

THIS LAND ON WHICH WE GATHER

***PREPARED FOR THE PEOPLE OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, PORT WASHINGTON, WI
BY FRIENDS FOR JUSTICE, 2024***

The following information was gathered over several years and began as a search to identify the indigenous people on whose land we now gather as the people of First Congregational United Church of Christ of Port Washington, Wisconsin. While our original intent was to acknowledge the land and specific indigenous people who occupied this land, we have instead found our eyes opened to the complexities of human and U.S. history.

The following text summarizes what we have learned of the dispossession of land and displacement of Native peoples from this place on which we gather. **We ask that this information be included in the telling of the story of our Church founding.** We are not historians but have references for this work. This is a work in progress and we welcome further research and understanding of this history of this place.

A brief story of this place:

We, the people of First Congregational Church of Port Washington Wisconsin, acknowledge the multiple Native peoples who occupied this place and were sustained by this land, but were dispossessed of this land before it became our place of worship. We, members of this Church, have benefitted from this earlier dispossession and displacement of Natives. The descendants of these same Native peoples continue to live as our neighbors in Wisconsin, but live with the consequences of land dispossession, economic restriction, and cultural devastation.

Zooming out in time: Humans, always migrating, moved into current-day Wisconsin, approximately 12,000 years ago, following the receding of the glaciers that covered most of this land through the Ice Ages. Numerous Native peoples, with diverse cultures and vibrant civilizations, sustained themselves and traded with one another for thousands of years across current-day North and South America before the arrival of migrating Europeans. After Christopher Columbus' arrival in the current-day Bahamas, land ownership and resources in the Americas began to be claimed by European nations (mainly Spain, France, and Great Britain in North America) The land was claimed based on the Doctrine of Discovery, a papal decree which disregarded the humanity of the

existing occupants of the land who were not Christian. We do not know about the First People of current-day Wisconsin, although archeologists continue to uncover insight into the deep past.

Zooming in: In the early 1500's in the Great Lakes region, French explorers began a trans-Atlantic fur trade that depended upon collaboration with Native trappers. These early trade interactions between the French and Natives often led to inter-marriage and some degree of mutual acculturation. Jean Nicolet, a French explorer in search of the northwest passage to the Orient, is considered the first European to arrive in present day Wisconsin (arrived near current day Green Bay in 1634). After Nicolet's earlier arrival in New France (Quebec, Canada), he lived with an Algonquian-speaking Indian tribe. His knowledge of Native language and culture made him a valuable interpreter for the thriving French fur trade in the Great Lakes region.

Ongoing conflict over colonial territory in North America among France, Great Britain, and Spain led to the Seven Year War (a.k.a French-Indian War) that ended in 1763. After this war, Great Britain gained most North American French territory east of the Mississippi. However, after the American Revolution (1783), Great Britain had to give up this same territory to the U.S., thus opening land for westward expansion by the U.S. beyond the 13 colonies. In 1787, Congress designated this newly-gained land as the "Northwest Territory". The Northwest Ordinances of 1784-1787 provided for the surveying and subdivision of this land, which ultimately became the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The intent of the new U.S. government to expand westward and open the land to Revolutionary War veterans and European immigrants was already clear. The "Louisiana Purchase" by the U.S. from France in 1803 followed by the Lewis & Clark expedition, confirmed this intent to expand westward. But opening the land to colonial settlers meant displacing the existing Native peoples, as well as settling land disputes among Native people who had been forced westward by both intertribal wars and European colonization.

Focusing on this place where our Church stands:

Menominee Indian Tribe (1836 Treaty): Based on the 1836 Treaty and land descriptions in earlier treaties, we believe that the land on which our Church stands was officially ceded by the Menominee Tribe to the United States in 1836 with the "Treaty with Menominee Indian Tribe at Cedar Point, on Fox River, near Green Bay in the Territory of Wisconsin". In this treaty, the Menominee People ceded approximately 4 million acres of land. The boundaries of the ceded land had first been described in a disputed 1825 treaty titled: "Treaty signed at Prairie des Chiens in the territory of Michigan with the Sioux and Chippewa, Sacs and Fox, Menominee, Ioway, Sioux, Winnebago, and a portion of the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomie, Tribe". The boundaries are described in Article 8 of this treaty:

“... It is understood that the general claim of the Menominies is bounded on the north by the Chippewa country, on the east by Green Bay and lake Michigan extending as far south as Millwaukee river, and on the West they claim to Black River.”

Because the described Menominee boundaries appear to include the current City of Port Washington, we focused on learning more about the Menominee People while understanding that other Native people were occupying this land at the time of colonial settlement. The 1825 treaty document (mentioned above) lists the many tribes vying for land resources that had been traditionally recognized as Menominee land. It is important to note that a Native view of land as sustenance and identity was vastly different from the European view of private ownership of land. It is also important to note that by 1836 when the Menominee land cession had been finalized by treaty, the United States had already passed the Indian Removal Act (1830) with the clear intent of displacing all remaining Natives to west of the Mississippi River.

It is best to let the Menominee tell their own story:

- Text: <https://www.menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/AboutUs.aspx>
- Video, with tribal elder David Grignon: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUr8-jWIYFU>
- Website: <https://menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/BriefHistory.aspx>

As of today, twelve Native tribes live as sovereign nations on reservations in Wisconsin. Eleven of these tribes are federally recognized; the 12th tribe, the Brothertown tribe, is seeking federal recognition.

Land purchase from U.S. government (*research by Jane Spalding*): We know that on August 24, 1837, James D. Doty of Brown County purchased 3 parcels of land (184 acres) from the U.S. government, including the land that eventually became the property of The Congregational Church of Port Washington (1898). Born in New York, Mr. Doty was a lawyer, land speculator, and politician in the Wisconsin Territory.

The exact succession of this land ownership after Mr. Doty's purchase has not yet been researched. We do know that Fred Dennett of Sheboygan, owner of the Wisconsin Chair Factory, sold the current church land to The Congregational Church of Port Washington for a nominal fee. The Church was established in 1898.

A historical timeline follows. Again, we acknowledge that this is a work in progress.

*Submitted by Louise Mollinger, member, Friends for Justice at First Congregational Church, Port Washington
Summer, 2024*

TIMELINE & HISTORICAL NOTES	
<p>TODAY 2024 C. E. (Common Era)</p>	<p>First Congregational Church of Port Washington, United Church of Christ, ends a year of celebrating its 125th anniversary in April</p> <hr/> <p>There are people of 12 Sovereign Tribal Nations living in Wisconsin on reservations <i>listed alphabetically as they name themselves on their tribal websites</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa * Brothertown Indian Nation (not yet federally recognized) Forest County Potawatomi Ho-Chunk Nation** Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe * Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians* Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin Sokaogon Chippewa Community, Mole Lake Band of Lake Superior Chippewa* Oneida Nation of Wisconsin* Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa* St. Croix Chippewa Indians of Wisconsin* Stockbridge-Munsee Community, Band of Mohican Indians </p> <p>* Ojibwe Nation ** formerly known as Winnebago of WI</p>
<p>1988</p>	<p>January – Notes from James T. Liebnow, Pastor, in newsletter of First Congregational Church: <i>“In 1987, two projects were considered: (1) a land survey [drawing]; and (2) a re-examination of our western slope (not pursued). In talking with the geotechnical engineer, he stated, “Expansion on this site would be very costly because of soil make-up and potential slope failure.”</i>”</p>

	<i>"Personally, I think we need to consider the future relocation of our church facility. Why? Because to address access or facility expansion on this site would not be in the best, long range interest of this congregation."</i> (research by Jane Spalding)
1973	Restoration of Federal Supervision of Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin (see <i>Termination of Tribe, 1954</i>)
1954	Termination of Federal Supervision of Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin
1924	Indian Citizenship Act grants full citizenship to Native Peoples but leaves it up to individual states to grant voting rights. It takes another forty years for all 50 states to extend the right to vote to all Native Americans.
1920	Nineteenth Amendment of U.S. Constitution extends voting rights to women.
1898	Congregational Church of Port Washington established at 131 N. Webster St, Port Washington, WI 53074, Ozaukee County
	Fred Dennett sells land to Congregational Church for nominal fee
18??	<i>Fred Dennett, Sheboygan, owner of Wisconsin Chair Factory, purchases land</i>
1870	Fifteenth Amendment extends voting rights to African American men.
1848	Wisconsin becomes the 30 th State
1837	August 24 th , James D. Doty, of Brown County, purchases 3 parcels of land (184 acres) from the United States of America. This land includes that which eventually became the property of The Congregational Church of Port Washington , the 1 st Congregational Church in Ozaukee County (1898). The "Land Patent" document includes the testimony of U.S. President Martin Van Buren. As the first buyer of this land from the U.S. government, he is the "patentee". (research by Jane Spalding) Notes: Jame D Doty: lawyer, land speculator & politician; descendant of Mayflower immigrant Edward Doty; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Duane_Doty#References born 1799 in Salem, NY
1836	Wisconsin becomes its own Territory, separate from Michigan Territory.
1836	<u><i>First land cession to the U.S. acknowledged by the Menominee Tribe.</i></u> Treaty with Menominee Indian Tribe at Cedar Point, on Fox River, near Green Bay in the Territory of Wisconsin. Menominee nation cedes to the United States approximately 4 million acres.
1835	Land speculator, General Wooster Harrison, purchases land, briefly settled as "Wisconsin City" (current day City of Port Washington)
1832	A survey of Wisconsin is conducted between 1832 and 1866 by the federal General Land Office. This work establishes a township, range and section grid: the pattern upon which land ownership and land use is based.
1832	Treaty with the Menominee at Green Bay – outlines difficulties with timeliness of consent of all parties involved, including U.S. Senate, Menominee, and NY Indians.

1831	February 8 - Treaty with the Menominee at city of Washington, ceding land to U.S. government for the benefit of "the New York Indians". Treaty describes land along Lake Michigan to Milwaukee River. February 17 – Treaty at Washington; amended some language of Feb 8 th treaty.
1830	U.S. Indian Removal Act - Native Peoples forced to move west of Mississippi River
1825	Treaty signed at Prairie des Chiens in the territory of Michigan with the Sioux and Chippewa, Sacs and Fox, Menominie, Ioway, Sioux, Winnebago, and a portion of the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawattomie, Tribes: to "promote peace among these tribes, and to establish boundaries among them and the other tribes who live in their vicinity....in the territory of Michigan" Article 8: "... It is understood that the general claim of the Menominies is bounded on the north by the Chippewa country, on the east by Green Bay and lake Michigan extending as far south as Millwaukee river, and on the West they claim to Black River.
1817	Treaty at St. Louis between the United States of America and "chiefs and warriors" of the Menominee Tribe: "to confirm to the United States all and every cession of land heretofore made by their tribe or nation to the British, French, or Spanish government, within the limits of the United States or their territories..."
1803	Lewis & Clark Expedition followed the "Louisiana Purchase" by the U.S. government from France
1787	Northwest Ordinance (land law) – "An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States, North-West of the River Ohio" – legal framework for the westward expansion of the U.S.
1783	Northwest Territory (including current day Wisconsin) given up by British to U.S. after the American Revolution
1775 - 1783	Treaty of Paris of 1783 ends the American Revolution (Revolutionary War). The U.S. gains independence from Great Britain and is granted significant territory for westward expansion.
1776	Declaration of Independence. Indians are identified as "merciless savages": "He [King of Great Britain] has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages , whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."
1763	Treaty of Paris ends the French and Indian War, part of the global conflict between Great Britain, France, and Spain called the Seven Year War. In the U.S., these 3 nations are battling over their colonial territory. The Treaty of Paris "awards" Canada, Louisiana, and Florida to Great Britain, opening up North America to westward expansion.
1756	Beginning of the Seven Year War, a global conflict between Great Britain, France, and Spain.
1634	French explorer, Jean Nicolet, lands near current-day Green Bay. Considered the 1 st European in current-day Wisconsin.
1619	Africans captured from current-day Angola brought to British Jamestown Colony, Virginia.

1610	Jamestown – first permanent English settlement in the Americas
1608	Samuel du Champlain (1567 – 1635) – French explorer, cartographer, navigator, draftsman, diplomat. Established French settlement in New France, now Quebec City, Canada.
1530's	Jacques Cartier – French explorer into Gulf of St Lawrence; conducted some of earliest fur trading between Europeans and First Nations people.
1494	Treaty of Tordesillas (initiated by Catholic Pope) – divides known world (outside of Europe) equally between Portuguese & Spanish monarchies.
1493	“Doctrine of Discovery” expands papal bull that gives Spain permission to seize non-Christian lands belonging to people outside of Europe.
1492	Italian explorer Columbus lands on island in Atlantic Ocean, believed to be current-day San Salvador in the Bahamas.
1455	“Doctrine of Discovery”: papal bull gives Portuguese monarchy permission to seize West Africa
700 – 1200	Native Peoples, now known as Effigy Mound Builders, live in current-day Wisconsin (circa 700-1200 CE). <i>Note: Today, a group of well-preserved mounds are at Lizard Mound State Park, in Washington County, near West Bend.</i>
250 - 900	Rise of Mayan Civilization begins about 250 and lasts until about 900 C.E. At its peak, there are forty cities, each with populations between 5,000 to 50,000.
B.C.E. - BEFORE THE COMMON ERA	
~ 1,500	Beginning of Mayan civilization (current-day southern Mexico, Guatemala, northern Belize). First Mayan Peoples settle in villages and develop cultivation of corn, beans, squash.
~ 8,500	Domestication of wild plants takes place globally, including in the Americas. Corn-based agriculture occurs in Mexico; Central America; Andes in South America; & eastern North America.
~ 10,500	Humans enter current-day Wisconsin following northward retreat of glacial ice.