



What might Justice look like now?
Land Ownership: **The Christian**
Doctrine of Discovery,
Living Native Peoples & Us

SESSION 1: MAY 10, 2023

LOOKING TO THE PAST & LISTENING

SESSION 2: MAY 24, 2023

**LISTENING TO THE PRESENT & LOOKING TO THE
FUTURE**

FOCUS ON MENOMINEE TRIBE

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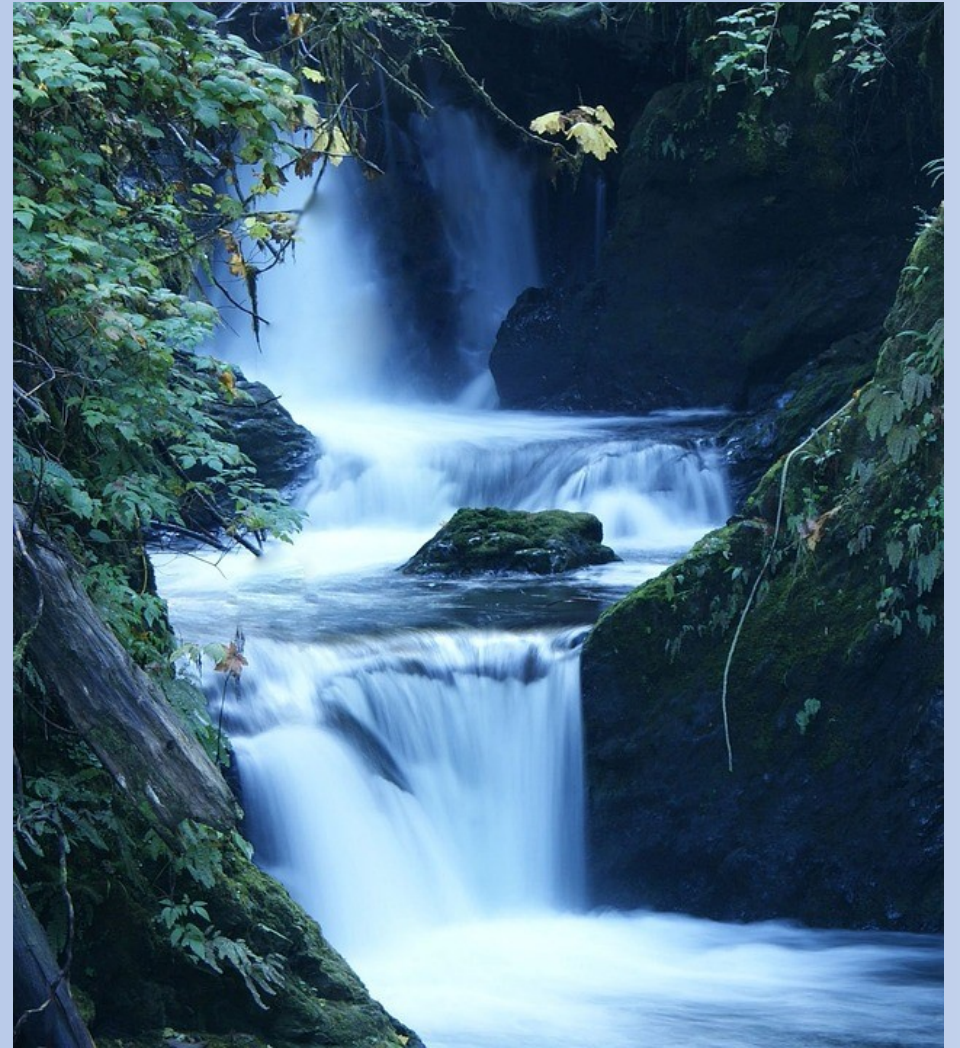
Friends for Justice at First Congregational Church

is a group of individual church members who come together around issues of justice. The group speaks to, but not for, First Congregational Church of Port Washington.

Guiding Statement

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.



What might Justice look like now?

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

- **FORMAT**

- Prayer
- Thanksgiving
- Reflect on content, feelings, questions (Personal)
- Summary: group reflection
 - Listen
 - Let all speak
 - No judgement of others' words
- Prayer

What might Justice look like now?

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

- **PERSONAL REFLECTION (index card)**
 - What are your feelings about this study of **LAND OWNERSHIP & AMERICAN INDIANS?**
(30 seconds)



PRAYER

GIVING THANKS

In preparation for the
GROUP REFLECTION / SUMMARY

**1. What have you learned?
Any new insights? Need for clarification?**

2. Is there a next step? If so, what?

(use separate sticky notes for posting on the brown paper)

Brief Review from Session 1



TERMINOLOGY

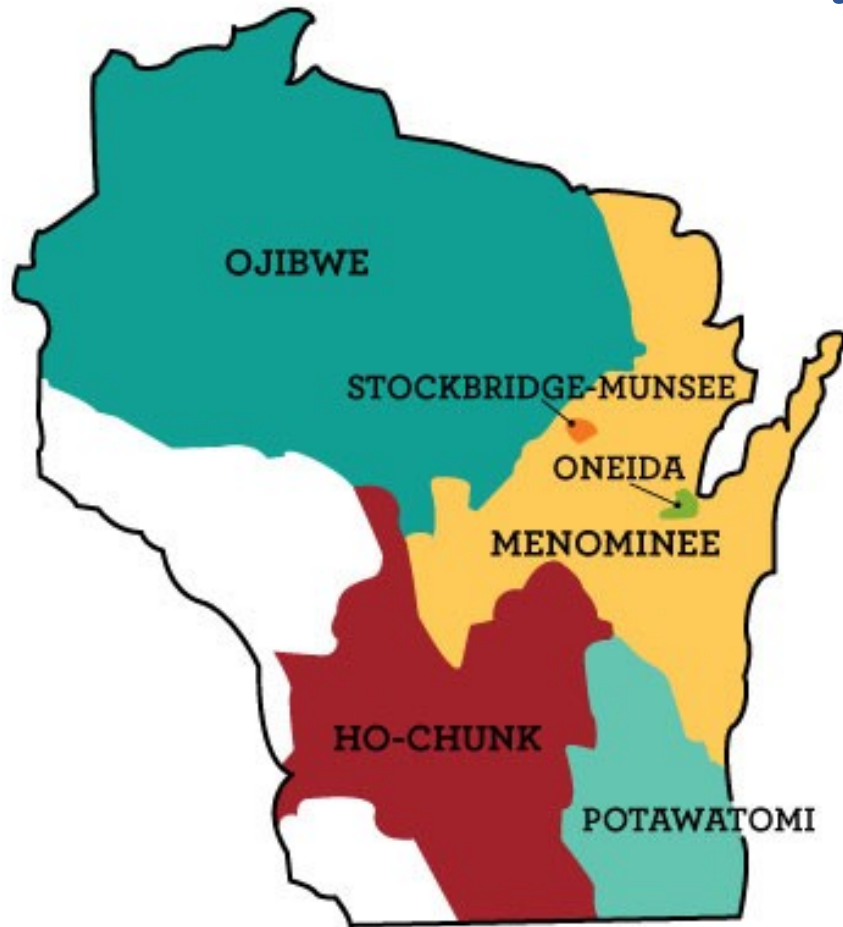
Indigenous = Indian = Native

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

**First People =
The People =
First Nations**



... First Congregational Church of Port Washington stands on land traditionally occupied by the Menominee People



(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****

... the Doctrine of Discovery is the worldview at the root of the violent cultural conflict about land ownership

15th century papal documents (*Doctrine of Discovery*):

- capture, vanquish, and subdue enemies of Christ, put them into perpetual slavery, and take all their possessions and property
- divided known world into “half” for Spain & Portugal

1823 – citing *Discovery Doctrine*, US Supreme Court stripped American Indians of land ownership rights.



... many Churches have recently repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery

- **Formal “repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery” by Churches**
 - **UCC – General Synod, 2013**
 - **Wisconsin UCC – April, 2019**
 - **Pope Francis – March, 2023**

... we agree it's important to listen to Native voices in the telling of their own story

- Began listening to Native voices about Indian Boarding Schools and Menominee Peoples' history.
- Expressed concern about pursuing controversial issues
- Decided to focus on the living Menominee People

And we're still asking ourselves . . .

- Beyond self-education, what is the next step for *Friends for Justice*? Is there a next step?

SESSION 2: Menominee Tribe – Main Resources

The Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin: website

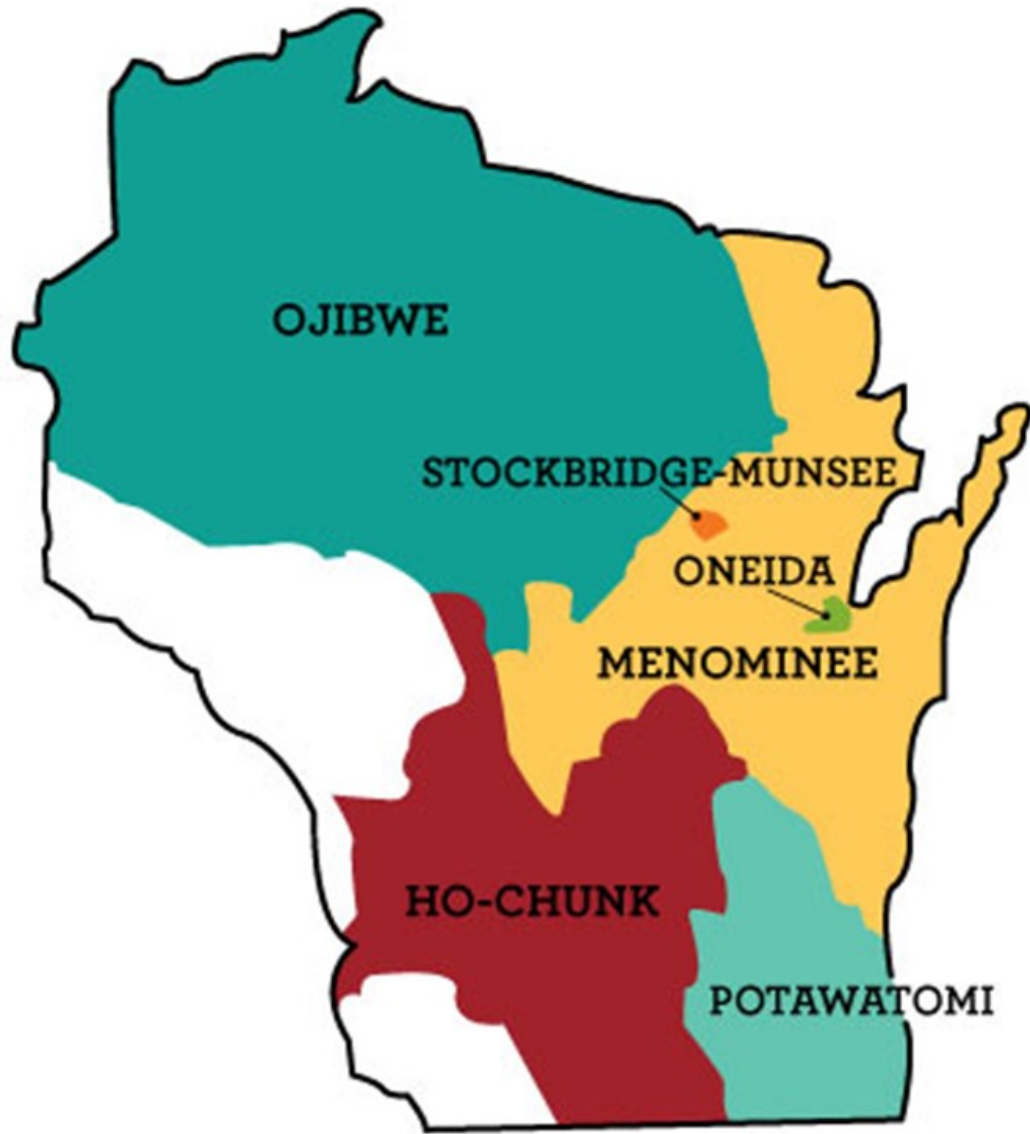
- <https://menominee-nsn.gov/>
 - History (see Culture tab >> About Us)
 - Treaties (see Culture tab >> Historical Documents)

Wisconsin First Nations: American Indian Studies in Wisconsin

- <https://wisconsinfirstnations.org/>

Wisconsin Indian Resource Project: Milwaukee Public Museum

- <https://www.mpm.edu/wirp>



Traditional Menominee land in current WI (left). Current Menominee reservation (Menominee County) (right)

Menominee Reservation
(since 1854) approx. same
as **Menominee County**
(created 1959 * from
portions of Shawano &
Oconto Counties, in
anticipation of
Termination; tribal assets
transferred to corporation)

* signed into law by Gov
Gaylord Nelson, 1961



Term: **Ceded** vs **Unceded** Land

- **Ceded:**

Tribal lands granted to US govt or another Tribe in a **signed treaty**

- Often result of military, economic, or political pressure

Menominee Treaties & land cessions: <https://www.menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/>

1836 – partial land ceded to US govt in exchange for \$\$ for 20 yrs plus goods

1848 – all land in WI ceded to US govt in exchange for land earlier ceded to US by Chippewa (Minnesota) Two yrs later, Menominee refused to move to MN; granted temporary reservation along Wolf River.

1854 – US government gave Menominee reservation land on the Wolf River

1856 – Menominee ceded part of yet unsettled reservation to Stockbridge & Munsee Tribes, and other “New York Indians” which “the US government may desire to remove...”

Term: **Sovereign Nation**

- **Tribal sovereignty** - right of American Indians to govern themselves. The U.S. Constitution recognizes Indian tribes as having distinct governments with the same powers as federal and state governments to regulate their internal affairs. Sovereignty includes the right to establish their own form of government, determine membership requirements, enact legislation, and establish law enforcement and court systems.
- They **cannot** establish their own military or create their own currency.

Source: <https://www.ncsl.org/quad-caucus/an-issue-of-sovereignty>

Source: <https://www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-07>

Term: Termination

Resource: <https://www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-97>

Termination: elimination of tribal sovereign status; one nation

1954 - US Congress passed Menominee Termination Act, signed by President Eisenhower:

- Ended federal recognition of Menominee Tribe.
- Ended sovereign nation status.
- Ended federal protection of Menominee reservation land,
- Ended Tribal government

Menominee Termination date: **April 30, 1961**

- Tribe chosen because of successful forestry & lumbering operations

Term: Termination to Restoration

Resource: <https://www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-97>

Menominee Termination: (1961)

- Insufficient tax base to provide basic services, i.e. police, fire, etc
- Led to poverty & social disruption
- Tribal corporation (MEI) contracted with private developer
 - Development of Legend Lake (joining of 9 small lakes in Menominee County), with land sales to non-Indians !

Menominee Restoration: (1975)

- 1970 – tribal leaders, Ada Deer & James White, lobbied Congress to reverse termination
- Dec, 1973 - President Nixon signed bill to restore federal status of Menominee Tribe
- Jan, 1975 – Menominee Warrior Society occupied abandoned building in Gresham
- 1975 – Menominee County reverted to reservation status

Term: **Federal Indian Trust**

- legally enforceable fiduciary obligation on the part of the United States **to protect tribal treaty rights, lands, assets, and resources, as well as a duty to carry out the mandates of federal law with respect to American Indian** and Alaska Native tribes and villages.
- legal & moral obligation of United States
- trust doctrine at center of numerous Supreme Court cases, thus making it one of the most important principles in federal Indian law.

Source: <https://www.bia.gov/frequently-asked-questions>

How the Menominee People describe themselves now:

We are indigenous to the State of Wisconsin

We continue to have strong leadership, which has taken us through adversity

We continue to speak our language and practice our traditions and our traditional religion

Spiritually, we continue to speak with our creator through tobacco, prayers, and other offerings

We will continue to survive because we are a sovereign nation, a nation that refused to be pushed from our territory, a nation that will remain strong and independent

We are "Kiash Matchitiwuk" the Ancient Ones

<https://www.menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/AboutUs.aspx>

Omaeqnomenaewak – People of the Wild Rice

Mission

The mission of the Omaeqnomenaewak (People of the Wild Rice) is to promote, protect, and preserve our rights, resources, and culture by utilizing responsible leadership and judicious exercise of our sovereign powers.

Vision

We envision the Omaeqnomenewak (People of the Wild Rice) as a strong, healthy, and proud nation living in accordance with its culture and beliefs, and possessing the resources necessary to be successful in achieving our goals.

Values

As Omaeqnomenewak (People of the Wild Rice), we value our children, elders, and each other, preserving our language, tradition, history and culture.

<https://www.menominee-nsn.gov/Mission.aspx>

Menominee Land Today

- <https://menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/Landmarks.aspx>

SPIRIT ROCK

One night long ago a Menominee Indian dreamed that Manabush, grandson of Ko-Ko-Mas-Say-Sa-Now (the Earth) and part founder of the Mitawin or Medicine Society, invited him to visit the god. With seven of his friends the Indian called on Manabush who granted their request to make them successful hunters. One of the band, however, angered the god by asking for eternal life. Manabush, seizing the warrior by the shoulders, thrust him into the ground and said, "You shall be a stone, thus you will be everlasting." The Menominee say that at night kindly spirits come to lay offerings of tobacco at the rock and that if one looks closely he can see their white veils among the trees. The legend is that when the rock finally crumbles away the race will be extinct.

Erected 1963



General Info:

- **8,720** tribal members
- Reservation = approx. **360 sq miles**
- **95% forested land** = largest single tract of virgin timberland in WI
- Education: School district; Tribal school K-8; Head Start; College of Menominee Nation
- Casino – Keshena, WI
- Menominee Tribal Enterprises
- Museum – Keshena, WI

Satellite Map of Menominee County

<http://www.maphill.com/united-states/wisconsin/menominee-county/maps/satellite-map/>



MENOMINEE LAND ETHIC

Chief Oshkosh, Menominee Nation

"Start with the rising sun and work toward the setting sun, but take only the mature trees, the sick trees, and the trees that have fallen. When you reach the end of the reservation, turn and cut from the setting sun to the rising sun and the trees will last forever."

<https://www.mtewood.com/>





Menominee Sustainable Forest Management

<https://www.mtewood.com/>

**“Our spiritual home”: a
model for sustainable
living and logging**

<https://www.greenbaypressgazette.com/in-depth/news/2020/10/08/wisconsin-menominee-forest-teaches-foresters-how-sustain-woodlands/5621244002/>

Waller, D. M., and N. J. Reo. 2018. First stewards: ecological outcomes of forest and wildlife stewardship by indigenous peoples of Wisconsin, USA. *Ecology and Society* 23(1):45.

<https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-09865-230145>

Findings:

Compared to nearby non-tribal land, tribal forests in northern WI (Menominee & Ojibwe had:

- More mature trees with higher volume
- Higher rates of tree regeneration
- More plant diversity
- Fewer invasive species

Q: Fishing / Hunting rights of Menominee?

A: Rights only on reservation, not on ceded land

History:

- **1831** treaty reserved right to hunt/fish on ceded land
 - but this language not included in subsequent treaties
- **1996** – Federal judge Barbara Crabb ruled **against** tribal appeal that US treaty commissioners had led tribe to believe that **1831** language had been included in subsequent treaties

<https://www.mpm.edu/educators/wirp/nations/menominee/treaties-treaty-rights>

Menominee People in the news.....

- May 2023: Renewable Energy: <https://www.wpr.org/wisconsin-menominee-nation-renewable-energy-solar-installation>
- Jan 2023: Reintroduce Bison: <https://www.wpr.org/wisconsin-tribes-reintroducing-bison-maintaining-population>
- Dec 2022: Kenosha casino: <https://www.wpr.org/menominee-indian-tribe-casino-kenosha>
- Nov 2022: Ancestor remains: <https://www.wpr.org/they-can-continue-their-journey-spirit-world-menominee-ancestors-return-home>
- Oct 2022: Language learning: <https://www.wpr.org/menominee-charter-school-works-preserve-culture-through-language-learning>
- 2018: The “Back Forty” mine: <https://www.wpr.org/wisconsin-tribe-files-lawsuit-over-proposed-mine>

Menominee People in the News . . .

Legend Lake: A Talking Circle, 2010 (34 min. video)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7LMncjhRNWY>

April 2023: **Legend Lake Property Owners Association v. Bureau of Indian Affairs**

- Lawsuit by non-Indian property owners who don't want Menominee to buy back Legend Lake property
- Property returned to Menominee puts it in federal trust, meaning no property taxes are paid (reduced tax base)

State of the Wisconsin Tribes

All 12 Wisconsin tribal elders come to Madison annually for State of the Tribes Address to WI Assembly

2023 State of the Tribes address:

<https://pbswisconsin.org/watch/pbs-wisconsin-public-affairs/2023-state-of-the-tribes-address-emzdjq/>

May 5

**National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)**

PERSONAL REFLECTION (5 minutes, sticky notes)

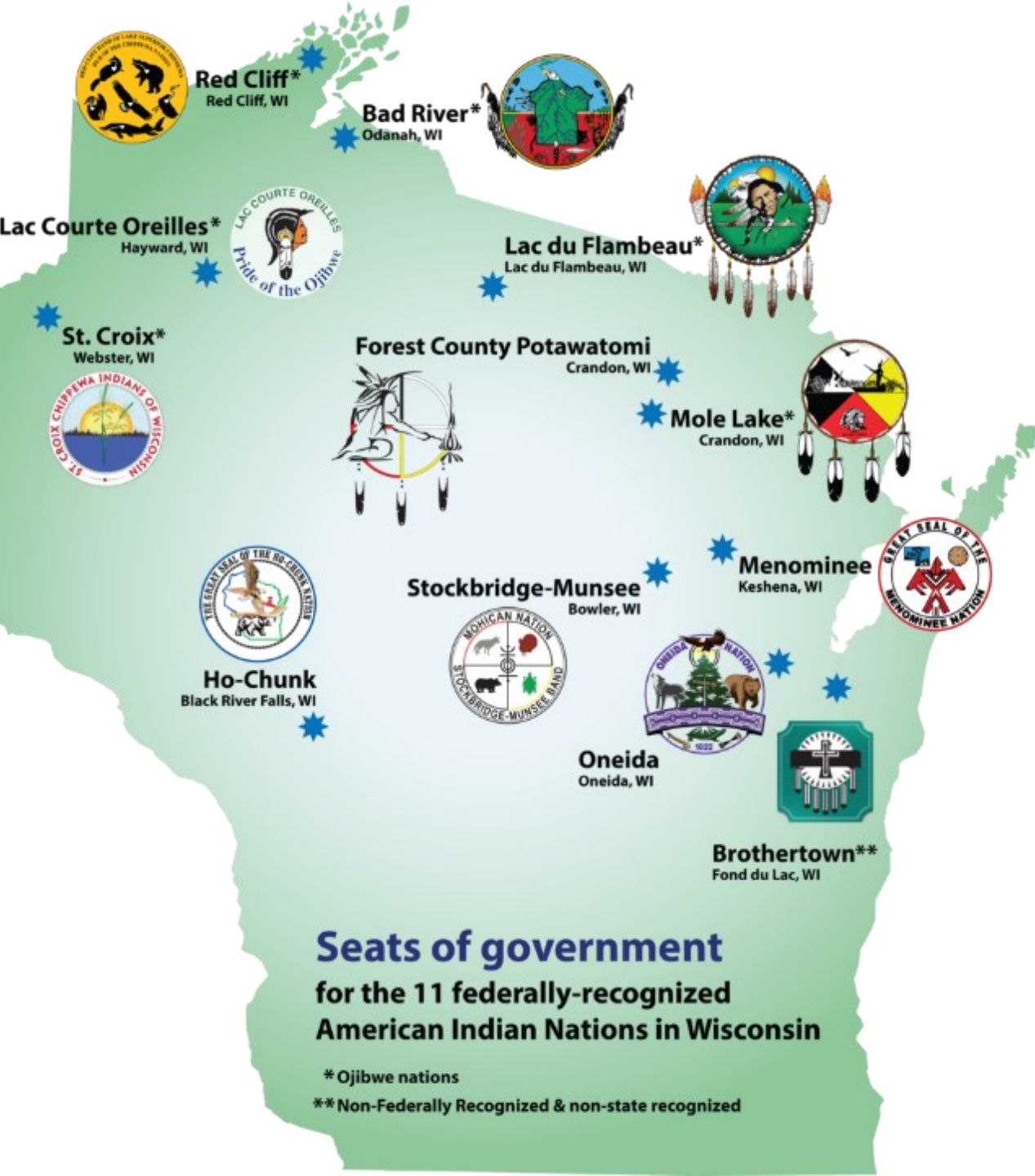
1. **Main insights?**
2. **Where do we go from here?**

Summary: GROUP REFLECTION

1. **Major “take-aways”?**
2. **What is the Next Step? *What might Justice look like? How can we be allies?***



CLOSING PRAYER



Recognized Tribes in Wisconsin

- Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band Of Mohican Indians
- Bad River Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Lac Courte Oreilles Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Lac Du Flambeau Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Menominee Indian Tribe Of Wisconsin
- Oneida Nation
- Red Cliff Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Forest County Potawatomi
- Mole Lake (Sokaogon Chippewa Community) Band Of Lake Superior Chippewa
- Saint Croix Chippewa Indians Of Wisconsin
- Brothertown Indian Nation

<https://dpi.wi.gov/amind/tribalnationswi>



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/>