

FFWPU USA: Celebrate Juneteenth as Unificationists bridge racial divides

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This week, the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act was signed into U.S. legislation, officially making Juneteenth - short for June 19 - one of 11 federal holidays. Juneteenth celebrates the 1865 emancipation of more than four million African Americans who were enslaved in the U.S.

Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon, the [Mother of Peace](#) and co-founder of Family Federation for World Peace and Unification (FFWPU), has yearned to bring together a global family that dwells within the love of God, our Heavenly Parent. The international Unification movement comprises people of all backgrounds, and over the years Dr. Moon has extensively traveled the world with a message of hope, peace and unity for all humanity.

Dr. Moon visited Africa on a number of trips to various countries, embracing its people and sharing prayers of healing and repentance for the sorrowful history of enslaved Africans. "The sense of profound grief I felt when I first stepped onto African soil in the 1970s remains in my heart," wrote Dr. Moon in her 2020 [memoir](#), *Mother of Peace*. "I prayed: How can I help heal this continent's wounds and bring harmony and oneness of heart?"

Juneteenth is a time for us to reflect on all the people who were affected during a grim period in America's history, so that we may bring peace to those ancestors and their descendants. Originating in Texas, Juneteenth has been celebrated nationwide each year since 1866. It commemorates June 19, 1865, when Union Army General Gordon Granger proclaimed freedom from slavery in Texas. Later that same

year, in December 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified by Congress, officially abolishing slavery throughout the U.S.

Together with her late husband, the Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon, Dr. Moon's prevailing aim has been to unite humanity as one family under God. They initiated the cross-cultural international [Marriage Blessing](#) movement in the 1960s, which has been the primary avenue toward restoring racial, national, and ideological conflicts through multicultural couples who transcend barriers to bring about a more peaceful world.

Several initiatives established by Dr. Moon, such as the global [Peace Starts With Me](#) movement, virtual [Rally of Hope](#) series and [World Summit Africa](#), also call for peace and reconciliation among all people, families, nations, and the world. In January 2018, Dr. Moon went to Senegal to visit the House of Slaves on Gorée Island, believed to be the largest slaving post in Africa between the 15th and 19th centuries.

"An intense pain arose in my heart," she wrote in her memoir. "I already was feeling that the bitter tears of grief shed by thousands of captives in transit through that island could fill the world's oceans. The beautiful site that we were approaching must be the most sorrowful island in the world."

Dr. Moon stood and wept at the Door of No Return, where more than 20 million Africans were sold and shipped off to slavery in Europe and the Americas. She imagined and felt the hearts of the mothers of Africa whose children were ripped from their arms and their homes. She could also imagine the pain of the enslaved mothers in the Americas whose children were taken away and sold at auction.

"Men, women, and children were placed in chains..." she wrote. "The once-peaceful island of Gorée was a slave camp filled with screams, tears and grief... No one knows how many innocent lives were lost at sea during the voyages."

"As the True Mother, it broke my heart to know that such atrocities were committed by many people who prayed in the name of Jesus Christ. Knowing these things, I wanted to visit Gorée Island and liberate the historical agony and heartbreak of all the Africans who suffered due to the scourge of slavery... Liberating those who have ascended differs from comforting those who are alive on earth... Facing the silent, grieving walls of the House of Slaves, I forever broke the miserable chains of Africa's oppression."

Dr. Moon liberated Gorée Island with her prayers, and donated a boat to the island so that it may be used to provide urgent care for its people, bringing them quickly to the hospital on the mainland of Senegal. "It reflected our common hope that, although innumerable lives have been lost over the centuries, no others will be lost for the lack of a medical boat," she wrote in her memoir.

From Africa to the Americas, Juneteenth recognizes the plight of enslaved Africans and the weight of 400 years of suffering. Let us celebrate this Juneteenth and the freedom that finally came to our black brothers and sisters. As Unificationists across the U.S. continue efforts to [bridge racial divides](#) within our own community, we know more can be done to break down racial barriers. We invite our passionate community members to share in discussions on how we can actively support our black brothers and sisters more.

You can learn more about Juneteenth [here](#), and get a copy of Mother of Peace [here](#).