RESOLUTION # 2026-02

Sacred Traditions of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Peoples

Resolved, That the 60th Diocesan Convention affirm that the sacred ceremonies, languages, songs, and spiritual traditions of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples are living expressions of these peoples' relationship with the Creator, worthy of honor and protection; reject any claim that these traditions stand opposed to the Christian faith or that following Jesus requires their surrender; and acknowledge that the Church has too often presumed to judge Indigenous traditions rather than approach them with humility and respect; and be it further

Resolved, That the 60th Diocesan Convention commit that the clergy, congregations, and members of the Diocese will not denigrate, appropriate, or misuse the sacred traditions, ceremonies, or languages of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples, and will repudiate any teaching, from any pulpit, that disrespects or denigrates these traditions; and be it further

Resolved, That the 60th Diocesan Convention commit that in any action the Diocese undertakes that concerns the sacred traditions, sacred sites, or ancestral memory of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples, the Diocese will seek the guidance and approval of the Diocese's congregations on the Wind River Indian Reservation, and the appropriate Tribal authority, when necessary; and be it further

Resolved, That the 60th Diocesan Convention request that Wyoming Episcopal Justice include, within its regular reports to the Diocesan Council, an account of the work undertaken pursuant to this resolution.

Explanation

This resolution continues work the Diocese has already begun. At its 59th Annual Convention on October 11, 2025, the Diocese adopted Resolution 2025-02, repudiating the Doctrine of Discovery as *fundamentally opposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ*. In that resolution the Diocese also committed to examine its own history and to support the Indigenous peoples within its bounds in their efforts to be respected as peoples. This resolution takes up that commitment and carries it a step further.

Where Resolution 2025-02 repudiated a doctrine and affirmed the sovereignty and rights of Indigenous peoples, this resolution affirms the *traditions* themselves — the ceremonies, languages, songs, and spiritual life through which the Eastern Shoshone and Northern

Arapaho peoples have encountered the Creator across generations. It moves from the renunciation of a false doctrine to the honoring of the living spiritual traditions of the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples.

Missionaries of the Episcopal Church came to the Wind River Reservation seeking to convert the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples to Christianity, and to that end sought to replace their languages, ceremonies, and spiritual life with our own. The Episcopal Church founded and operated the Shoshone Episcopal Mission Boarding School for Shoshone girls near Fort Washakie, the Wind River Industrial School for Indian Children, and St. Michael's Mission at Ethete — part of the wider system of federal and church-run boarding schools through which Native children across this country were compelled to abandon their languages, their dress, and the traditions of their people. This resolution is offered in that light: the Diocese that once undermined these traditions now pledges to honor them, and to stand with the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho peoples in protecting them.

Fiscal impact: none. This resolution requires no budget allocation.

This resolution was submitted by the Rev. Mary Erickson, St. John's Jackson.

Approved as to Form:

Elizabeth B. Lance
Chancellor

03/10/26
Date

Signature: Beth Lance (Oct 3, 2026 14:58:42 MDT)

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Final Audit Report 2026-10-03

Created:	2026-10-03
By:	Genie Osburn (genie@episcopalwy.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAPPe3FScw68B7stYTG5aDvKQjI0AIWNfA

"RESOLUTION 2026-02" History

Document created by Genie Osburn (genie@episcopalwy.org)
2026-10-03 - 8:48:39 PM GMT

Document emailed to Beth Lance (elizabeth@lanceandhall.com) for signature
2026-10-03 - 8:48:44 PM GMT

Email viewed by Beth Lance (elizabeth@lanceandhall.com)
2026-10-03 - 8:58:09 PM GMT

Document e-signed by Beth Lance (elizabeth@lanceandhall.com)
Signature Date: 2026-10-03 - 8:58:42 PM GMT - Time Source: server - Signature Appearance Selected: MOBILE_DRAW

Agreement completed.
2026-10-03 - 8:58:42 PM GMT