

The New Epistle

a newsletter of

The Progressive Episcopal Church

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June News from the Secretary . . .

It has been fairly quiet of late with regard to church administration, for which I am thankful. It has allowed me to make excellent progress in sorting through the multitude of boxes and totes comprising my mother's estate. Not only some wonderful childhood memories coming to light, but also many photographs of my mother's family that I'd not seen before!

Also many things that made me scratch my head, such as "Why on earth did she keep her travel itinerary printout from the travel agents from back in the 1980s?

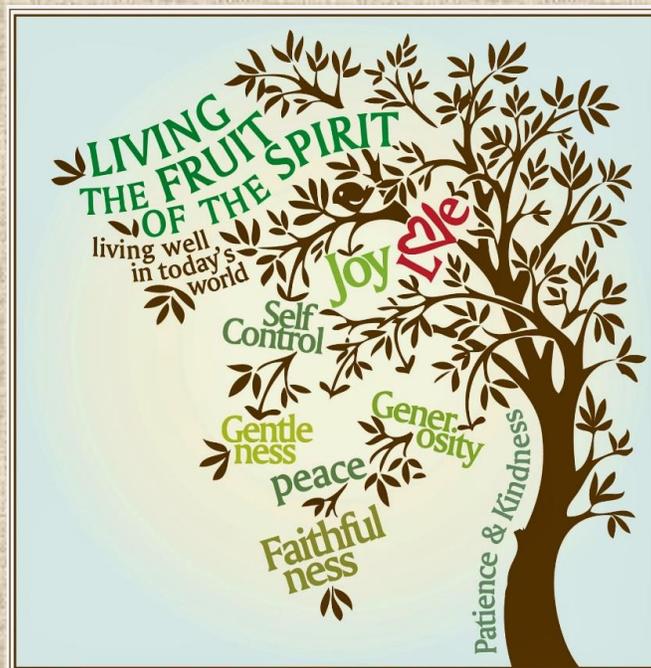
And why did she keep her pay stubs from Shell BP in Nigeria from the 1950s? But I have also inherited some wonderful liturgical resource books and hymnals.

And my dining room is very close to being a dining room once again, rather than a storage room for boxes and totes!

The history within our families – no matter who we are – has a richness and a value beyond measure, and beyond all price. No matter what our legacy is, we must embrace it and learn from it: there is *always* something to be learned that is to our benefit, that we can in turn use to benefit the world around us. It is part of the greater history of our communities and of our country. More on that elsewhere in this newsletter.

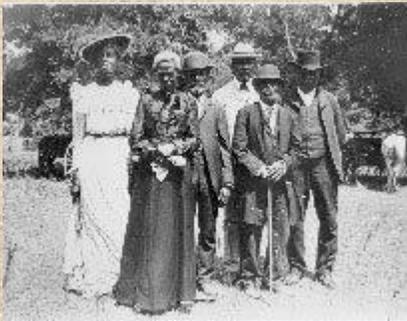
The Progressive Episcopal Church welcomes Mr. Kirk A. Rollo of Cape Coral, Florida as a Licentiate Minister in the Diocese of the West. Mr. Rollo will serve as a LM for approximately one year and then will be ordained to the Perpetual Diaconate.

We also welcome the Oratory of St John the Divine in Canton, Georgia into residence within the Ordinariate of St John the Evangelist.



In a brief 1992 article for the Eugene Register Guard, Quintard Taylor explains the origins of the Juneteenth holiday. Part of that article is reprinted below.

Freedom came in many guises to the four million African Americans who had been enslaved at the beginning of the Civil War. Some fortunate black women and men were emancipated as early as 1861 when Union forces captured outlying areas of the Confederacy such as the Sea Islands of South Carolina, the Tidewater area of Virginia (Hampton and Norfolk) or New Orleans, Louisiana from 1861 onward. Other black slaves emancipated themselves by exploiting the disruption of war to run away to freedom, which in some instances was as close as the nearest Union Army camp. President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation liberated all blacks residing in territory captured from the Confederates after January 1, 1863. These slaves did not have to run for their freedom, they merely had to wait for Federal troops to arrive.



Emancipation for the majority of African Americans, however, came only in 1865 when Confederate commander Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Federal forces at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. With that surrender the rebellion was over. News of Lee's surrender spread quickly through the former slave states east of the Mississippi River. Texas, however, was another matter. Isolated from both Union and Confederate forces, Texas, during the Civil War, had become a place of refuge for slaveholders seeking to ensure that their "property" would not hear of freedom. Through April, May, and part of June, 1865, they did not. Finally on June 19, 1865, freedom officially arrived when Federal troops landed at Galveston, Texas. Word of emancipation gradually spread over the state despite the efforts of some slaveholders to maintain slavery.

But African Americans would not be denied the liberty that had eluded them so long. When the news came entire plantations were deserted. Many blacks brought from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Missouri during the War, returned home while Texas freedpersons headed for Galveston, Houston, and other cities where Federal troops were stationed. Although news of emancipation came at different times during that Texas summer of 1865, local blacks gradually settled on June 19 (Juneteenth) as their day of celebration. Beginning in 1866 they held parades, picnics, barbecues, and gave speeches in remembrance of their liberation. By 1900 the festivities had grown to include baseball games, horse races, railroad excursions, and formal balls. By that time Juneteenth had officially become Texas Emancipation Day and was sponsored by black churches and civic organizations. Indeed, Juneteenth had become so respectable that white politicians including various Texas governors addressed the largest gatherings (which sometimes included upwards of 5,000 people) in Houston and Dallas. Juneteenth had surpassed the Fourth of July as the biggest holiday of the year for Texas African Americans.

With the migration of African Americans from Texas to the West Coast particularly during World War II, Juneteenth simultaneously declined in Texas and grew in the emerging black communities of Los Angeles, San Diego, and Oakland in California, Portland, Oregon, and Seattle, Washington. And some communities east of Texas such as Washington, D.C., and Birmingham, Alabama, began celebrations as well. But by the 1970s many blacks, including those in Texas, had forgotten the holiday's origins and its significance in African American history.

Sources: Quintard Taylor, "The Juneteenth Celebration, 1865-1992," Eugene Register-Guard, June 8, 1992, pp. 1D, 4D.

On July 5th, 1852, a full thirteen years before the Emancipation Proclamation, the great orator Frederick Douglass gave a speech at Corinthian Hall in Rochester, New York. That speech would become a powerful voice for the equal rights of all people, especially people of colour. In reading the speech, might we reflect what conditions still exist in the United States today, or are re-emerging, that differ little if any from the concerns addressed by Frederick Douglass.

Herewith are excerpts from that oration. May we read, and reflect where we are in America in June 2018 compared to July 1852 and ask why some things have remained unchanged.

Then might we consider what we can contribute to change that which has gone unchanged, and to arrest & reverse our backward momentum elsewhere.

ORATION.

Mr. President, Friends and Fellow Citizens :

HE who could address this audience without a quailing sensation, has stronger nerves than I have. I do not remember ever to have appeared as a speaker before any assembly more shrinkingly, nor with greater distrust of my ability, than I do this day. A feeling has crept over me, quite unfavorable to the exercise of my limited powers of speech. The task before me is one which requires much previous thought and study for its proper performance. I know that apologies of this sort are generally considered flat and unmeaning. I trust, however, that mine will not be so considered. Should I seem at ease, my appearance would much misrepresent me. The little experience I have had in addressing public meetings, in country school houses, avails me nothing on the present occasion.

The papers and placards say, that I am to deliver a 4th July oration. This certainly, sounds large, and out of the common way, for me. It is true that I have often had the privilege to speak in this beautiful Hall, and to address many who now honor me with their presence. But neither their familiar faces, nor the perfect gage I think I have of Corinthian Hall, seems to free me from embarrassment.

The fact is, ladies and gentlemen, the distance between this platform and the slave plantation, from which I escaped, is considerable - and the difficulties to be overcome in getting from the latter to the former, are by no means slight. That I am here today, is, to me, a matter of astonishment as well as of gratitude. You will not, therefore, be surprised, if in what I have to say, I evince no elaborate preparation, nor grace my speech with any high sounding exordium. With little experience and with less learning, I have been able to throw my thoughts hastily and imperfectly together; and trusting to your patient and generous indulgence, I will proceed to lay them before you.

This, for the purpose of this celebration, is the 4th of July. It is the birthday of your National Independence, and of your political freedom. This, to you, is what the Passover was to the emancipated people of God. It carries your minds back to the clay, and to the act of your great deliverance; and to the signs, and to the wonders, associated with that act that day. This celebration also marks the beginning of another year of your national life; and reminds you that the Republic of America is now 76 years old. I am glad, fellow-citizens, that your nation is so young. Seventy-six years, though a good old age for a man, is but a mere speck in the life of a nation. 'Three score years and ten is the allotted time for individual men; but nations number their years by thousands.

According to this fact, you are, even now only in the beginning of you national career, still lingering in the period of childhood. I repeat, I am glad this is so. There is hope in the thought, and hope is much needed, under the dark clouds which lower above the horizon. The eye of the reformer is met with angry flashes, portending disastrous times; but his heart may well beat lighter at the thought that America is young, and that she is still in the impressible stage of her existence. May he not hope that high lessons of wisdom, of justice and of truth, will yet give direction to her destiny? Were the nation older, the patriot's heart might be sadder, and the reformer's brow heavier. Its future might be shrouded in gloom, and the hope of its prophets go out in sorrow. There is consolation in the thought, that America is young.-Great streams are not easily turned from channels, worn deep in the course of ages. They may sometimes rise in quiet and stately majesty, and inundate the land, refreshing and fertilizing the earth with their mysterious properties. They may also rise in wrath and fury, and bear away, on their angry waves, the accumulated wealth of years of toil and hardship. They, however, gradually flow back to the same old channel, and flow on as serenely as ever. But, while the river may not be turned aside, it may dry up, and leave nothing behind but the withered branch, and the unsightly rock, to howl in the abyss-sweeping wind, the sad tale of departed glory. As with rivers so with nations.

Fellow-citizens, I shall not presume to dwell at length on the associations that cluster about this day. The simple story of it is, that, 76 years ago, the people of this country were British subjects. The style and title of your "sovereign people" (in which you now glory) was not then born. You were under the British Crown. Your fathers esteemed the English Government as the home government and England as the fatherland. This home government, you know, although a considerable distance from your home, did, in the exercise of its parental prerogatives, impose upon its colonial children, such restraints, burdens and limitations, as, in its mature judgment, it deemed wise, right and proper.

But, your fathers, who had not adopted the fashionable idea of this day, of the infallibility of government, and the absolute character of its acts, presumed to differ from the home government in respect to the wisdom and the justice of some of those burdens and restraints. They went so far in their excitement as to pronounce the measures of government unjust, unreasonable, and oppressive, and altogether such as ought not to be quietly submitted to. I scarcely need say, fellow-citizens, that my opinion of those measures fully accords with that of your fathers. Such a declaration of agreement on my part, would not be worth much to anybody. It would, certainly, prove nothing, as to what part I might have taken, had I lived during the great controversy of 1776. To say now that America was right, and England wrong, is exceedingly easy. Everybody can say it; the dastard, not less than the noble brave, can flippantly discant on the tyranny of England towards the American Colonies. It is fashionable to do so; but there was a time when, to pronounce against England, and in favor of the cause of the colonies, tried men's souls. They who did so were accounted in their day, plotters of mischief, agitators and rebels, dangerous men. To side with the right, against the wrong, with the weak against the strong, and with the oppressed against the oppressor! here lies the merit, and the one which, of all others, seems un fashionable in our day. The cause of liberty may be stabbed by the men who glory in the deeds of your fathers ...

Oppression makes a wise man mad. Your fathers were wise men, and if they did not go mad, they became restive under this treatment. They felt themselves the victims of grievous wrongs, wholly incurable in their colonial capacity. With brave men there is always a remedy for oppression ...

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here today? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us? and am I, therefore, called upon to bring

our humble offering to the national altar, and to confess the benefits and express devout gratitude for the blessings resulting from your independence to us?

Would to God, both for your sakes and ours, that an affirmative answer could be truthfully returned to these questions! Then would my task be light, and my burden easy and delightful. For who is there so cold, that a nation's sympathy could not warm him? Who so obdurate and dead to the claims of gratitude, that would not thankfully acknowledge such priceless benefits? Who so stolid and selfish, that would not give his voice to swell the hallelujahs of a nation's jubilee, when the chains of servitude had been torn from his limbs? I am not that man. In a case like that, the dumb might eloquently speak, and the "lame man leap as an hart."

But, such is not the state of the case. I say it with a sad sense of the disparity between us. I am not included within the pale of this glorious anniversary! Your high independence only reveals the immeasurable distance between us. The blessings in which you, this day, rejoice, are not enjoyed in common.—The rich inheritance of justice, liberty, prosperity and independence, bequeathed by your fathers, is shared by you, not by me. The sunlight that brought life and healing to you, has brought stripes and death to me. This Fourth July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today? If so, there is a parallel to your conduct. And let me warn you that it is dangerous to copy the example of a nation whose crimes, towering up to heaven, were thrown down by the breath of the Almighty, burying that nation in irrecoverable ruin! I can today take up the plaintive lament of a peeled and woe-smitten people!

Fellow citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, today, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. Standing with God and the crushed and bleeding slave on this occasion, I will, in the name of humanity which is outraged, in the name of liberty which is fettered, in the name of the constitution and the Bible, which are disregarded and trampled upon, dare to call in question and to denounce, with all the emphasis I can command, everything that serves to perpetuate slavery—the great sin and shame of America! "I will not equivocate; I will not excuse;" I will use the severest language I can command; and yet not one word shall escape me that any man, whose judgment is not blinded by prejudice, or who is not at heart a slaveholder, shall not confess to be right and just.

By an act of the American Congress, not yet two years old, slavery has been nationalized in its most horrible and revolting form. By that act, Mason & Dixon's line has been obliterated; New York has become as Virginia; and the power to hold, hunt, and sell men, women and children, as slaves, remains no longer a mere state institution, but is now an institution of the whole United States. The power is co-extensive with the star-spangled banner, and American Christianity. Where these go, may also go the merciless slave-hunter. Where these are, man is not sacred.

I take this law to be one of the grossest infringements of Christian Liberty, and, if the churches and ministers of our country were not stupidly blind, or most wickedly indifferent, they, too, would so regard it.

At the very moment that they are thanking God for the enjoyment of civil and religious liberty, and for the right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, they are utterly silent in respect to a law which robs religion of its chief significance, and makes it utterly worthless to a world lying in wickedness. Did this law concern the "mint, anise and cumin," abridge the right to sing psalms, to partake of the sacrament, or to engage in any of the ceremonies of religion, it would be smitten by the thunder of a thousand pulpits. A general shout would go up from the church, demanding repeal, repeal, instant repeal!-And it would go hard with that politician who presumed to solicit the votes of the people without inscribing this motto on his banner.

A worship that can be conducted by persons who refuse to give shelter to the houseless, to give bread to the hungry, clothing to the naked, and who enjoin obedience to a law forbidding these acts of mercy, is a curse, not a blessing to mankind. The Bible addresses all such persons as "scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, who pay tithes of mint, anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith.

The far off and almost fabulous Pacific rolls in grandeur at our feet. The Celestial Empire, the mystery of ages, is being solved. The fiat of the Almighty, "Let there be Light," has not yet spent its force. No abuse, no outrage whether in taste, sport or avarice, can now hide itself from the all-pervading light. The iron shoe, and crippled foot of China must be seen, in contrast with nature. Africa must rise and put on her yet unwoven garment. "Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand unto God." In the fervent aspirations of William Lloyd Garrison, I say, and let every heart join in saying it :

*God speed the year of jubilee
The wide world o'er!
When from their galling chains set free, Th' oppress'd shall vilely bend the knee,
And wear the yoke of tyranny Like brutes no more.
That year will come, and freedom's reign,
To man his plundered rights again Restore.
God speed the day when human blood shall cease to flow!
In every clime be understood,
The claims of human brotherhood,
And each return for evil, good, Not blow for blow;
That day will come all feuds to end,
And change into a faithful friend each foe.
God speed the hour, the glorious hour, When none on earth
Shall exercise a lordly power,
Nor in a tyrant's presence cower; But all to manhood's stature tower, By equal birth!
THAT HOUR WILL COME, to each, to all,
And from his prison-house, the thrall Go forth.
Until that year, day, hour, arrive,
With head, and heart, and hand I'll strive, To break the rod, and rend the grave, The spoiler of his prey deprive
So witness Heaven!
And never from my chosen post,
Whate'er the peril or the cost,
Be driven.*

The entire speech may be read here: <https://rbscp.lib.rochester.edu/2945>

JAMES WELDON JOHNSON 1871-1938

James Weldon Johnson was born 17 June 1871, in Jacksonville, Florida. His parents stimulated his academic interests, and he was encouraged to study literature and music. Johnson enrolled at Atlanta University with the expressed intention that the education he received there would be used to further the interests of African Americans. He never reneged on that commitment. In the summer after his freshman year, Johnson taught the children of former slaves. Of that experience he wrote, "In all of my experience there has been no period so brief that has meant so much in my education for life as the three months I spent in the backwoods of Georgia." After graduation, he became the principal of the largest high school in Jacksonville, during which time he was paid half of what his white counterparts were paid, even though the school excelled under his leadership.

In 1900, he collaborated with his brother, Rosamond, a composer, to create "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing." Written in celebration of President Lincoln's birthday, the song has become known as the "Black National Anthem." Due to the success of their collaboration, Johnson moved to New York in 1901 to join his brother, and together they attained success as lyricist and composer for Broadway.

In 1906, Johnson was invited to work for the diplomatic corps and became U.S. Consul to Venezuela and later Nicaragua. During his Nicaraguan tenure, Johnson was the voice of reason and reconciliation in a time of civil unrest and turmoil. His ability to bring together people of differing viewpoints toward a common vision served Johnson well in the 1920's, when he became an organizer for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Johnson was a prolific poet and anthologist. He edited *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), a major contribution to the history of African American literature. His book of poetry, *God's Trombones* (1927), seven biblical stories rendered into verse, was influenced by his impressions of the rural South.

Eternal God, who gave your son James Weldon Johnson a heart and voice to praise your Name in verse: As he gave us powerful words to glorify you, may we also peak with joy to banish hatred from your creation. Amen.

-- Adapted from [A Great Cloud of Witnesses](#) ©2016 Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America



A group of young men in Jacksonville, Florida, arranged to celebrate Lincoln's birthday in 1900. My brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, and I decided to write a song to be sung at the exercises. I wrote the words and he wrote the music. Our New York publisher, Edward B. Marks, made mimeographed copies for us, and the song was taught to and sung by a chorus of five hundred colored school children.

Shortly afterwards my brother and I moved away from Jacksonville to New York, and the song passed out of our minds. But the school children of Jacksonville kept singing it; they went off to other schools and sang it; they became teachers and taught it to other children. Within twenty years it was being sung over the South and in some other parts of the country. Today the song, popularly known as the Negro National Hymn, is quite generally used.

The lines of this song repay me in an elation, almost of exquisite anguish, whenever I hear them sung by Negro children.

Lift every voice and sing
 Till earth and heaven ring,
 Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
 Let our rejoicing rise
 High as the listening skies,
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
 Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
 Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.
 Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
 Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
 Bitter the chastening rod,
 Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
 Yet with a steady beat,
 Have not our weary feet
 Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
 We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
 We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
 Out from the gloomy past,
 Till now we stand at last
 Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,
 God of our silent tears,
 Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
 Thou who hast by Thy might
 Led us into the light,
 Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
 Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
 Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
 Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
 May we forever stand,
 True to our God,
 True to our native land.

In keeping with this month's theme of freedom and liberation of oppressed people, we also take note that June is LGBTQ Pride Month. The Progressive Episcopal Church welcomes and embraces people of every race, colour, creed, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Nearly every "category" (lacking a better term) is represented in the clergy and membership of this Church.

For the benefit of the younger generation which is often unfamiliar with the history of the observance, we provide a brief lesson in how Gay Pride celebrations got their start.

The Progressive Episcopal Church enthusiastically supports, celebrates, and observes Marriage Equality.

HISTORY OF PRIDE

The majority of Pride events are held in June to commemorate the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion in New York City on June 28, 1969, which most historians consider to be the birth of the modern LGBT movement. At the time, police raids on bars catering to LGBT patrons were common, but that night, the patrons of the Stonewall Inn fought back. While historical accounts of the night vary, the violent response ignited a national firestorm of activism that brought new visibility to the struggle for LGBT equality.

June is unofficially recognized as Pride Month by the LGBT community, and many Pride events still occur on the last Sunday in June to commemorate the anniversary of Stonewall. In some places Pride events stretch out over a weekend or an entire week, while in other areas, Pride events occur at different times of the year altogether (particularly in parts of the country where June is especially hot).

PRIDE TODAY

Over time, the smaller marches and gatherings organized by community members evolved into a highly organized slate of events attracting a broad range of LGBT community members and straight allies. The increasing popularity and visibility of Pride events can partially be attributed to greater levels of acceptance towards the community. While Pride events play a key role in raising the profile of the community and commemorating the history of the LGBT social movement, Pride also marks an opportunity for the community to come together, take stock and recognize the advances and setbacks made in the past year. It is also a chance for the community to come together and celebrate in a festive, affirming atmosphere.

THE MANY FACES OF PRIDE

The number and variety of Pride events throughout the country and the world reflect the diversity of the LGBT community both in the United States and abroad. In the United States, Pride events vary from city to city and region to region. Local volunteer groups, often with the sponsorship of corporations and local businesses, organize most LGBT Pride events, and they include a variety of events catering to different segments of the community.

In the early 1990s, Black Prides emerged as a powerful force and now take place in more than 30 major cities nationwide. Black Pride events, which include New York's "Pride in the City" and Detroit's

"Hotter Than July", offer a unique opportunity for LGBT communities of African descent to celebrate their myriad of experiences and identities with their allies, friends and families. Black Pride celebrations originated from the dissatisfaction of Black LGBT people who did not identify with the entertainment or cultural programming at other Pride events. For a list of more Black Pride events, please visit the International Federation of Black Prides. In recent years, other Pride events specifically targeted to other communities of color, specifically for the Latino/a community, have also occurred in some cities.

In many places, Pride events specifically for women occur on the day before or the same weekend as other Pride events. These events are usually offered as a grassroots supplement to Pride celebrations catering to the entire community and often have high-profile corporate sponsors and events. While these events are usually targeted to lesbians and transgender people, they are open to all and usually include a rally and a march.

Youth and young adult Prides have also gained popularity in recent years. These events are for young LGBT people, their families and straight allies. School organizations such as gay-straight alliances come together to celebrate the community in rallies and marches.

In addition, Pride events now occur internationally throughout the year, and they are most popular in Canada, Latin America, Australia and throughout Europe, though events are held in other parts of the world. Pride events and related rallies in some international cities have resulted in conflict and violence, providing a stark contrast to Pride events in the United States and other countries with more visible LGBT populations.

History of the LGBT Pride Flag:

Gilbert Baker, an openly gay activist born in 1951, grew up in Parsons, Kansas, and went on to serve in the US army for about two years around 1970. After an honorable discharge, Gilbert taught himself to sew. In 1974, Baker met Harvey Milk, an influential gay leader, who three years later challenged Baker to come up with a symbol of pride for the gay community. The original gay pride flag flew at the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade celebration on June 25, 1978. It has also been suggested that Baker may have been inspired by Judy Garland's singing "Over the Rainbow" and the Stonewall riots that happened a few days after Garland's death (she was one of the first gay icons). Another suggestion for how the rainbow flag originated is that at college campuses during the 1960s, some people demonstrated for world peace by carrying a Flag of the Races (also called the Flag of the Human Race) with five horizontal stripes (from top to bottom they were red, white, brown, yellow, and black). The flags were commissioned by the fledgling pride committee and were produced by a team led by Baker and included artist Lynn Segerblom. Baker is said to have gotten the idea for the rainbow flag from this flag in borrowing it from the Hippie movement of that time largely influenced by pioneering gay activist Allen Ginsberg. The flag originally comprised eight stripes; Baker assigned specific meaning to each of the colors, as seen on the right.



After the assassination of gay San Francisco City Supervisor Harvey Milk on November 27, 1978, demand for the rainbow flag greatly increased. To meet demand, the Paramount Flag Company began selling a version of the flag using stock rainbow fabric with seven stripes: red, orange, yellow, green, turquoise, blue, and violet. As Baker ramped up production of his version of the flag, he too dropped the hot pink stripe because of the unavailability of hot-pink fabric. Also, San Francisco-based Paramount Flag Co. began selling a surplus stock of Rainbow Girls flags from its retail store on the southwest corner of Polk and Post, at which Gilbert Baker was an employee.

In 1979 the flag was modified again. When hung vertically from the lamp posts of San Francisco's Market Street, the center stripe was obscured by the post itself. Changing the flag design to one with an even number of stripes was the easiest way to rectify this, so the turquoise stripe was dropped, which resulted in a six stripe version of the flag — red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet.

-- from Wikipedia

"There is no true commitment to solidarity with the poor if one sees them merely as people passively waiting for help. ... The goal is not to become ... the 'voice of the voiceless' ... but rather in some way to help ensure that those without a voice find one."

~Gustavo Gutiérrez, "The Option for the Poor Arises from Faith in Christ" (2009)

