

North Carolina Synod Land Acknowledgement

The North Carolina Synod office is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the **Catawba and Keyauwee** people, and we acknowledge their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called and continue to call this land their home.

We honor and name those who lived here before the synod came to be, who were the first stewards of the land, the first people who offered the first prayers and sang the first songs into the very soil under our feet. **All land has a tribal story.** We must remember it as the first and current home to many Indigenous people. We recognize and confess that our ability to be working and living here now comes as a direct benefit of policies of expulsion and assimilation of Native American peoples.

The whole of the NC Synod stretches from the mountains to the coast of this state. Before any Lutheran movement, this land was made up of diverse, culturally-organized, and productive communities. There were 27 known tribes that inhabited this land at its beginning. We say their names: Chawanoke, Croatoan, Hatteras, Moratoc, Secotan, Weapemeoc, Machapunga, Pamlico, Coree, Neuse River, Tuscarora, Meherrin, Cherokee, Cape Fear, Catawba, Shakori, Sissipahaw, Sugeree, Waccamaw, Waxhaw, Woccon, Cheraw, Eno, Keyauwee, Occaneechi, Saponi, and Tutelo.

We know that Native American peoples are not historical subjects but part of our communities, churches, schools, and leadership, and we give thanks for the invaluable wisdom they offer for the ways we exist, today and into the future, in relationship with Mother Earth and our human and non-human neighbors.

Currently, North Carolina has the largest Native American population east of the Mississippi River and the eighth-largest Native American population in the United States. The current tribes living on this land are:

[Eastern Band of Cherokee](#) (Swain County and surrounding counties)

[Coharie](#) (Sampson and Harnett counties)

[Lumbee](#) (Robeson and surrounding counties)

[Haliwa-Saponi](#) (Halifax and Warren counties)

[Sappony](#) (Person County)

[Meherrin](#) (Hertford and surrounding counties)

[Occaneechi Band of Saponi Nation](#) (Alamance and surrounding counties)

[Waccamaw-Siouan](#) (Columbus and Bladen counties)

The long history in this state of treaty negotiations, land use conflict, immigrant settlement, and federal administration continues to this day. It is fundamental to remember this history and confess the injustice in order for us to move to healing and a more just future together. We must learn more, do more and realize healing and justice for Native American peoples whose lands we now occupy.