
A Prayer Guide for the Overlooked

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Mon, May 4, 2020 at 6:29 PM



CARL SPAIN CENTER

RACE STUDIES & SPIRITUAL ACTION



Indigenous Communities

& Reservations

"[Native Americans] were promised in perpetuity federally funded health care, housing and education. And that was never funded to the level that was needed, so the level of funding per capita has been lower than every other group the government funds. The infrastructure is so crippled, and when that happens over generations, you see this intergenerational transmission of health disparities like diabetes and heart disease."

- Allison Barlow, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health



Decades of neglect and underfunding of indigenous health system's has become as evident as ever amid COVID-19.

In a recent [article](#) published by The Hill, the health disparities and underfunding that has been a reality for so many indigenous communities for so long were made abundantly clear.

"Native Americans who live on tribal lands may be uniquely susceptible to suffering severe symptoms of COVID-19, experts said. Households on tribal lands are much more likely to include three or more generations of family members. Underlying conditions that exacerbate COVID-19 are more prevalent among Native populations; they are twice as likely to suffer from respiratory illness than non-Hispanic whites, and more likely to suffer from asthma, diabetes and COPD."

Although the federal CARES Act included \$8 billion in funding for Native nations, **the largest amount ever appropriated by the federal government to tribal governments**, tribes are being forced to complete applications in order to receive this funding. This, however, is an added step in the process that individual states were not forced to complete, per The Hill. It is an added level of bureaucracy that has been a [worry](#) for many since the funding was initially announced.

Their worries were further justified when, on Friday, *"a number of Native American tribes sued the federal government in an effort to get the money flowing faster. The outcome of the lawsuits will dictate how the stimulus funds and any future relief are distributed among the 574 federally recognized tribes, tribal leaders and advocates said. But it also all but guarantees that some of the aid will remain frozen, leaving tribal citizens without critical federal assistance even as the number of virus-related deaths on some reservations eclipses that of entire states,"* per the [New York Times](#)

As we continue in our social distancing, may we not overlook our indigenous neighbors who face increased health threats due to COVID-19 and lack the funding to adequately address the pandemic's impact in their communities.



Prayer and Lament are not inaction, it's work. When we pray and lament, we do so to a sovereign, omnipotent and omniscient God. Over the next week, we encourage you to practice total stillness and silence while making your sorrow and requests known to God (Philippians 4:6-7).

Prayers for indigenous communities & reservations:

1. The Gospel would bring them comfort & hope in a time of despair.
2. Protection from the spread of the virus.
3. Access to quality and accessible healthcare for those who are sick.

4. Access to protective supplies.
5. Relief from historic health and economic disparities.
6. Access to capital and federal loan and grant programs to address urgent needs such as food deserts, testing supplies and more.
7. Speedy and favorable end to the federal lawsuits halting much needed aid to native nations.
8. Continued support and advocacy from the church and the government after the pandemic ends to address the social, medical and infrastructural needs of indigenous communities & reservations.

Prayers for yourself:

1. That the posture of your heart would be humble & empathetic towards indigenous communities & reservations & their experiences.
2. For a desire to relieve all types of suffering on earth, especially eternal suffering.
3. For opportunity to build relationships with those from indigenous communities & reservations.
4. To better love those living in indigenous communities & reservations.
5. To advocate for indigenous communities & reservations.

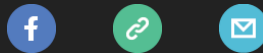


The Center aims to share its emphasis on scholarly research by providing materials, educational opportunities, and other relevant resources to any who have a desire to deepen their understanding on race and its function in the church and broader society. Each prayer guide we will include recommended resources that we believe will help inform the work we are doing at the Carl Spain Center and the work you are doing with us.

- On Lament: [Dare to Hope in God](#)

- [Navajo & Hopi Families COVID-19 Relief Fund](#)
- [After New York and New Jersey, the place with the highest coronavirus infection rate in the U.S. is the Navajo Nation](#)
- [COVID-19 Across the Navajo Nation](#)
- [Native American Radio Network](#)
- [Native America Calling Podcast](#)

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