

Disavowing the Doctrine of Discovery: Acknowledgment, Dialogue and Response

This fall, Cherokee Park United Church is hosting a two-part dialogue to take a hard look at difficult truths about the tragic treatment of Indigenous people by our state, nation and religious institutions. We start with the Doctrine of Discovery—the 15th Century papal edicts that gave explorers the legal and religious justifications to seize lands occupied by non-baptized “heathens” and to use force to convert or enslave them. We finish by looking at how the Doctrine of Discovery’s legacy is still present today.



Father Hennepin “discovering” St. Anthony Falls hangs in the Minnesota Governor’s Reception Room.

The Series will be at Cherokee Park United Church 371 W. Baker St. (St. Paul’s West Side)

Monday, Oct. 13, 7–9:15 p.m.

On Indigenous People’s Day, we will host a public screening of the **documentary film *Doctrine of Discovery***, presented by filmmaker Sheldon Wolfchild of the Lower Sioux Indian Community. The film will be followed by small group dialogues. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. (Film is appropriate for junior high school aged youth and up.)

Tuesday, Oct. 28, 7–9:15 p.m.

We will have a panel discussion exploring how the Doctrine of Discovery is still present today followed by small group dialogue. Panelists include: Perry Altendorfer, historian for the Mendota Mdewakanton Community; Nancy Victorin-Vangerud, Hamline University Chaplin; Sharon Goens-Bradley, Healing Justice Program Director for the Twin Cities Office of the American Friends Service Committee; and Mauro Souza, pastor, theologian, and writer. Former St. Paul School Board member Elona Street-Stewart will moderate the panel.

Co-Sponsors: This event is co-sponsored by the St. Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN) and Healing Minnesota Stories. Other co-sponsors are: Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area, Mendota Mdewakanton Community, Saint Matthew’s Catholic Church, West Side Citizen’s Organization, Neighborhood House, GAP (Guadalupe Alternative Program) School, Macalester Plymouth United Church Peacemakers, Mary’s Pence, and Clouds in Water Zen Center.

For more information, contact: Pastor Tim Johnson at cpuc@usfamily.net or 651-227-4275.