

I am part of a Continuing Education group that is spending nine months looking at how we can live into the decision of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's decision to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery. The Doctrine of Discovery is a principle of international law dating from the late 15th century. It has its roots in a papal decree issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 that specifically sanctioned and promoted the conquest, colonization, and exploitation of non-Christian territories and peoples.

At our morning worship service this past Saturday, we used part of the liturgy referenced below. This prayer was a part of it – Affirmation of God's past action, our disregard for this plan, and prayer for the renewal of God's intent for creation.

Creator, you bent the earth like a bow  
    Until it was one, round, shining planet.  
At your word the land was drawn into mountains and deserts,  
    Forests and plains;  
    The waters were gathered together into rivers, lakes and seas.  
Many times, when people crossed these seas from other lands  
    They broke the circle of your creation  
    By their greed and violence  
        And they shattered the lives of others.  
Creator, renew the circle of the earth  
    And turn the hearts of all people to one another; That they and all the earth  
    May live and be drawn toward you  
    Through the power of your Son,  
    Who lives with you and the Holy Spirit  
    In the circle of the Trinity, forever One. **AMEN**

*(A prayer to the Four Directions written by Pastor Joan Conroy, Oglala Sioux)*

*From: Native American Liturgical Celebration*

Written and Compiled by: ©Kelly Sherman-Conroy (Oglala Sioux Tribe)

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Deaconess Diane Kaufmann