

**Resolution to Change the Racially Demeaning Name  
of the  
Washington National Football League Team**

WHEREAS, all human beings are created in the image of God (Genesis 1: 27);

WHEREAS, Jesus calls us to love one another as he has loved us (John 15: 12-17);

WHEREAS, Paul admonishes us to work for peace and mutual upbuilding (Romans 14: 18-19);

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ is committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination<sup>1</sup>;

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ adopted at General Synod 18 (1991) a resolution condemning negative stereotyping of Native Americans<sup>2</sup>;

WHEREAS, the use of racist imagery is an affront to basic human rights, undermines basic human dignity, and has a negative impact upon self image, self awareness, and self esteem<sup>3</sup>;

WHEREAS, the use of racist language and stereotypes continues to exploit and degrade Native American culture;

WHEREAS, the abuse of Native American symbols, such as the headdress and sacred pipe, for entertainment and profit is insensitive, insulting, and an affront to Native American spirituality and is, therefore, unacceptable;

---

<sup>1</sup> United Church of Christ General Synod 18 Resolution, July 1991, "Negative Stereotyping of Native Americans."

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "The Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Mascot," Michael A. Friedman, Ph.D., October 16, 2013.

## R-1

30 WHEREAS, not only many professional, semi-professional, amateur, collegiate,  
31 and high and grade school sports teams throughout the United States but also  
32 (and particularly egregiously) the highly visible professional football team located  
33 in our nation’s capital still employs racially derogatory and demeaning symbols,  
34 mascots, and names;

35

36 WHEREAS, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines “redskin” as a “usually  
37 offensive” term to describe American Indians and this term, when used in  
38 reference to Native American cultures and people, has a history of use as a  
39 pejorative and insulting name<sup>4</sup>;

40 WHEREAS, the term “redskins” would not properly be used by a person when  
41 visiting the home of a Native American and should not be used to market a  
42 professional sports team;

43

44 WHEREAS, the use of the term “Redskins” for the team mascot and nickname of  
45 the Washington National Football League team is offensive and hurtful to many  
46 Native Americans and causes direct harmful effects to the public health and well  
47 being of the Native American population<sup>5</sup>; and

48

49 WHEREAS, every major Native American organization, along with hundreds of  
50 clergy, churches, civil rights organizations, media outlets, sports writers and  
51 journalists, authors, and elected officials (including the President of the United  
52 States), has voiced support for changing the team name;

53

54 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Central Atlantic Conference calls upon the  
55 National Football League’s Washington franchise to change its team name and to  
56 refrain from the use of any images, mascots, or behaviors that are or could be  
57 deemed harmful or demeaning to Native American cultures or peoples;

58

---

<sup>4</sup> “Resolution on the Washington, D.C. Football Team Name,” adopted December 12, 2013, by The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (with UCC as signatory).

<sup>5</sup> Michael A. Friedman.

**R-1**

59 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Central Atlantic Conference will communicate  
60 in writing this resolution to the owner of the Washington Football League team,  
61 Daniel Snyder, and to the NFL Commissioner, Roger Goodell;

62

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Central Atlantic Conference will communicate  
64 this resolution to the clergy, churches, and members in its conference and will use  
65 other social media to publicize these concerns;

66

67 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Central Atlantic Conference will communicate  
68 this resolution to the national office of the United Church of Christ with the hope  
69 that it, in turn, will add its voice and inform the wider church;

70

71 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that individual churches and members of the Central  
72 Atlantic Conference are urged to communicate their concerns regarding this  
73 matter to both the Washington National Football League team and the National  
74 Football League by writing to:

75 Daniel Snyder	Roger Goodell
76 Owner	Commissioner

77

78 Redsk*ns Park	National Football League
79 21300 Redsk*ns Park Drive	280 Park Avenue 15 <sup>th</sup> Floor
80 Ashburn, VA 20147-6100	New York, NY 10017
81 703-726-7000	212-450-2000

82

83 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that members and churches of the Central Atlantic  
84 Conference are urged to join a boycott of games played by the Washington  
85 National League Football team and not wear, display, or purchase any items with  
86 the Washington National League Football team logo until the name changes;

87

88 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Central Atlantic Conference supports the  
89 Oneida Indian “Change the Mascot” campaign and will contact its staff to  
90 determine the best means of support and solidarity; and

91

## R-1

92 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Central Atlantic Conference calls upon other  
93 sports teams to eradicate the use of team names, images, mascots, and behaviors  
94 that are or could be deemed harmful or demeaning to Native American cultures  
95 or people.

96

97

## 98 REFERENCES

99

100 United Church of Christ General Synod 18 Resolution, July, 1991, "Negative  
101 Stereotyping of Native Americans"

102

103 "Negative Stereotyping As It Relates to the Native American Indian – A Position  
104 Paper for the United Church of Christ," developed and published by the Racial  
105 Justice Program of the UCC Board for Homeland Ministries, Juanita Helpfrey,  
106 Secretary for Racial Justice Programs, December 1, 1991

107

108 Position Paper of the United Church of Christ, "Negative Stereotypes, Logos and  
109 Imagery of 'Chief Wahoo/Cleveland Indians'," prepared for the Task Force to  
110 Strategize Legal Aspects, March 25, 1998

111

112 "No More Racist Sports Names!" by Juanita Helpfrey, November 2000, for *United*  
113 *Church of Christ News*

114

115 "The Harmful Psychological Effects of the Washington Football Mascot," by  
116 Michael A. Friedman, Ph.D., October 16, 2013

117

118 "Overture: Stereotyping Native American Names and Symbols," by the  
119 Presbyterian Church (USA), to be presented at its June 14-21, 2014, General  
120 Assembly (following on its 1999 GA resolution that called attention to the  
121 stereotyping of Native Americans in U.S. culture)

122

## R-1

123 “Resolution on the Washington, D.C. Football Team Name,” adopted December  
124 12, 2013, by The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights (with the UCC  
125 as signatory)

126

127 “Resolution Calling on the National Football League to End the Use of the  
128 Washington D.C. Racially Offensive Slur Team Mascot Name,” passed by the  
129 United South and Eastern Tribes (USET) – [USET Resolution No. 2014:015  
130 (October 31, 2013)]

131

132 ChangeTheMascot.org website of the Oneida Nation and related press releases

133

134 “Sacking the ‘Redsk\*ns’: Just Because Racism is ‘Tradition’ Doesn’t Make it  
135 Right,” by Peggy Flanagan, *Sojourners*, February, 2014, pp. 10-11

136

137 Encounter Gospel News: “DC Clergy Join Push to Change Redskins Name,” by Erik  
138 Brady, *Religion News Service*, October 28, 2013

139

140 **This resolution has been endorsed by the Central Atlantic Conference Board**  
141 **of Directors**

142