

Zion Lutheran Church, 15 S. 4th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110
www.zionharrisburg.org / office@zionharrisburg.org / 717-234-4064
WOW (Worship On Wednesday) 12:10pm
JUNETEENTH
June 19, 2024
SERVICE OF WORD & PRAYER

Juneteenth is a holiday that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. It recalls how the states of Louisiana and Texas heard the news that President Abraham Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863. Slavery continued in those two states for more than two years after the proclamation was signed because the word had yet to travel there. Texas and Louisiana finally got the good news on June 19, 1865. Former slaves broke out in spontaneous celebration. These were dangerous times. Even in the face of resistance and threat, the formerly enslaved Africans found ways to give voice to the wide range of thoughts and emotions at the announcement of the end of legalized slavery in the United States of America.

Welcome & Announcements

Confession and Assurance of Pardon

Called, gathered, enlightened and sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God, we worship in the name of God the Father, Son, + and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Let us come humbly before God and our brothers and sisters in the faith, confessing our sins, known and unknown, trusting in God's gracious word of forgiveness.

(Silence for self-reflection and examination)

Holy God who brings life out of death and transforms the whole creation with a Word, forgive our disobedience and breathe on us the Spirit of your righteousness.

Free us from the power of sin, death, and the devil in our lives; renew us with your loving Spirit as you bring us from death to sin to life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Make us your instruments of peace and love in the world and free us from all that seeks to enslave us, trusting that your will for us is that we would be free to live fully into your mercy and grace. Amen.

In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake, God forgives you your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Prayer

Holy and righteous God, you created us in your image. Grant us grace to contend fearlessly against evil. Help us, like those of generations before us who resisted the evil of slavery and human bondage. Help us to use our freedoms to bring justice among people and nations everywhere, to the glory of your Holy name through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sankofa

The West African spiritual proverb and teaching reminds us to “Go back and fetch it”. Taking hold of our past, our history in such a way that it becomes nourishment and guidance for journeying into our future.

“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

Scripture Readings

Response to Scripture Readings

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Exodus 3:7-9

⁷ Then the LORD said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, ⁸ and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ⁹ And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them.

Romans 12:15

¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

Luke 4: 16-21

¹⁶ And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. ¹⁷ And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives

and recovering of sight to the blind,

to set at liberty those who are oppressed,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.” ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

Silence to reflect on the readings and to prepare for a time of prayer.

Prayers of the People

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son. Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred that infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unites us in bonds of love; and, through our struggle and confusion, work to accomplish your purposes on earth; so that, in your good time, every people and nation may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Out of the darkness we cry to you, O God. Enable us to find in Christ the faith to trust your care even in the midst of pain. Assure us that we do not walk alone through the valley of the shadow, but that your light is leading us into life. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant Christ's peace and reassurance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination by the Holy Spirit. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, call us into a deeper relationship to be your church for the sake of the world. Help us to see with new eyes the injustices within church and society. Call us to have a loving heart that respects and uplifts the humanity and dignity of every person. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Additional petitions offered - spoken and/or in silence.

Heavenly Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may never forget you, but remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing & Dismissal

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Go out into the world in the peace of Christ; have courage; hold onto what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Thanks be to God.**

Resources for this service include the following:

Adapted from SOWeR Site - © 2021 Sola Publishing: www.solapublishing.com
(permission granted to active subscribers to reproduce this sheet for local congregational use)

Copyright © 2019 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This document may be reproduced for use in your congregation as long as the copyright notice appears on each copy. This resource may be used in whole or adapted based on your local traditions. Additional assembly song may reflect the theme and text of the day.