

All human beings are born free and  
equal in dignity and rights.

*Article 1, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*



## SOME DAYS TO REMEMBER

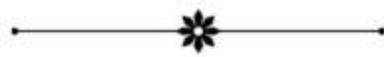
June is a busy month. There are graduations, weddings, planting, weeding, and much more. Here at Starcross we also throw in a few commemorations, some of which you've probably never heard of before! I want to mention three that were important in the fights for human dignity.



**LOVING DAY — June 12.** Sometimes there is a trick question in a Constitutional Law exam, *Discuss the legal issues involved in Loving Day.* As you can imagine, there are a lot of wild guesses! But Loving Day is a commemoration of a Supreme Court case in 1967, *Loving v. Virginia*, which struck down all anti-miscegenation laws in the United States. It was the final end to bans on interracial marriage. Mildred Loving was African-American, and married to Richard Loving, who was Caucasian. They were arrested for *cohabiting as man and wife, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Virginia.* They avoided jail time by promising to leave Virginia and moved to Washington D.C. The Supreme Court case was a unanimous decision. And the couple moved back to Virginia.



The Supreme Court handed down the decision on June 12, 1967 and ever after that time, this day is celebrated at many places in the United States, especially where mixed-race couples are common. The recent Royal Wedding in England shows how far we have advanced in issues like this. At one time interracial marriage was a serious situation. It seems right that we commemorate progress in human dignity on Loving Day.



**JUNETEENTH — June 19.** Racism has been and still is the great curse of American history. The Emancipation Proclamation became effective on January 1, 1863 but for various reasons it did not include all the slaves in the United States. It wasn't until June 19, 1865 when the estimated 250,000 slaves in Texas were freed by "General Order No. 3." It decreed that all slaves,

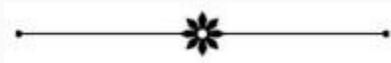
including those in Texas, were freed. White supremacists immediately came up with new versions of slavery, including Jim Crow laws, segregation, lynching, imprisonment, legal abuse, poverty, etc. We still have a long ways to go but there are reasons to rejoice about the step taken on June 19th.

Since the 1980s and 1990s this holiday has been widely celebrated among African-

American communities. Texas, to its credit, became the first state to establish Juneteenth as a state holiday. Today 45 of the 50 states recognize it in some fashion. And for various reasons, it is a big hit in Paris!

In an increasing number of places there are festivities featuring traditional songs and the historical reenactments coupled with parades, street fairs, and cookouts. Added to these are the contributions of contemporary African-American writers and artists such as Maya Angelou (1928–2014), who wrote in her famous poem:

*The caged bird sings  
with a fearful trill  
of things unknown  
but longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird  
sings of freedom.*



**ANNE FRANK — June 12.** Almost everyone has read the diary of Annelies Marie Frank (1929–1945.) It bothers me that in many cases that is the only thing that young people have read about The Holocaust — The Shoah. Several young persons have told me that the Shoah was a horrible thing and it is unhealthy to dwell on it. Furthermore, it was a problem of my times not their times. It's true that I do believe it was the defining moment of the 20th century. But it is also true, as the poet and philosopher George Santayana observes, *Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*— Which may be happening in our present day.



Anne died at the age of 15 in Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

I am going to let her conclude this reflection. What follows is from Anne Frank.

*The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely, or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quite alone with the heavens, nature, and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature. As long as this exists, and it certainly always will, I know that then there will always be comfort*

*for every sorrow, whatever the circumstances may be. And I firmly believe that nature brings solace in all troubles. ...*

*Riches can be lost, but that happiness in your own heart can only be veiled, and it will still bring you happiness again, as long as you live. As long as you can look fearlessly up into the heavens, as long as you know that you are pure within, and that you will still find happiness. ...*

*It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out.*

*Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery, and death. I see the world gradually being turned into a wilderness, I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us too, I can feel the sufferings of millions and yet, if I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come*



*right, that this cruelty too will end, and that peace and tranquility will return again.*

Many years ago, my daughter Holly insisted we should make a birthday cake on June 12th. We still do that. "Happy Birthday, Anne!"

***Brother Toby***