

Why We Are Going to Sand Creek in June



For those United Methodists who may wonder why we are doing something with the 2014 Annual Conference we have never done in the history of the Conference, here are some reasons why it is imperative that we make the trip to the site of the Massacre.

- Most importantly we have been invited by the descendants of the Massacre to join them in a trip to this sacred place.
- On the 150 anniversary of the Massacre we are reminded that the government censured John Chivington and took his commission and the Territorial Governor, John Evans, was removed from office for his complicity in the Massacre, the Methodist Church did nothing to Chivington, a Presiding Elder (District Superintendent) and he was allowed to continue his ministry.
- While we cannot repair the pain our church has created, if we do not acknowledge it, we will perpetuate the pain by our unwillingness to own what happened.
- Sometimes the right thing to do is not the most convenient. The time has come for us to do the right thing.
- If we truly wish to remember Sand Creek and the 150th anniversary we will need to visit the place where the Massacre happened. It becomes much more real to us if we can actually visit the site. People who have actually visited the Oklahoma City Muir Building site or the Shanksville field where Flight 93 crashed are brought to the point of a silent witness. Such an emotion is evoked as one stands at the Sand Creek site. We will be inspired by the experience.
- This is a great opportunity to learn something about ourselves, our church, and our connection to each other. We will be changed by the experience.
- There is no way to overestimate the value of this event. It will be emotionally draining and deeply moving to stand with the Sand Creek Massacre descendants to experience their grace filled welcome to their sacred space.

(By Charles Schuster, Chair of the Task Force on the Acts of Repentance, Rocky Mountain Conference)