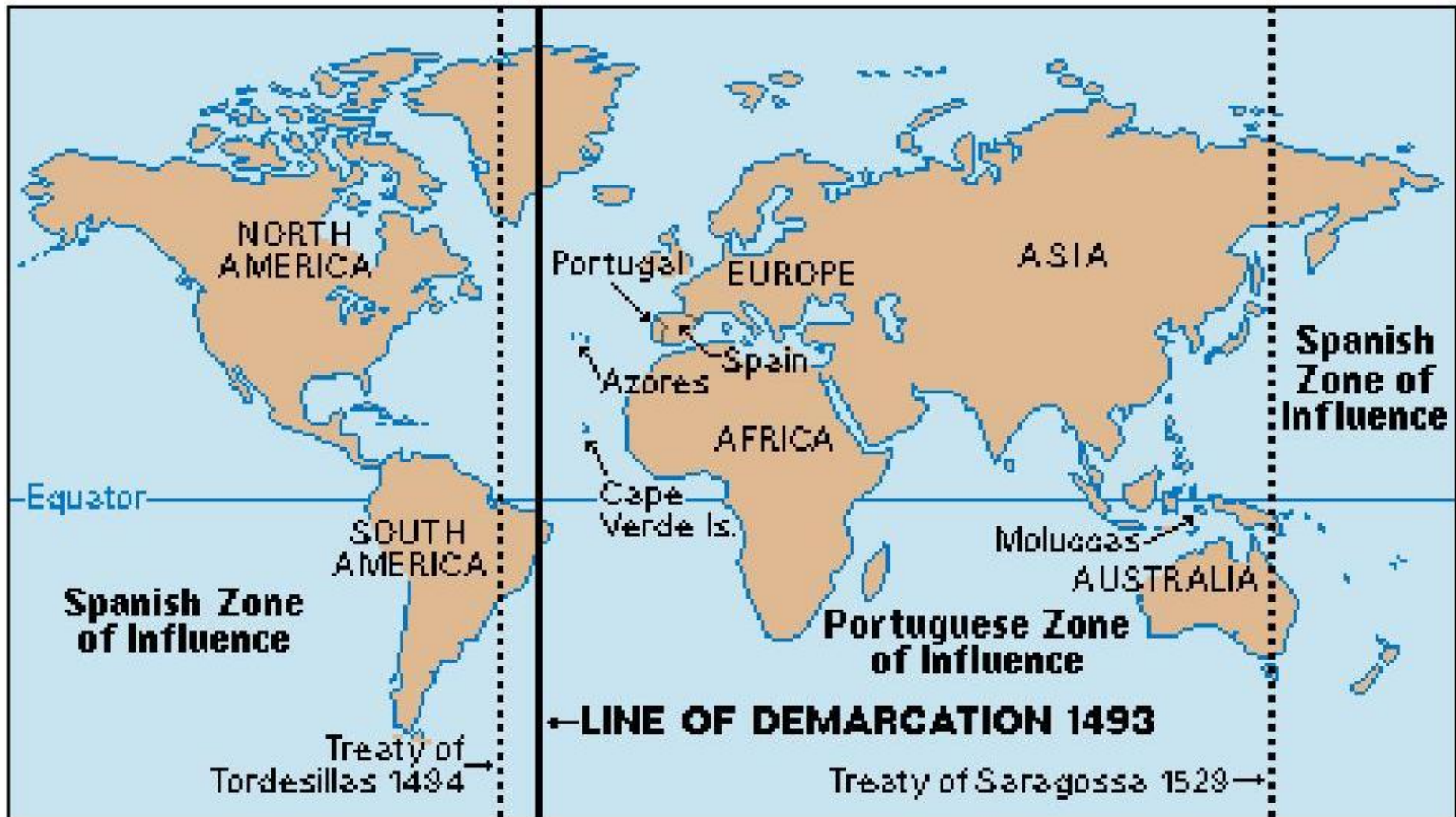
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The Christian Doctrine of Discovery: Vatican Papal Bulls

June 1494 – Pope Alexander VI. **Treaty of Tordesillas** In response to Portugal's protest over bull favoring Spain. Created the line of demarcation: Spain & Portugal. (*maps next slides*)

1823 – ***Johnson vs McIntosh***. SCOTUS rules that federal government controls land; American Indians have only “right of occupancy” but hold no title to the land. Decision cites the Discovery Doctrine.

May 28, 1830 – ***Indian Removal Act***. “Granted” land west of Mississippi to Indian tribes in exchange for tribal lands to the east. (Passed: Senate 28-19; House 101-97; signed by President Andrew Jackson).



[line-of-demarcation-l.jpg \(1024x768\) \(slideserve.com\)](#)

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- **DISMANTLING (REPUDIATING) THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY**

- 1992 – 500-year anniversary of Columbus' arrival in current-day Americas
- Repudiation of Doctrine of Discovery:
 - 2007 > Episcopal Church; Religious Society of Friends; Canadian Anglican Church; Unitarian Universalist Churches
 - February 2012 – World Council of Churches denounced the D of D
 - July, 2013 – United Church of Christ (General Synod 29)
 - April, 2019 – Wisconsin UCC
 - March 2023 – Vatican / Pope Francis

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Land Ownership in the Americas: **A Violent Colonial Clash of Cultures**

Land in Worldview of Indigenous Peoples

*“You see, I am alive.
I stand in good relation to the earth”*

“The Indian conceives of himself in terms of the land. The landscape is his natural element; it is the only element in which his life is possible. In this view, the earth is sacred. It is a living entity.”

*N. Scott Momaday
Kiowa Indian Tribe, Oklahoma
In “I Am Alive. . .”, page 11*

Land in Worldview of U.S. Colonial Settlers

Land is a commodity, an object of trade and utility. *Supported by papal Doctrine of Discovery & 1823 US Supreme Court decision*

“Everything in US history is about the land – who oversaw and cultivated it, fished its waters, maintained its wildlife; who invaded and stole it; how it became a commodity (“real estate”) broken into pieces to be bought and sold on the market”

Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz in “An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States”, p. 1

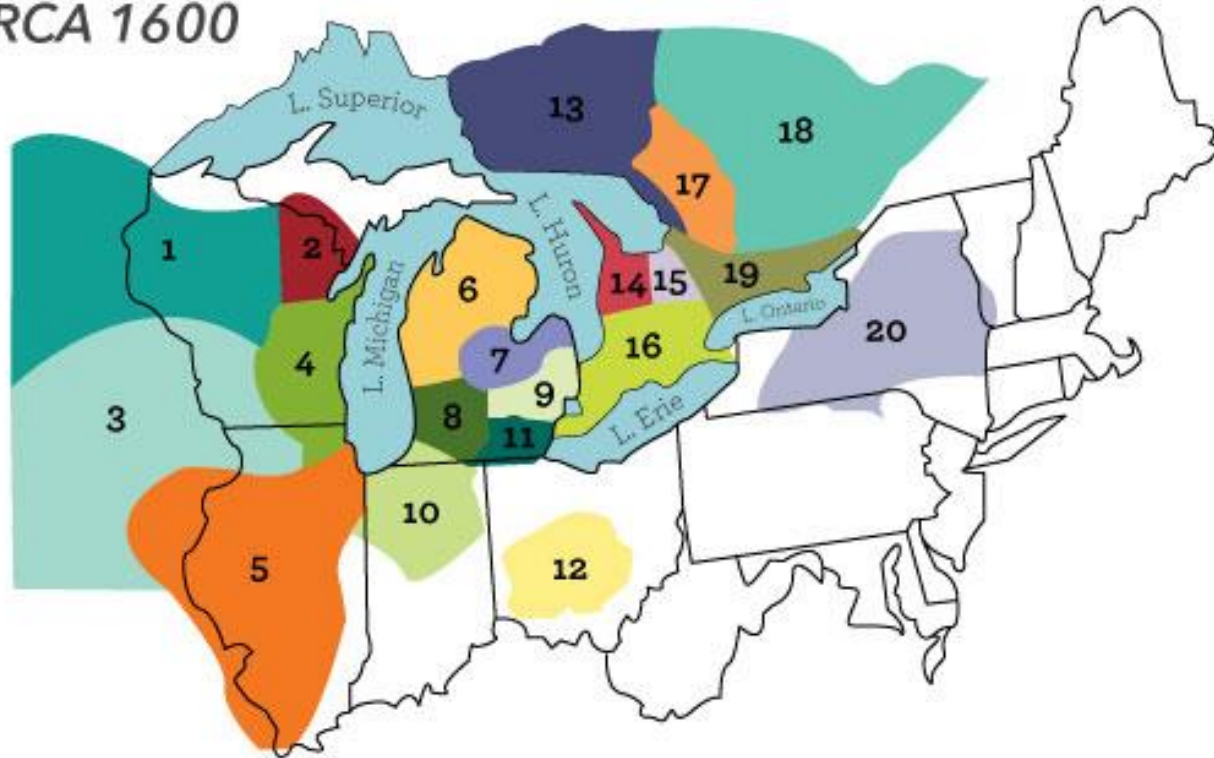
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- **PERSONAL REFLECTION (index card)**
 - Using words or short phrases, privately note:
 - Your feelings
 - Your questions
 - Your expectations
- (20 seconds)

GREAT LAKES TRIBES

CIRCA 1600



1 Santee Dakota
2 Menominee
3 Ioway
4 Ho-chunk
5 Illinois

6 Potawatomi
7 Sauk
8 Mascouten
9 Fox
10 Miami

11 Kickapoo
12 Shawnee
13 Ojibwe
14 Ottawa
15 Petun

16 Neutral
17 Nipissing
18 Algonkin
19 Huron
20 Iroquois

Most of Algonkian language family: **Menominee, Ojibwe (Chippewa), and Potawatomi**

Stockbridge-Munsee & Brothertown: also Algonkian-speaking, but relocated from eastern coast to Great Lakes in 19th century

Oneida: Iroquois language group

Ho-Chunk (Winnebago); Siouan language

Tribal Lands circa
1800 in current day
Wisconsin:

Ojibwe (Chippewa)

Dakota (Sioux)

Ho-Chunk (Winnebago)

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DISPLACEMENT OF EAST COAST INDIANS to WISCONSIN – early 1800's

- **Oneida:**

- Iroquoian-speaking tribe,
- Pre-colonial Oneida homeland in upstate New York (Oneida Creek & Oneida lake area of north central NY State).
- The Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscarora make up the Six Nations League of the Iroquois.

- **Stockbridge – Munsee:**

- Algonkian-speaking
- Pre-colonial homelands in parts of Massachusetts, NY, Pennsylvania, Connecticut

- **Brothertown:**

- Eastern Algonquian language (Mohegan, Pequot)
- Pre-colonial homelands in parts of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Long Island

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Listening to Native Voices

Indian Boarding Schools
Discovered?... Or Stolen!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nU9AtP9yJ8>



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Listening to Native Voices

Menominee Oral Tradition

<https://wisconsinfirstnations.org/tribal-histories-menominee-history/>



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