

6 Ways White People Can Observe Juneteenth

1. Respectfully attend or volunteer at events

Ask your local sponsor of Juneteenth events and your Black friends, colleagues, and church friends how you can help. Volunteer for the clean-up/set-up crews. Help staff information booths, if appropriate. If you attend as a guest, be respectful. Do not wear African dashikis or kente cloth without first asking permission. While you may intend it as appreciation, others may view it as cultural appropriation.

3. Support Black churches, charities, and businesses

Make a regular tithe or donation to a local African American church, a United Methodist campus ministry at a historically Black college or university, or community ministry or scholarship-fund supporting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Make deliberate efforts to support Black-owned businesses and services.

5. Confront the history in your community

Learn about the history of enslaved Black people in your local area and state. Explore the history of your church and its leaders and develop ways that your congregations can make tangible amends and reparations.

2. Preach and teach about the current face of racism

Many white people have been socialized to see racism as a challenge of the distant past. However, full voting rights and equal education for African Americans were not granted until the 1950s and 1960s. In The United Methodist Church, some annual conferences had legalized racism until the 1970s. The U.S. Church is still largely segregated in worship and work. White Christians must grapple with their role in perpetrating racism and work to heed God's call to "let justice roll down." Use sermons, worship, and church media to educate and inspire your congregation.

4. Listen and read

Juneteenth offers an opportunity for white friends and family to learn more about the realities African-Americans face and the contributions they make to the church, community, and world. Listen to this podcast with Jasmine Bradshaw, which further explains Juneteenth history and ways your family can celebrate the holiday.

6. Church school and small groups

Discuss Juneteenth's history and current implications for African Americans. Invite a local Black history teacher or museum curator to speak, or watch the Ava DuVernay's Netflix documentary, *13th: From Slave to Criminal with one Amendment*, which explores the U.S. journey from the enslavement of Black people to the school-to-prison pipeline. A study guide for the film from Influence Film Club is available.

