

Resources for Celebrating Juneteenth on Sunday

Sunday closest to June 19

EXPLANATION—Why do this and Recommended Actions

History of Juneteenth

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on **June 19th** that the Union soldiers, led by **Major General Gordon Granger**, landed at **Galveston, Texas** with news that the war had ended and that the **enslaved were now free**. Note that this was **two and a half years after** President Lincoln's **Emancipation Proclamation** - which had **become official January 1, 1863**. The Emancipation Proclamation had little impact on the Texans due to the minimal number of Union troops to enforce the new **Executive Order**. However, with the **surrender of General Lee in April of 1865**, and the **arrival of General Granger's regiment**, the **forces** were finally strong enough to **influence** and **overcome the resistance**.

General Order Number 3

One of General Granger's first orders of business was to read to the people of Texas, **General Order Number 3** which began most significantly with:

"The people of Texas are informed that in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired laborer."

The **reactions to this profound news** ranged from pure **shock** to immediate **jubilation**. While many lingered to learn of this new employer to employee relationship, many left before these offers were completely off the lips of their former 'masters' - attesting to the varying conditions on the plantations and the

realization of freedom. **Even with nowhere to go**, many felt that leaving the plantation would be their first grasp of freedom. North was a logical destination and for many it represented true freedom, while the **desire to reach family members in neighboring states** drove some into Louisiana, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Settling into these new areas as free men and women brought on new realities and ***the challenges of establishing a heretofore non-existent status for black people in America***. Recounting the memories of that great day in June of 1865 and its festivities would serve as motivation as well as a release from the growing pressures encountered in their new territories. The celebration of **June 19th was coined "Juneteenth"** and grew with more participation from descendants. **The Juneteenth celebration was a time for reassuring each other, for praying and for gathering remaining family members.** Juneteenth continued to be highly revered in Texas decades later, with many former slaves and descendants making an **annual pilgrimage back to Galveston** on this date.

Juneteenth In Modern Times

Today, Juneteenth is enjoying a **phenomenal growth rate** within communities and organizations throughout the country. Institutions such as the **Smithsonian**, the **Henry Ford Museum** and others have begun **sponsoring Juneteenth-centered activities**. In recent years, a number of local and national Juneteenth [organizations](#) have arisen to take their place along side older organizations - all with the mission to **promote and cultivate knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture**.

Juneteenth today, **celebrates African American freedom and achievement**, while encouraging **continuous self-development** and **respect for all cultures**. As it takes on a **more national, symbolic and even global perspective**, the events of 1865 in Texas are not forgotten, for **all of the roots tie back** to this fertile soil from which **a national day of pride is growing**.

The **future of Juneteenth looks bright** as the number of cities and states creating Juneteenth committees continues to increase. Respect and appreciation for all of our differences grow out of exposure and working together. Getting involved and supporting Juneteenth celebrations creates new bonds of friendship and understanding among us. This indeed brightens our future - and that is the [Spirit of Juneteenth](#). **History of Juneteenth ©JUNETEENTH.com**

Shorter version:

“Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Dating back to 1865, it was on June 19th that the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. Note that this was two and a half years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation - which had become official January 1, 1863.” <https://www.juneteenth.com/history.htm>

SCRIPTURES

- Year A: Suggest keeping the first lesson Genesis 18:1-15; and the assigned Gospel as well: Matthew 9:35-10:8
- Year C: Suggest keeping the second lesson: Galatians 3:23-29), and the assigned Gospel as well: Luke 8:26-39 (Gerasene demoniac).
- Additional lesson suggestions:

From An African Prayer Book, ed. By Desmond Tutu . (NP)

- **Isaiah 43:1-2**

But now thus says the Lord,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

- **Isaiah 49:14-16**

But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me,
my Lord has forgotten me.”
Can a woman forget her nursing child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these may forget,
yet I will not forget you.
See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are continually before me.

OTHER TEXTS

- texts and resources recommended (ECLA actually: **Copyright © 2019 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**) include these two short quotations, which might be included as the additional lesson.
 - “Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world. Now I've been free, I know what a dreadful condition slavery is. I have seen hundreds of escaped slaves, but I never saw one who was willing to go back and be a slave.” ~ Harriet Tubman
 - “Liberty is meaningless where the right to utter one's thoughts and opinions has ceased to exist. That, of all rights, is the dread of tyrants. It is the right which they first of all strike down. They know its power. Thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, founded in injustice and wrong, are sure to tremble, if men are allowed to reason... Equally clear is the right to hear. To suppress free speech is a double wrong. It violates the rights of the hearer as well as those of the speaker.” ~ Frederick Douglass

SERMON SEEDS

- Juneteenth is part of our country's liberation history. If you want to know what liberation history is, read, mark and inwardly digest the struggle for freedom of this country's enslaved people.
- You know how, during the Easter Vigil we recount God's saving acts in history. Well, those saving acts didn't stop in the bible. Juneteenth represents God's saving acts in our national history.
- Juneteenth is Good News. If you want to know what it means to receive Good News, tell the story of the day when slavery finally ended in Galveston Tx. in 1865 when the last enslaved people in the country received the word that slavery was over.
- If you want to know what it means to repent and receive the good news, (what it means to be saved) think about what the end of slavery means for enslavers as well as enslaved peoples.
- Celebrating Juneteenth is a good way of understanding what we mean when we say Now and Not Yet. The Kingdom of God is now and not yet. The Beloved Community is now and not yet. Freedom is now and not yet. The freedom that came on Juneteenth was not the end it was the beginning.

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- On the Fourth of July we celebrate the birth of the nation. On Juneteenth we remember the day when the country was born again.

COLLECTS/Prayers

Canticle of Adoration St. Augustine (An African Prayer Book, Desmond Tutu, editor)

All shall be Amen and Alleluia.

We shall rest and we shall see.

We shall see and we shall know.

We shall know and we shall love.

We shall love and we shall praise.

Behold our end which is no end.

- **Collect:** Almighty and most loving God,
through your Son Jesus, who came among us as a slave,
choosing rather to serve his disciples than to be served by them;
help us in our weakness not to seek to oppress others,
nor to make peace with any form of exploitation,
but in all things earnestly and of our own free will,
to seek to serve each other following Christ's good example;
this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Liturgy to Celebrate Liberation, Barbados

(From Shore to Shore; Liturgies, Litanies and Prayers From around the world)

Confession:

**O God of our forebears, who in every generation sets us free to
live the life for which we are created,**

we confess that we have not accepted that freedom as we ought.

We have not accepted it for ourselves, neither have we set others free.

**We have enslaved our sisters and brothers through our thoughts,
our words and our actions.**

We are very sorry for our misuse of your gracious gift,

and we ask your forgiveness and your help to live in true freedom.

**For it is only when we are truly free in ourselves
that others are set free.**

Absolution:

May the God who led the slaves out of slavery into new life
lead you through his forgiving love out of your bondage,
that you may experience the joy of the eternal life
that he has given you in Christ Jesus our liberator. **Amen.**

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A Second Option for Confession:

Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

Almighty God, Source of all that is,

Giver of every good gift:

You create all people in your image
and call us to love one another as you love us.

We confess that we have failed to honor you
in the great diversity of the human family.

We have desired to live in freedom,
while building walls between ourselves and others.

We have longed to be known and accepted for who we are,
while making judgements of others based on the color of skin,
or the shape of features, or the varieties of human experience.

We have tried to love our neighbors individually
while yet benefitting from systems that hold
those same neighbors in oppression.

Forgive us, Holy God.

Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people.

Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love.

Restore us in your image, to be beloved community,
united in our diversity,

even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit,

Holy and undivided Trinity, now and forever.

Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.
Amen.

*A Second Option **POP:** (<https://mercyedu.org/juneteenth-2020-prayer-service/>)*

As we enter this Juneteenth holiday celebration, we offer prayers for ourselves and the world. That those entrusted with authority in our nation may support the changes needed in order to exercise leadership and promote healing it in an authentic, responsible, and peaceful manner, we pray:

May we accept the call to be bearers of peace.

That the fullness of justice and compassion may be extended to the victims and families who have been subjected to violence, abuse, discrimination, murder, or the threat of, we pray:

May we accept the call to be bearers of peace.

That our communities and our schools may find ways to actively participate in efforts to eliminate violence, especially violence against black and brown people, so that this country may take the lead in fostering conditions for healing racial division, we pray:

May we accept the call to be bearers of peace.

That all who gather this week to remember Juneteenth be able to freely, peaceably, and in celebration with us, remember together, we pray:

May we accept the call to be bearers of peace.

That we be courageous in living out the Gospel, we pray:

May we accept the call to be bearers of peace.

Concluding Collect:

We pray, O Lord, for change. Jesus you revealed God through your wise words and loving deeds, and we encounter you still today in the faces of those whom society has pushed to the margins. Guide us, through the love you revealed, to establish the justice you proclaimed, that all peoples might dwell in harmony and peace, united by that one love that binds us to each other, and to you. And most of all, Lord, change our routine worship and work into genuine encounter with you and our better selves so that our lives will be changed for the good of all. **Amen.**

(<https://www.archbalt.org/a-prayer-to-celebrate-juneteenth-a-light-of-hope-for-freedom-and-justice/>)

- **The Great Thanksgiving** *A Liturgy to Celebrate Liberation, Barbados*
(*From Shore to Shore; Liturgies, Litanies and Prayers From around the world*)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give *God* thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to
give you thanks, almighty and everlasting God:

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with angels
and archangels and with all the company of heaven,
who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is *he* who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Creator God, God of our mothers and fathers,
through the ages you have called our ancestors
to be faithful to your will, that you may bless them.

You called Abraham
and brought him from his father's house to a land
you had chosen, where you blessed him.
You brought hope to Sarah in her old age,

declaring once more your wondrous love
for your people in the common things of life.
When Joseph was enslaved, you were with him,
and at the appointed time you led him out of bondage
to be the prince of Egypt.

You later raised up your servant Moses,
whom you had chosen to lead your people
out of bondage in Egypt,
to receive your commandments
and declare them to your people.

From this people, you forged a mighty nation
to declare your will to the world.

Throughout the ages you continued to raise women and men
to lead your people out of various forms of bondage.

Yet we failed to be faithful to you.

We turned away from your will and neglected to follow
the path you had chosen for us.

Your Son Jesus, the Christ, came among us as flesh and blood,
showing us an example of perfect obedience,
and declaring that we were born free,
not to be enslaved by sin, but to bind ourselves to the love of God.

Through him you freed us from the power of sin;
even death itself was to be no eternal shackle for your people.

He conquered death and the grave.

In him, you have brought us out of error into truth,
out of sin into righteousness,
out of death into life.

His triumph makes us worthy to stand in your presence to give you thanks.

Therefore we ask you to hear us,

and sanctify with your Holy Spirit this bread and cup. (this needs to be edited)

[For] on the night he was betrayed he took bread,
blessed it and gave it to his disciples,

saying, "Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup of wine, and when he had blessed it, said,
"This is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you
and for *many* for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, whenever you drink it, for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, loving Creator, according to his command,
we remember his death,
we proclaim his resurrection,
we await his coming in glory,

and we ask you to look with favor on this sacrifice of praise and
thanksgiving which we bring before you.
Bless us who will share in this sacred meal,
and grant us so to be filled with your Spirit,
that our lives may be living examples of your presence in this world.

Bless and inspire us, that we may proclaim your reign in this world,
making no compromise with injustice.
Bless the church which you have left and fill it with the spirit of unity,
that those things which demonstrate the diversity of our human race
may not be used as points which divide us,
but as pillars of our unity in Christ.

We thank you for all persons who in every age
received your word and committed themselves
to the deliverance of others from bondage.
We remember those who gave their lives
for the removal of slavery from our land.

Pour out your Spirit upon the whole earth
and make it your new creation.
That with all your people

of every race, class, language and nation,
we may share the banquet you have promised;
through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
and join together in songs of everlasting praise.
Blessing and honor and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. (this may need to be edited)
Amen.

A Second Option for Eucharistic Prayer:

Enriching Our Worship Eucharistic Prayer 1

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy.

You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing (say):

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we

might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah you called us into covenant with you. You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you:

This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with [_____ and] all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**

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- ***Post Communion Prayer: Church of the Province of the West Indies***

Let us pray:

**All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, the privilege is ours to share
in the loving, healing, reconciling mission of your Son Jesus Christ, our Lord,
in this age and wherever we are. Since without you we can do no good thing.**

May your Spirit make us wise;

May your Spirit guide us;

May your Spirit renew us;

May your Spirit strengthen us;

So that we will be:

Strong in faith,

Discerning in proclamation,

Courageous in witness,

Persistent in good deeds.

This we ask through the name of the Father. Amen.

Second option for Post Communion Prayer: (Written by Revd Gemma Sampson, Diocese of Durham)

Let us pray:

Creator God,

**May we who have been strengthened by this sacrament,
strengthen those in weakness**

We who have been fed, feed those in hunger

We who have been welcomed, welcome others

We who have been seen and known, see and know the needs of others

Give us your grace to respond always in loving service

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- ***Blessing: A Liturgy to Celebrate Liberation, Barbados***
(From Shore to Shore; Liturgies, Litanies and Prayers From around the world)

May the God who has set you free from the yoke of slavery

walk with you into the realm of his glory,

that you may witness the joy of the free life in God

for which you have been created.

The blessing of God the creator, liberator and sustainer
be with you now and throughout eternity.

Amen.

Second Option for Blessing: *(A Four- Fold Franciscan Blessing by The Very Rev. Kim L. Coleman)*

And now, may God bless us with anger at injustice, oppression, exploitation of people, so that we may continue to work for justice, freedom and peace. **Amen**

May God bless us with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation and war, so that we may reach out our hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy. **Amen**

May God bless us with enough foolishness to believe that we can make a difference in this work, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done. **Amen**

And the Blessing of God Almighty, the One who creates, Redeems and Sanctifies, be upon you and all you love, this day, and forever more. **Amen.**

HYMNODY

Wade in the water

Oh, Freedom

Go Down Moses

Motherless Child

We are marching in the Light of God

Swing Lo Sweet Chariot

Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing *

*N.B. *Lift every voice* (LEVAS, Hymn 1) is sung in place (as one would the *Star-Spangled Banner*), and not as a processional or recessional. Provide an explanation in the bulletin to avoid cultural appropriation and to further better understanding of the day.

I am so Glad Jesus Lifted Me

On Jordan's Stormy banks

We Shall Overcome

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Teach Me, O Lord

Lead Me, Guide Me

ART WORK

- <https://janetmckenzie.com/> Email Ms. McKenzie at art@janetmckenzie.com or call (802) 723-4122
- This image is from MA's history, a 'watch party' waiting for emancipation:

