

2019

JUNETEENTH

Celebrate Freedom

JUNE 19

Resources



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June 2019

Dear Beloved Community:

“Every year we must remind successive generations that this event triggered a series of events that one by one defines the challenges and responsibilities of successive generations. That’s why we need this holiday.” Al Edwards



This quote is in reference to the importance of Juneteenth. It is especially significant this year. 2019 marks the 400th Anniversary since the arrival of 20 enslaved Africans in Jamestown, Virginia. From that date in 1619, Black people through their actions, their inventions, their labor, their protest, their organizing – have changed not only American history, but world history.

This resource includes worship resources, history and additional resources that can be used within your community and congregation.

Blessed to be a blessing to you,

Sheila P Spencer

Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration of the ending of slavery. “From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19th as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond. Today Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement. It is a day, a week, and in some areas a month marked with celebrations, guest speakers and family gatherings. It is a time for reflection and rejoicing. It is a time for assessment, self-improvement and for planning the future. In cities across the country, people of all races, nationalities and religions are joining hands to truthfully acknowledge a period in our history that shaped and continues to influence our society today.

Why We Celebrate Juneteenth...

Juneteenth represents the joy of freedom – the chance for a new beginning.

Unless we expose the truth about the African-American slave experience, Americans won’t truly be free.

Never must we forget our ancestors’ endurance of one of the worst slave experiences in human history.

Every American has benefitted from the wealth blacks created through over 200 years of free labor and Juneteenth allows us to acknowledge that debt.

TTo encourage every former slave-holding state to follow Texas’ (and Oklahoma’s) example and make Juneteenth a state holiday.

Everyday in America, blacks are reminded of the legacy of slavery. Juneteenth counters that by reminding us of the promise of deliverance.

Even on the journey to discover who we are, Juneteenth allows us to reflect on where we’ve been, where we’re at and where we’re going as a people.

N“Never give up hope” is the legacy our enslaved ancestors left. It was this legacy that produced black heroism in the Civil War and helped launch the modern civil rights era. It is this legacy we celebrate.

TTo proclaim for all the world to hear, that human rights must never again become subservient to property rights.

HHistory books have only told a small part of the story; Juneteenth gives us a chance to set the record straight.

Freedom is always worth celebrating!

*A portion of The Black Church and Juneteenth
by Dr. Charles Taylor*

What is Juneteenth?

June 19th is perhaps the oldest holiday celebrated by African Americans; it is the grandfather of all such observances. Juneteenth is a cultural observance. June 19, 1865 marks the date that all slaves in the United States were officially made “free.”

Who developed Juneteenth?

Freed slaves in the state of Texas created and developed the June 19th celebration in 1866. Legend has it that the name Juneteenth was derived from a little girl who could not pronounce “June 19.” She said “Juneteenth” and the name caught on and was used throughout the state of the Texas.

The Church and Juneteenth

From the establishment of the first black church in America, throughout slavery and beyond, the church has been the foundation of the black community. During the horrific days of slavery it provided relief and nourishment for the soul with its promise of a better life after death. The church gave the slave dignity and assured him he was equal in the eyes of God. Despite his earthly condition he was loved and valued as a person of God no matter how difficult his burden became or unbearable his suffering was. Jesus, who too suffered, prepared a place of rest for him when his time was up on earth. It was this religious faith that sustained the slave and enabled him to endure his bondage.

The slave owner was able to observe a glimpse of this faith as he heard the incredible music that seemed to come out of the slave's soul while toiling in the field. If the slave owner had ventured into a slave church, his strong defense of slavery would no doubt have been weakened. He would have seen the people he considered inferior and sub-human without the defensive masks they wore in the fields; in their churches, enslaved men and women displayed a dignity and stateliness that survived the slave owner's dehumanizing oppression.

The church was more than a safe house. It served as a launching pad for black leadership and was involved early on in working for liberation. Many free blacks in northern churches participated in the Underground Railroad, raised money for freedmen after the Civil War, and helped keep the black community intact.

The importance of the black church cannot be overstated. It was, and perhaps still is, the single most important institution in the black community. It permitted self-expression and supported creativity at a time when it could have meant death. An example is found in the spirituals, gospel and other forms of music that helped blacks explain and endure their sojourn in America. Blacks were able to use their churches to hone organization and leadership skills useful in the economic, social and political development of their community. It's no accident that Martin Luther King, Jr., Jesse Jackson and a host of civil rights leaders got their start through the black church.

The Black Church provided a haven from the daily oppression slaves faced, but after freedom it was also the center of social activities including the sponsorship of the annual Juneteenth Celebration.

*A portion of The Black Church and Juneteenth
by Dr. Charles Taylor*

When is Juneteenth observed?

Juneteenth is officially observed on June 19; however, the celebration may last one to seven days. On this Lectionary, it is slated for celebration for January 1 and has been joined with Emancipation Proclamation Day for two reasons. First, the Emancipation Proclamation was given effect on January 1, 1863. Second, during the earliest Juneteenth celebrations the reading of the Emancipation Proclamation took center stage. Our goal is to give historical coverage to both events, understanding that Juneteenth is now almost always celebrated in June.

Litany

- Leader: Freedom: We fought for it and died for it.
- People: Freedom we have gained and there are freedoms yet to be obtained.
- Leader: We have the freedom to dream in a new year filled with possibilities, casting off old things that are too weighty to bear and old habits that hinder us.
- People: We have the freedom to embrace new hopes and new visions that are personal, communal, and worldwide. We shall not fully inhale freedom until it is breathed around the world.
- Leader: We are people of hope, undeterred, and people of faith. This is what makes us free.
- Collective: We serve the One who has made us free indeed, no turning back, no turning back.

Litany and Juneteenth from African American Lectionary Emancipation Proclamation and Juneteenth Cultural Resource Unit
Dr. Juan Floyd-Thomas

Where is Juneteenth observed?

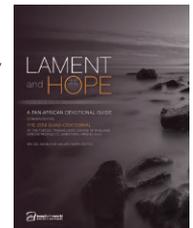
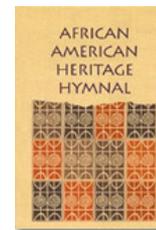
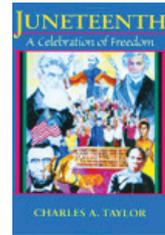
This American holiday is celebrated primarily by African Americans and was originally celebrated by freed slaves located in the state of Texas. Juneteenth is now celebrated by many throughout the world.

Why is Juneteenth observed?

Juneteenth is observed to acknowledge that all slaves within the continental United States were freed at a certain point. This celebration acknowledged the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation while also acknowledging that the slaves of the state of Texas did not receive the news until almost 2½ years after the official signing and announcement was given. Large celebrations began in 1866.

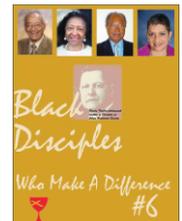
Juneteenth Resources

- **Video on Juneteenth – African American Lectionary:**
<http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/videos.html#v35>
- **History of Juneteenth and resources:** <http://www.juneteenth.com/>
- **African American Lectionary Resources:**
<http://www.theafricanamericanlectionary.org/PopupLectionaryReading.asp?LRID=305>
- **National Juneteenth Holiday Campaign.** Online location: http://nationaljuneteenth.com/Juneteenth_Holiday.html
- **Texas State Historical Association.** Online location:
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/lkj01>
- **2019-2020 Juneteenth Events – Click link for info on Juneteenth celebrations that are near you**
<https://www.everfest.com/seasonal/juneteenth-festivals>
- **Taylor, Charles A., *Juneteenth: A Celebration of Freedom*,** Greensboro, NC: Open Hand Publishing, LLC, 2002.
- ***African American Heritage Hymnal: 575 Hymns, Spirituals, and Gospel Songs*** by Rev. Dr. Delores Carpenter – General Editor, Rev. Nolan Williams – Music Editor
<https://www.giamusic.com/products/P-5400.cfm>
- ***Lament and Hope: A Pan-African Devotional Guide***
Bread for the World is pleased to announce the digital publication of the new devotional, “Lament and Hope”: A Pan-African Devotional Guide Commemorating the 2019 Quad-Centennial of the Forced Transatlantic Voyage of Enslaved African Peoples to Jamestown, Virginia (USA) that makes the connections between Bread’s work to end hunger and the history of the practice of enslavement and later, the policy of enslavement in Jamestown, Virginia. Rev. Dr. Angelique Walker-Smith is devotional guide editor and senior associate for Pan-African and Orthodox Church Engagement at Bread for the World. Disciples Minister Rev Sekinah Hamlin is one of the featured writers.
<https://www.paperturn-view.com/us/bread-for-the-world/lament-and-hope-a-pan-african-quad-centennial-devotional-guide?pid=NDM43639&v=2.2>



Additional DHM Resources

- **Black Disciples Who Make a Difference** Issue 1-5: These resources contain brief biographies of African Americans whose lives are a significant part of our Christian faith.
<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/congregations/african-american-congregational-nurture/resources/>
- **African American History Month:**
<https://www.discipleshomemissions.org/congregations/african-american-congregational-nurture/resources/african-american-history-month/>



Children’s Books Celebrating Juneteenth

- **Juneteenth for Mazie** by Floyd Cooper.
- **Juneteenth Jamboree** by Carole Boston Weatherford.
- **Juneteenth** by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson.
- **Freedom’s Gifts: A Juneteenth Story** by Valerie Wesley.
- **All Different Now: Juneteenth, the First Day of Freedom** by Angela Johnson.
- **Juneteenth: A Celebration of Freedom** by Charles Taylor.
- **The Story of Juneteenth: An Interactive History Adventure** by Steven Otfinoski.
- **Juneteenth: Freedom Day** by Muriel Miller Branch.
- **Come Juneteenth** by Ann Rinaldi.
- **Tiny’s Emancipation** by Linda Baten Johnson.
<https://coloursofus.com/10-childrens-books-celebrating-juneteenth/>

