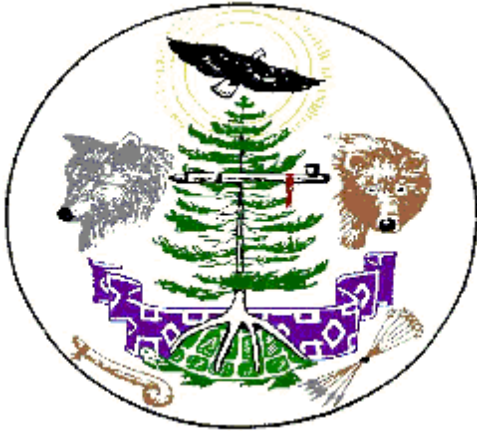


Oneida Thanksgiving Prayer For the Councils of the Church



One of the oldest Native American Episcopal Churches in the United States is on the Oneida Nation very near the village of Ashawabenon. Built in the 1800's it reflects the tradition of the Episcopal Church in its structure and Anglican architecture. The church is in an area surrounded by white birch trees and pine trees, in the midst of grass land. In Winter, the white birches stand out like tall white appendages reaching up to the sky from a blanket of ice and snow. Apostles Episcopal Church stands out in this geographical tapestry. A piece of England graphed onto native land. The church is a treasured

landmark of the tribe and many Oneida people are Episcopalians. Close to the church is a museum where you can find the following Oneida Thanksgiving prayer, a prayer that seems to have an Anglican flavor to it. The prayer is said at the beginning of every council meeting of the governing council of the Oneida Nation and at the beginning or ending of other meetings held with Oneida people.

ONEIDA THANKSGIVING PRAYER

Now all listen to the words that come before all else. We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to one another. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to our mother the earth, for the life she gives. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks for the first fruits that grow, the strawberry. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks for all medicines. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to the tobacco we use to send our messages to the Creator. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds and give thanks to all the different kinds of animals that help sustain our lives. So be in our minds.

We bring together our minds and give thanks to all the different trees, the maple is the most special of all. So be in our minds.

We bring together our minds and give thanks to all the waters, great and small. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds and give thanks to all the different birds that entertain us. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds and give thanks to the forces that work together with the earth, our grandfathers the thunders, who bring the rain to renew the earth. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to our eldest brother the sun who gives us light and warmth. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to our grandmother moon, she controls all of the life cycles on earth. So be it our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to the stars that are our relatives, they beautify the sky. So be it in our minds,

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to the four messengers who give us guidance. So be it in our minds.

We bring together our minds as one and give thanks to the Creator of all, for it is the Creator that has brought us together as one. So be it in our minds.