



City of Mercer Island, Washington

Proclamation

WHEREAS, each year, June 19 commemorates the traditional observance of the end of slavery in the United States and is called "JUNETEENTH" combining the words June and Nineteenth.

President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, declaring the slaves in the Confederate territory free, paving the way for the passing of the 13th Amendment which formally abolished slavery in the United States of America. Word about the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation was delayed some two- and one-half years, until June 19, 1865, when Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and announced the end of both the Civil Wars and slavery, by stating: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free."

The following year, the first official Juneteenth celebrations took place in Texas and have continued across the United States for over 150 years.

On this day, people in communities across the country come together to acknowledge the painful history and lasting, systemic impact of slavery and racial injustice in the United States.

Governor Jay Inslee signed House Bill 1016 on May 13, 2021 declaring Juneteenth a new legal State Holiday, effective in 2022. President Joe Biden signed legislation that made Juneteenth a federal holiday in June 2021.

Juneteenth is an opportunity educate ourselves on the experience of African Americans throughout history, and to recommit to the goal of creating a more equal and just society.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Salim Nice, Mayor of the City of Mercer Island, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2023 as

JUNETEENTH

APPROVED, this 6th day of June 2023.

Mayor Salim Nice

Proclamation No. 311

