



# Proclamation

**WHEREAS:** President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, declaring the slaves in Confederate territory free, paving the way for the passing of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment which formally abolished slavery in the United States of America; and

**WHEREAS:** the celebration of the end of slavery, which became known as “**Juneteenth**”, is the oldest known celebration commemorating the ending of slavery in the United States, when Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865 bringing news that the Civil War had ended, and that the Emancipation Proclamation had declared all enslaved people free nearly two and a half years earlier; and

**WHEREAS:** the first **Juneteenth** celebration was a time for reassurance, prayer, and the gathering of family members and neighbors and today is a time of remembrance and celebration within communities throughout the country that promotes and cultivates knowledge and appreciation of African American history and culture, while encouraging continuous self-development and respect for all people and cultures; and

**WHEREAS:** this year’s **Juneteenth** celebrations taking place in Gaston County include the City of Belmont, City of Bessemer City, City of Gastonia, and Elements of Empowerment, Inc. observing the weekend of Friday, June 18 and Saturday, June 19 beginning with “Juneteenth Sunday” on Sunday, June 13, 2021; the African American Museum of History and Culture at Loray Mill observing June 14 – 19, 2021; and the third annual Juneteenth celebration in the City of Gastonia taking place at the Rotary Pavilion on Saturday, June 19, 2021.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I, Walker E. Reid III, Mayor, and the City Council of the City of Gastonia, do hereby declare **June 19, 2021** as

## **JUNETEENTH**

in the City of Gastonia, North Carolina and urge all citizens to join in celebrating a day so significant in the history and heritage of our nation and city.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Gastonia to be affixed, this the 1<sup>st</sup> day of June in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-one.

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Walker E. Reid III, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Suzanne J. Gibbs, City Clerk