

Juneteenth

Juneteenth is short for June 19th (nineteenth). It is a federal holiday in the United States that commemorates African Americans slaves becoming free. It became federal holiday in 2021. Because it's a federal holiday, if it falls on a weekend day (Saturday or Sunday), it will be observed on the closer weekday (Friday or Monday).

June 19, 1865 was the day that federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas which led to slaves being freed. In December 1865, slavery became illegal when the 13th Amendment was adopted.

Slavery in the United States

In the 1700s, European settlers began capturing and bringing millions of men and women from African to work as slaves in North America. They worked in fields on plantations that grew tobacco, cotton, and other plants. There were many slaves in the southern part of the United States. They were treated horribly. They were beaten, raped, and forbidden to learn how to read and write. Families could be separated if different family members were sold to different owners. When slaves tried to get an education or fight against their oppressors, slave owners became afraid and abused them even more.

Abolitionist Movement

Abolish means to end something, and an abolitionist is a person who tries to end something. This word is often used for people who tried to end slavery. The Abolitionist Movement in the United States was a plan to end slavery. The movement was led by freed former slaves and by white supporters. One of the most famous people during this time was Frederick Douglas who was a freed Black man. Slaves tried to travel north where slavery was not legal in some parts. The Underground Railroad was transportation where people such as Harriet Tubman guided escaped slaves to the north where they would be free.

The United States Civil War

The Civil War in the United States was a war that was fought within a country and not with another country. The United States was divided. Slavery was one of the issues that made the states in the United States divide.

The Civil Rights Movement to Today

After slavery became illegal, racism and hatred persisted in the United States with white supremacist hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. There was segregation which was separating groups of people because of their race. For example, Black and white children also had to attend different schools. During segregation, there was no equality because what was given to Black Americans was never as good as what was given to white Americans. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement fought against the prejudice that Black Americans were still experiencing. One of the leaders of this movement was Martin Luther King, Jr. Today, racism is still an issue, and laws and policies continue to change as old problems remain and new problems emerge.