

1. How many reservations does Oklahoma have?

Oklahoma is not a reservation state. When Native Americans were removed to what is now Oklahoma, the government gave individual families allotments. Although there are tribal areas, they are not reservation areas like one would find in Arizona, North Dakota, or other states.

2. How do your churches worship?

Our OIMC United Methodist churches are much like other United Methodist churches. The style of worship is the same, and we use United Methodist resources like the hymnal, etc. Some tribes have customs in their churches that are unique to their tribe. Most churches will also sing their tribal songs, and some more rural churches will conduct their entire service in their language. But for the most part, the service is conducted in English.

3. Why are there separate churches for Native Americans?

OIMC churches are historic in the sense that they were the first Methodists in the state. Soon, other people came to Oklahoma and began their own churches, often taking over what the Native Americans already started. It is important for Native Americans to worship with their own people, sing their own songs, and retain what God has given them as Native people.

4. How many tribes are in Oklahoma?

There are 37 federally recognized tribes in the state. To be federally recognized, the tribe must have its own history and its own language. There are also non-federally recognized tribes in the state.

5. How many languages are among tribes?

Each tribe has its own language and culture. There are some tribes that are very similar and come from the same roots and are able to understand each other's language. Most tribes in Oklahoma originate from all over the country.

Making a Christian Difference
VIM
 in God's Backyard

OUR PURPOSE

To share the love of Jesus Christ in ways that make a Christian difference.

OUR TASK

To share our abilities in partnership with our team members and those who host our teams. As servants, we participate in accomplishing particular goals set by, and in cooperation with, our hosts — in their time and in their way.

OUR VALUES

- ☞ We will seek to glorify God in all that we do by acting on our belief that the commitment to Christ and service are inextricably bound together.
- ☞ We will be an extension ministry of the United Methodist Church in Oklahoma, responding to the specific requests of Methodist-related churches and agencies, both locally and around the world, and will partner with them in mission.
- ☞ We will equip our leaders and team members for effective ministry and seek, through our tasks and the sharing of our own time, talents, and lives, to build relationships that enhance ministry and fulfill our purpose.
- ☞ We will value and respect other cultures and ways of life and will conduct ourselves accordingly.
- ☞ We will fulfill our commitment to every mission by returning home and sharing the story of Christian difference-making.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Volunteers In Mission

Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church
 (800) 231-4166 • (405) 530-2032 • Fax (405) 525-4164
www.okumc.org/vim/ok.htm

OKLAHOMA INDIAN MISSIONARY CONFERENCE **MISSION OPPORTUNITIES**



Volunteers In Mission

VIM
 Oklahoma

ABOUT THE OIMC

The Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference was organized and established in 1844 at Riley's Chapel near Tahlequah, in the Cherokee Nation in Indian Territory. The Indian Mission was established to serve "distinctly Indian congregations" in Oklahoma. The boundaries have since been extended to include four churches in Kansas and one in Dallas, TX. Today there are 89 congregations in OIMC. The two United Methodist Annual Conferences in the state — OIMC and the Oklahoma Conference — operate as sister conferences and share the same bishop.



Many of the congregations are very small and include less than 50 members, frequently located "at the end of the road" in very rural areas. Others are small churches located in small cities and towns, while a few larger churches may be found in bigger cities. Many of the churches are historic, having been around since the tribes were forcibly removed from their homelands beginning in the early 1840s. Several OIMC churches are older than any other United Methodist churches in the state. Some Native American churches served as springboards for Oklahoma Conference churches.

In many instances, the small rural churches may have been built on parcels of land donated from family land allotments or from the tribes. In Oklahoma, rather than establishing reservations, land was allotted by the U.S. Government to individual families to build homes and raise crops. Allotments to the families of a given tribe were usually made in the same area, thus establishing the still present concentrations of certain tribes in various parts of the state, often designated as tribal nations, such as the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. Headquarters for 37 federally recognized tribes are scattered across Oklahoma.

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

- Youth Groups
- United Methodist Women
- Keenagers (those around 60 or older)
- United Methodist Men
- Sunday School Classes
- Families

- Singles Groups
- God's people from United Methodist churches and other denominations
- Groups whose members feel they can truly make a difference through personal service in mission

Skills are optional; willing hands are necessary. There will be work for every person, of any age, who is willing to participate.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The OIMC mission site you select is an opportunity for you to serve Jesus Christ and be personally involved in fulfilling a real and great need. Yours will be one of dozens of volunteer teams to serve at various Native American sites in Oklahoma. Count on having a great experience with fellow missionaries and the local people while enjoying the fellowship of the wonderful family of God.

Most of the work will be new construction or repairs for OIMC congregations that could not afford to contract the work nor do it on their own. Many sites are in beautiful rural settings. Most OIMC churches prefer to conduct their own Bible Schools, but occasionally they ask for assistance from outside their congregation. Presently, there are no medical mission opportunities in OIMC.

SITE SELECTION PROCESS

The VIM office will help you make your mission become a reality.

Decide on specific dates, or multiple choices of dates, for which your team members will be available to go. Then determine approximately how many team members you will be taking. ***Throughout this process, feel assured that the site where God wants to send you will emerge.***

With that information in hand, contact the VIM office. The staff may already have a "best match" mission site to offer your team, or the search process may be necessary. Those sites of interest will be contacted by the VIM staff for availability and additional information about the site and mission.

Once a site is selected, VIM will work with the team leader to make the necessary arrangements for travel, lodging, insurance and other needs of the team. An infrastructure will be provided for the organization of the team and preparation for the mission. This includes ensuring that the Team Leader is properly trained and qualified to assume responsibility for the team. Throughout the preparation process and the duration of the mission, the VIM office will be available as backup to the Team Leader.

TEAM FEES* AND EXPENSES

The **Team Confirmation Fee** is required to reserve mission dates and initiate processing. The amount of the fee is:
\$25 for teams originating from Oklahoma
\$50 for teams originating elsewhere

The **Team Administration Fee**, based on the formulas below, is due when your number of team members is established:

- For a mission of 3 or more days:
\$75 for a team up to 15 members
Add \$5 for each additional member
- For a mission of 1 or 2 days:
\$20 for a team up to 15 members for each day
Add \$2 for each additional member

The **Insurance Fee** for coverage required for each member is:
\$1 per team member, per day, including travel days.

Airline arrangements for teams flying in to Oklahoma, when made by VIM, are subject to a flat fee of \$50 per team.

Materials to be used at all OIMC sites requires funding from the volunteer teams. Each team must budget \$25–\$50 per team member, per work day, for materials.

Volunteers always pay their own way. This can include food, lodging, transportation and other expenses, including tools and safety apparel.

Team lodging, when arranged by VIM at local churches, is only \$3 per team member per night. Bring your own bedroll. The church kitchen and fellowship hall may be used by the team for meal preparation and serving, as well as meetings, worship and recreation.

Teams that prepare their own meals should budget approximately \$5–\$7 per person per day for groceries.

* Fees are subject to change. Please confirm fee amounts with VIM office.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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