The 39 Tribes and Nations in Oklahoma

Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Indians
Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town
Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Caddo Nation of Oklahoma
Cherokee Nation
Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
Comanche Nation
Delaware Nation
Delaware Tribe of Indians
Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma
Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
Kaw Nation
Kiakiaa Tribal Town
Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma
Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
Miami Tribe of Oklahoma
Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Osage Tribe
Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma
Otoe-Missouria Tribe of Indians
Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Ponca Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
Quapaw Tribe of Indians
Sac & Fox Nation
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Seneca-Cayuga Tribe of Oklahoma
Shawnee Tribe
The Chickasaw Nation
The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
Thlopthlocco Tribal Town
Tonkawa Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma
United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma
Wichita and Affiliated Tribes
Wichita, Keechi, Waco and Tawakoni
Wyandotte Nation

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is a Native American?
As a general principle an Indian is a person who is of some degree Indian blood and is recognized as an Indian by a tribe/village and/or the United States. There exists no universally accepted rule for establishing a person’s identity as an Indian. The criteria for tribal membership differ from one tribe to the next. To determine a particular tribe’s criteria, one must contact that tribe directly. For its own purposes, the Bureau of the Census counts anyone an Indian who declares to be such. By recent counts, there are more than 2.4 million Native Americans, including Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians.

Why are Indians sometimes referred to as Native Americans?
When referring to American Indians or Alaska Natives, it is appropriate to use the terms American Indians and Alaska Natives. These terms denote the cultural distinction between the indigenous people of the continental United States and those of Alaska. While the term “Native Americans” came into usage in the 1960s out of respect to American Indians and Alaska Natives, usage of the term has expanded to include all Native people of the United States and its territories, including Native Hawaiians and American Samoans.

What is an Indian Tribe?
An Indian tribe was originally a body of people bound together by blood ties who were socially, politically, and religiously organized, who lived together in a defined territory and who spoke a common language or dialect. In the eyes of the U.S. government a body of people as described above must be officially recognized in order to be considered a tribe.

What does the term “federally recognized” mean?
Only tribes who maintain a legal relationship to the U.S. government through binding treaties, acts of Congress, executive orders, etc., are officially “recognized” by the federal government. Once “recognized” a tribe has a legal relationship with the United States. There are currently more than 550 federally recognized tribes in the United States, including some 200 village groups in Alaska. However, there are still hundreds of tribes undergoing the lengthy and tedious process of applying for federal recognition. There are currently 39 federally recognized tribes in the State of Oklahoma.

How many Churches and Fellowships are in the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference?
The Under the Indian Removal Act, commonly known as “The Trail of Tears” whole tribes were removed from the Eastern and Southeastern states to Indian Territory. Many among these tribes were converted to Christianity through the Methodist church. They were able to rebuild their communities and with the help of missionaries organize congregations and churches in what came to be known as Oklahoma.

In what was then the Indian Mission Conference, Methodists offered a Christian ministry sensitive to the languages and cultures of more than 30 tribes. The 1972 General Conference acknowledged the importance of the Indian Mission Conference and designated it the Oklahoma Indian Missionary Conference (OIMC) with “the same rights and powers as an annual conference.”

Today the OIMC continues to minister to the needs of Native American people. The present membership is over 6,500 with 85 churches and fellowships with several of these congregations being over 150 years old. Oklahoma is home to the majority of the congregations; however we have one church in Dallas, Texas; three churches in Kansas and one fellowship in Kansas City, Missouri. Presently there are two districts, Northern and Southern, with the conference headquartered in Oklahoma City.