

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

My letter to you today provides information about some remembrance events that are taking place this week. Today, we remember the "Emanuel Nine," who were killed while attending a Bible Study at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston on this date in 2015. In 2019, the ELCA made a resolution at Churchwide Assembly to remember this day in order to:

- * Reaffirm their commitment to repenting of the sins of racism and white supremacy which continue to plague this church.
- * venerate the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine,
- * and to mark this day of penitence with study and prayer.

Resources are available at ELCA.org. ("Remembering the Emanuel Nine," ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, YouTube video, June 11, 2021)

Please join me now in this prayer remembering the Emanuel Nine, provided by Presiding Bishop Eaton--

In lives of faithful dedication, your servants Clementa, Cynthia, Daniel, DePayne, Ethel, Myra, Sharonda, Susie, and Tywanza lived by your promises, sharing their gifts with those in their families and communities. May we not forget their lives, taken too soon. In the years to come, let us share their names and their witness, so that the world comes to know of your spirit at work in and through them. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Yesterday, we heard in news broadcasts that the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives' voted to approve the creation of "Juneteenth" as a federal holiday. After President Biden signs it, Juneteenth will be recognized nationwide as the day in which the last enslaved persons in the United States after the Civil War, learned that they were free.

The Greater La Crosse Area Diversity Council has created a special weekend of events entitled, "Juneteenth: Education Through Celebration." On Friday, June 18th, there will be a free movie showing at the Rivoli theatre. (Doors open at 6:15 p.m.). On Saturday, June 19, there will be a community fair in Riverside Park in La Crosse, from Noon until 8 p.m. The event includes guest speakers, free food, a talent show, community services information, a fair, and the Enduring Families project. All are welcome to join the Black Student Leaders, B.L.A.C.K., UWL Black Student Unity and Hope Restores members for these events. For more information, go to www.glaxdiversitycouncil.com.

If you would like to watch a special "2021 Juneteenth Celebration" presented by Healing of the Nations Foundation in association with Carnegie Hall, you can stream it live. Go to the McCormick Theological Seminary Facebook page at facebook.com/mccormickseminary on Saturday, June 19 at 6:30 p.m. Central Time, to see this event! For more details go to www.juneteenth-ny.com or www.carnegiehall.org.

If you are able, please participate by attending the events in La Crosse, watching the events online, and/or joining me in prayer and reflection as we seek justice and peace for all persons in God's world.

Peace,

Pastor Cathy