

# JUNETEENTH IS SUNDAY, JUNE 19, 2022

Juneteenth, also known as Emancipation Day, Freedom Day, Jubilee Day, Black Independence Day and Juneteenth Independence Day, is a federal holiday celebrated annually on June 19<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the end of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth is short for June Nineteenth, and marks the day federal troops arrived in Galveston, Texas in 1865 to ensure that all enslaved people be freed.<sup>1</sup>

In 1863, Texas was largely controlled by forces fighting for the Confederate states in the Civil War, which opposed the abolition of slavery. “Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox Court House two months earlier in Virginia, but slavery had remained relatively unaffected in Texas — until U.S. General Gordon Granger stood on Texas soil and read General Orders No. 3: “The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free.” The troops’ arrival came a full two and a half years after the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.”<sup>2</sup>



CAPTION FROM HISTORY.COM: The work-weathered hands of Henry Brooks, a formerly enslaved man from Greene County, Georgia, circa 1941.



The Juneteenth Flag consists of a rectangle, with the lower part red and the upper part blue, and a 5-pointed star in the center. The star has dual meanings: first for Texas, “The Lone Star State” and second representing the freedom of African Americans in all 50 states. The burst, or “Nova” outline around the star represents “new beginnings” and the curve in the flag is for a “new horizon.” “The red, white and blue represents the American flag, a reminder that slaves and their descendants were and are Americans.”<sup>3</sup>

Common to be seen at Juneteenth celebrations are items in Pan-African colors. “The term Pan-African colors can be a reference to either one of two sets of different colors with each set comprising three colors. The first set is inspired by the flag of Ethiopia and is made up of gold, red, and green.”<sup>4</sup> The second set is based off the Pan-African flag and consists of red, black and green. These colors have symbolic value, “the red is used to show the blood that is responsible for the unity of all Africans regardless of geographical location. The black, unsurprisingly, is representative of the black skin color of Africans while the lush and rich motherland of Africa is depicted by the green.”<sup>4</sup>



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