

# Proposed Business Resolution for General Assembly 2016

## Thanksgiving Day Reconsidered

### **Background:**

The Ballou-Channing District has submitted the Business Resolution "Thanksgiving Day Reconsidered."

### **Business Resolution:**

WHEREAS the year 2020 marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the ship "Mayflower" in the region that is now known as New England; and

WHEREAS concern has been expressed by Native American tribal leaders, by human rights advocates, by environmental justice advocates, and by others, about the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the colonization of New England; and

WHEREAS several of the New England congregations that were established during the 1600s continue today as Unitarian Universalist congregations; and NOTING the role of Unitarian Universalists in developing the holiday that is known as "the American Thanksgiving Day"; and

NOTING the desire of Unitarian Universalists to work for peace and justice for all of the world's people.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this General Assembly encourages all Unitarian Universalists to enter a time of education, careful reflection, and healing, for the years 2016-2021. We ask that special attention be given to the suffering, indignity, and loss that native peoples have suffered since the early 1600s; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly asks the President of the Unitarian Universalist Association to report to the 2017 General Assembly on national, tribal, and congregational plans for both the 400th anniversary of the "Mayflower" voyage and the 400th anniversary of the first harvest festival in Plymouth Colony; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this General Assembly asks the President of the Association to work with congregations, districts, camps, and theological schools, to make recommendations for the Americans who wish to observe what is often called "the first Thanksgiving Day in America"; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we encourage Unitarian Universalists to work with all of the religious groups that trace their religious roots to the Pilgrims and the Puritans. When we confront the past that we share with others, we ask for wisdom with charity as we try to better understand the people and the environment of the 1600s. To prepare for the future, we must make peace with our past. As we approach the Plymouth Colony quadricentennial dates, we ask for religious education programs that acknowledge the Radical Reformation and the religious Dissenters and Separatists of the 1600s. The story of religious Dissenters and Separatists is part of our Unitarian Universalist story and their influence is still with us. We ask for religious education programs that affirm the spiritual wisdom of Native American leaders. In today's world, we know that we are part of an interdependent web of all existence. With this awareness in mind, we ask for a time of truth and reconciliation for all Americans for the years 2016-2021.