

# Scripture and Prayers

## Week of June 21, 2020



June 19<sup>th</sup> is known as “Juneteenth” or “Emancipation Day.” On that day in 1867, for the first time, Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation was read in Galveston, Texas. This was the last state in the union to receive the word of freedom. All previously enslaved people in Texas were free.

James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) was a distinguished African-American writer, civil rights activist and a leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), where he worked from 1917 to 1930.

To celebrate “Juneteenth,” Johnson’s poem, “The Creation”, is featured. Our creation is God’s gift. We are to live with each other in love, honor and respect. Any thing less does not work.

## The Creation

James Weldon Johnson

And God stepped out on space,  
And he looked around and said:  
I'm lonely—  
I'll make me a world.

And far as the eye of God could see  
Darkness covered everything,  
Blacker than a hundred midnights  
Down in a cypress swamp.

Then God smiled,  
And the light broke,  
And the darkness rolled up on one side,  
And the light stood shining on the other,  
And God said: That's good!

Then God reached out and took the light in his hands,  
And God rolled the light around in his hands  
Until he made the sun;  
And he set that sun a-blazing in the heavens.  
And the light that was left from making the sun  
God gathered it up in a shining ball  
And flung it against the darkness,  
Spangling the night with the moon and stars.  
Then down between  
The darkness and the light  
He hurled the world;  
And God said: That's good!

Then God himself stepped down—  
And the sun was on his right hand,  
And the moon was on his left;  
The stars were clustered about his head,  
And the earth was under his feet.  
And God walked, and where he trod  
His footsteps hollowed the valleys out  
And bulged the mountains up.

Then he stopped and looked and saw  
That the earth was hot and barren.  
So God stepped over to the edge of the world  
And he spat out the seven seas—  
He batted his eyes, and the lightnings flashed—  
He clapped his hands, and the thunders rolled—  
And the waters above the earth came down,  
The cooling waters came down.

Then the green grass sprouted,  
And the little red flowers blossomed,  
The pine tree pointed his finger to the sky,  
And the oak spread out his arms,  
The lakes cuddled down in the hollows of the ground,  
And the rivers ran down to the sea;  
And God smiled again,  
And the rainbow appeared,  
And curled itself around his shoulder.

Then God raised his arm and he waved his hand  
Over the sea and over the land,  
And he said: Bring forth! Bring forth!  
And quicker than God could drop his hand,  
Fishes and fowls  
And beasts and birds  
Swam the rivers and the seas,  
Roamed the forests and the woods,  
And split the air with their wings.  
And God said: That's good!



Then God walked around,  
And God looked around  
On all that he had made.  
He looked at his sun,  
And he looked at his moon,  
And he looked at his little stars;  
He looked on his world  
With all its living things,  
And God said: I'm lonely still.

Then God sat down—  
On the side of a hill where he could think;  
By a deep, wide river he sat down;  
With his head in his hands,  
God thought and thought,  
Till he thought: I'll make me a man!

Up from the bed of the river  
God scooped the clay;  
And by the bank of the river  
He kneeled him down;  
And there the great God Almighty  
Who lit the sun and fixed it in the sky,  
Who flung the stars to the most far corner of the night,  
Who rounded the earth in the middle of his hand;  
This great God,  
Like a mammy bending over her baby,  
Kneeled down in the dust  
Toiling over a lump of clay  
Till he shaped it in his own image;

Then into it he blew the breath of life,  
And man became a living soul.  
Amen. Amen.



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# A Week of Scripture Reading

## **Sunday - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Pentecost June 21<sup>st</sup>**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17  
An Epistle Reading: Romans 6:1-11  
The Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:24-39

## **Monday - June 22**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 135  
The Gospel Reading: Luke 21:29-36

## **Tuesday - June 23**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 123  
The Gospel Reading: Luke 21:37 - 22:13

## **Wednesday - June 24**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 147:1-11  
The Gospel Reading: Luke 22:14-23

## **Thursday - June 25**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 147:12-20  
The Gospel Reading: Luke 22:24-30

## **Friday - June 26**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 130  
A Gospel Reading: Luke 22:31-38

## **Saturday - June 27**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 56  
A Gospel Reading: Luke 22:39-51

## **Sunday - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost June 28<sup>th</sup>**

Psalm for the Day: Psalm 13  
An Epistle Reading: Romans 6:12-23  
The Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:40-42



## For Hope

Loving God, by your Holy Spirit inspire me, as I fear losing hope. Give me a fresh vision of your love, that I may find again what I fear I have lost. Grant me your powerful deliverance; through the One who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

## For Trust in God

God, you are my help and comfort; you shelter and surround me in love so tender that I may know your presence with me, now and always. Amen.

## For Facing Great Uncertainty

God of the present moment,  
God who in Jesus stills the storm  
and soothes the frantic heart.  
Bring hope and courage to all  
who wait or work in uncertainty.  
Bring hope that you will make them  
the equal of whatever lies ahead.  
Bring courage and hope that they  
may endure what cannot be avoided.  
Ever remind us -  
even when we are faint and unbelieving  
that your will is health and wholeness.  
You are God, and we need you. Amen.

## For Life to Move Ahead

Keep safe, O Lord, the Church  
which is your household,  
in steadfast faith and love,  
that through the power of your grace we may  
proclaim your truth with boldness, and  
minister your justice with compassion.  
We pray for the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.  
Who lives now and forever. Amen.



*If the mail is slow,  
a start on the new week  
is provided.*