

Proclamation

City of Edmonds • Office of the Mayor

JUNETEENTH DAY OF OBSERVANCE, 2023

- WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, which directed, "...all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, henceforward, and forever free"; and
- WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation did not instantly free enslaved peoples because it only applied to places under Confederate control and not to border states or rebel areas under Union control that enslaved people; and
- WHEREAS, Juneteenth commemorates the day on June 19, 1865, when enslaved Black and African Americans in Texas were told by Major General Gordon Granger that their 246 years of enslavement had ended; and
- WHEREAS, news of the end of enslaved peoples did not reach the frontier areas of the United States until months after the conclusion of the Civil War, more than 2 ½ years after President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863; and
- WHEREAS, enslaving people was not officially abolished until the ratification of the 13th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States in December 1865; and
- WHEREAS, Juneteenth is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of enslaving people in the United States; and
- WHEREAS, Juneteenth symbolizes for many Blacks and African Americans what the Fourth of July does for all Americans – liberty, freedom, and justice for all; and
- WHEREAS, Juneteenth is a day for us to reflect on the suffering caused by enslavement, acknowledge the evils of hatred and discrimination, and commit to being allies of our Black and African American friends, family, and neighbors; and
- WHEREAS, Africans who were enslaved left a legacy of determination, strength, heroism, and hope, and Juneteenth is a time for Blacks and African Americans and their fellow Americans to celebrate and honor this legacy; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Edmonds recognizes the history of African American and Black people, including the obstacles placed before them through institutionalized racism, and values their heritage, culture, achievements, and contributions; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Edmonds commends organizations such as the Snohomish County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Communities of Color Coalition, the Lift Every Voice Legacy, Snohomish County Black Heritage Society, the City of Edmonds Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Commission, the Edmonds School District, and others for their continued efforts to secure equity, inclusion and equal rights in all facets of American life and ensure opportunity for all; and
- WHEREAS, in 2021 the Washington State Legislature and Governor established Juneteenth as a legal state paid holiday;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mike Nelson, Mayor of the City of Edmonds, do hereby proclaim June 19, 2023, as Juneteenth Day of Observance and call upon the citizens of Edmonds to celebrate the emancipation of all Black Americans and Commit together to eradicate systemic racism and inequity that can never be tolerated and must always be fought against.


Mayor Mike Nelson ~ June 6, 2023

Est. 1863