Presbyters Vote to Change the Name of The Presbytery of Blackhawk

By a solid three-fourths majority, an assembly of Presbytery clergy and elders voted on Tuesday, September 9 to change the name of Blackhawk Presbytery. The decision came after considerable opportunities were offered to study, question, learn and jointly discern whether it was appropriate for the Presbytery to continue to use the name of the great 19th century Sauk leader, Black Hawk.

The motion approved by the assembly was: "Based on the completed research and the consensus reached during the discernment activities, we move that the name of Blackhawk Presbytery be changed."

In addition to many thoughtful remarks to the assembly, the following rationale were cited:

- In 1972 when the name was chosen, members of the presbytery were not cognizant of or considerate of the historical context or the cultural context of the name Blackhawk.
- In 2025, we as members now understand that Blackhawk is the name of a war during which men, women, and children were mercilessly slaughtered.
- In 2025, we understand the name of Black Hawk, a revered leader of the Sauk tribe, is considered holy.
- In 2025, we see it as a matter of social justice to give back the name that never truly belonged to our presbytery.
- In 2025, we seize the opportunity to choose a new name that reflects who we are and who we will be.
- In 2025, with most of our materials in an electronic format, the cost of changing the name will be minimal.

Resources related to these efforts are available on the LANA page of the Presbytery's website, (blackhawkpresbytery.org/land-and-name-acknowledgement/).

Seeking Our New Name

In order to hear as many voices as possible, the following process will be used to choose a new name for our Presbytery. All clergy members and church members from Blackhawk churches are invited to participate in the early rounds of voting to narrow suggestions until the finalists are presented for voting at the November 18 assembly meeting (by commissioners only). Google ballot links will be sent to those members on the Connections mailing list. There will be an opportunity to rank your choices. If you, or someone you know, would like to participate who is not currently on this list, they may simply send their email address to Jeannette at jeannette@blackhawkpresbytery.org (or sign up online at: https://blackhawkpresbytery.org/e-newsletters/)

WEEK #1 (Sept. 14-20) **Receive Name Suggestions**

All suggestions advance to Week #2

WEEK #2 (Sept. 21-27) **Vote for Your Top 8 Names**

Names receiving 3+ votes advance to Week #3

WEEK #3 (Sept. 27-Oct. 4) **Vote for Your Top 6 Names**

The top 6 names advance to Week #4

WEEK #4 (Oct. 5-11) **Vote for Your Top 4 Names**

The top 4 names advance to Week #5

WEEK #5 (Oct. 12-18) **Announce the Top 4 Names and Request Comments**

All comments will be compiled

WEEK #6 to #10 (Oct. 19-Nov. 18) Report will be prepared for the Presbytery Council, published for the entire Presbytery and presented for action on November 18.