

## HARRIET TUBMAN REGION CELEBRATES JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION

By Julie Crawford, Church of Messiah and Associate Community of St John Baptist



Over 3 years ago the Social Justice Team of The Church of Messiah in Chester embarked on the Sacred Ground series under the leadership of Reverend Jerry Racioppi and Anti-Racism Commission member Michelle Simon. The program served as a catalyst for learning from the other. Since the Sacred Ground Series, Messiah has collaborated in the Chester Mendham and Washington Township region to offer community events both for Juneteenth and the International Day of Prayer in September.

Marking its 2nd annual Juneteenth Celebration, this year on June 19th over 80 community members meet at the Chester Gazebo on Main Street in Chester. The program included music, prayers, history including a reading of the Granger Order with period costume, a [Stand Up for the Other](#) Pledge, and tributes by the Mayors of Chester and Chester Township, along with the Principal of Mendham High School and the Admissions Officer at Delbarton School.

The event is coordinated as a collaboration partnership of the Social Justice Teams from [The Church of Messiah](#), [St Lawrence the Martyr](#), and The Community of St John Baptist (CSJB). In addition to participating, CSJB provides the printing services for the program. Sr Linda Clare of CSJB led the following Juneteenth Pray. [You can read the Prayer led by Sr Linda Clare of The Community of St John Baptist and view the video and program for the event on the next page.](#)



[View the Event Video](#)



[View and Share the Program with Others](#)

### ***Prayer from the Juneteenth Ceremony***

Today, we commemorate the end of slavery in America.

This day partially reminds us of the progress made.

This day also partially reminds us of the progress we have not made.

We celebrate the freedom of black lives in our nation.

We grieve that we have not correctly reconciled racism in our nation.

You created each person in Your image.

The two greatest commandments call us to love You with all our heart, souls, and minds; Then, to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Your love for us motivates us to love each other.

If we do not love each other, then ultimately, we have not experienced Your love.

As much as we commemorate and celebrate Juneteenth, we grieve this day.

We mourn that our black brothers and sisters have not been loved as our neighbors.

We mourn that our black brothers and sisters have been treated less than created in Your image throughout history. So, Lord, we confess our sins and repent.

The healing and reconciliation we desire comes from the gospel.

On Juneteenth 2023, we ask You to guide our nation.

May the good news of the gospel motivate us to love each other.

May the ideals of our words match the practices of our lives.

May a fresh empowerment of Your Spirit unite us together.

Give us eyes to see and ears to hear Your will and leading.

**Amen**

[See More Photos on next pages](#)



