

**General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022
Archives' Research Report**

Resolution No.: 2022-C052
Title: Inclusion Of June 19th, "Juneteenth" In The Church's Liturgical Calendar In Recognition Of The End Of Slavery In The United States
Proposer: Southeast Florida
Topic: Church Calendar

Directly Related: (Attached)

None

Indirectly Related: (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The "direct" resolutions are attached and "indirect" resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.

C052 - Inclusion Of June 19th, "Juneteenth" In The Church's Liturgical Calendar In Recognition Of The End Of Slavery In The United States

Final Status: Not Yet Finalized

Proposed by: Southeast Florida

Requests New Interim Body: No

Amends C&C or Rules of Order: No

Has Budget Implications: No

Cost:

HiA: HB

Legislative Committee Currently Assigned: 12 - Prayer Book, Liturgy & Music

Completion Status: Incomplete

Latest House Action: N/A

Supporting Documents: No

Resolution Text

Resolved, the House of _____ concurring,

That June 19, "Juneteenth," observed on every occurrence of June 19th, be included in the Church's liturgical calendar in recognition of the end of slavery in the United States, and be it further

Resolved, that

(1) June 19th, also known as "Juneteenth" and "Freedom Day," is the only celebration of the end of slavery in the United States. Though President Lincoln had issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, the enslaved people of Texas did not learn of their freedom until June 19, 1865.

(2) June 19th is both a day of celebration and a day of repentance: celebration of the end of slavery; repentance for its existence in the United States and for the systemic racism that continues to this day.

(3) The Episcopal Church is one of the institutions that has benefitted from the institution of slavery; it is incumbent on white Episcopalians, in particular, to acknowledge and atone for this sin.

(4) Just as Genocide Remembrance Day (April 24) is included in the liturgical calendar of the Episcopal Church (Holy Women, Holy Men) calling us to stand against hatred and oppression, Juneteenth is a reminder that people of faith must have unflinching resolve in prayer and action to stand on the side of freedom and justice for all people.

And be it further

Resolved, that the following material be included in “Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints”:

This day is set aside both for celebration and repentance. It is a day of celebration because on this day in 1865 the last enslaved people in the United States learned of their freedom; and it is a day of repentance not only because they learned of their freedom two and a half years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, but also because of the history of slavery and its subsequent legacy of racism in the United States. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States.

On June 19, 1865, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the war had ended and that enslaved people were now free, two and a half years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863. The Emancipation Proclamation itself had little impact on slave-owning Texans due to the minimal number of Union troops available to enforce the new Executive Order. However, with the surrender of General Lee in April 1865, and the arrival of General Granger’s regiment, the Union forces were finally strong enough to overcome the residual resistance and proclaim freedom to the remaining enslaved people.

Slavery is rightly called “the Original Sin of the United States of America.” Though slavery was ended throughout all of the United States on December 6, 1865 with the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the ongoing sin of systemic racism continues to this day. White people and white power structures, including The Episcopal Church, have benefitted from the institution of slavery. Black people continue to experience injustice in numerous ways. Slavery gave way to Jim Crow segregation, lynchings, redlining, mass incarceration, and police brutality, among many other forms of oppression. Though the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s brought about legislative reforms for Black citizens, inequity, injustice, and systemic racism continue. These are in stark contrast to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is incumbent on the Church and each Christian fully to realize and to embody our baptismal vow to “strive for justice and peace, respecting the dignity of every human being,” committing to the work of bringing about the Beloved Community for which God created us.

Let Juneteenth be a day of celebration and also a day of repentance and atonement.

And be it further

Resolved, that the General Convention authorize for trial use the new and revised collects for commemorations as found in the Blue Book.

Add to Revised Collects and Commemorations:

Collect for Juneteenth:

(Rite I)

O God of all life and truth, whose loving care knoweth no bounds and whose will it is that all people shall live in freedom: We give thee thanks that on this day in 1865 the last enslaved people in our land learned of their freedom. Give us thy grace to repent of the sin of racism in the United States and to seek thy guidance to dismantle the systems of white supremacy it hath engendered. Give us the courage continually to work for justice and freedom for all peoples for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, in whom thou hast set us free from the bondage of sin and death; and who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

(Rite II)

O God of all life and truth, whose loving care knows no bounds and whose will it is that all people shall live in freedom: We give you thanks that on this day in 1865 the last enslaved people in our land learned of their freedom. Give us your grace to repent of the sin of racism in the United States and to seek your guidance to dismantle the systems of white supremacy it has engendered. Give us the courage continually to work for justice and freedom for all peoples for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, in whom you have set us free from the bondage of sin and death; and who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Psalm

Lessons

82: 1-5, 8

Exodus 6: 5-8

Psalm 146: 1-2, 5-10

Luke 4: 14-21

