

JUNETEENTH SEDER HAGGADAH

Black Jewish Liberation Collective
2026/5786



Candlelighting: Starting the Program

Light candles using one of these blessings:

FEMININE LANGUAGE

ברוכה את יי שְׁכֵנָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מַלְכַת הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר
קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתֶיהָ וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

*Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat
ha'olam, asher kidashtanu b'mitzvotaiha,
v'tzivatanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are you, Shekhina, Queen of the
universe, who has made us holy through
her commandments and commands us
to light the candles of this holiday

TRADITIONAL

ברוך אתה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ (מֶלֶךְ) הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב.

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu ruach (me-
lekh) ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav
v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel yom tov.*

Blessed are you, G-d, Spirit (Sovereign)
of the universe, who has made us holy
through the commandments, and has
commanded us to light the candles of
this holiday.

HUMANIST

נְבַרְךָ אֶת הָאֵאוֹר כְּאֲשֶׁר נִקְבֵּץ בְּצוֹתָא לְהַדְלִיק נֵרוֹת
שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב. בְּאוֹר הַחֲרוּת נְבַרְךָ אֶת הַחַיִּים.

*N'varech et ha'or k'asher nikavatz b'tzavta l'hadlik neirot shel yom tov. B'or ha'cherut
n'varech et ha'chayim.*

Let us celebrate the light as we gather together to kindle the festival candles. With the
light of liberation, let us celebrate life.

INTRODUCTION

ברוך אתה אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחִינּוּ וְקִיַּיֵּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעְנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

Barukh atah adonai eloheynu melekh ha'olamshehekheyanu, v'kiyimanu, v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

ברוכה את יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ רִחוּם הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחִינּוּ וְקִיַּיֵּמְתָנוּ וְהִגִּיעְתָנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה

B'rukha atya eloheinu ruakh haolam shehekheyatnu v'kiyimatnu v'higiyatnu lazman hazeh.

You are Blessed, Our G-d, Spirit of the World, who has kept us in life and sustained us, enabling us to reach this season.



Juneteenth celebration band, June 19, 1900
Photo by Grace Murray Stephenson



Milwaukee Juneteenth Parade, 2016

Once we lived in Nigeria, Senegal, Benin, Mali, and Ghana. We gather today to remember and celebrate. Juneteenth, like Passover, presents us the opportunity to re-enact and remember the moment our people were in transition. We memorialize the ending of chattel slavery in the way we remember our liberation from Egypt because ritual is a form of collective embodied memory. We embody our experiences as both slaves and people on a journey towards liberation. We come together carrying with us the ancient tools and technology of the Jews (passover, rituals, and remembering) while lovingly honoring the fierce spiritual soul of our Christian and secular family, and ancestors who created and sustain the holiday of Juneteenth.

Blessings For Those Who Came Before

The sea swallows. Our name; our clothing; our language — that is all we were allowed to take out of Egypt. It is exactly what we lost when we were taken from Africa. The sea swallowed our ancestor's names and languages the same way it swallowed the Egyptian armies. We remember what we have lost.

May we be in right relation with all beings, including the earth.

How far back do our memories stretch? We are called in this moment to also remember the time before slavery when we were free people — the children of Jacob, natives to the continent of Africa in both stories. Enslavement was not our natural condition as we were free people longer than we were ever slaves. Our story did not start in slavery. We were Igbo and Yoruba and Wolof and Israelites... We were a free people before we were enslaved, and we will be a free people again. Liberation lies in the future, but it is also in our past. Slavery was but one experience in the vast history of our peoples.

May we always retain ancestral memory.

Celebration is also asked of us tonight. Our joy is bound to that of our ancestors, and it is the fuel that feeds our collective future. We bring into this space our ancestors who finally got word of Lincoln's decree, after slaving two and a half years longer than the law allowed. We are here to recreate their resilience and self-love. We are here to declare the freedom we have known before the seas, trading, and terror. We honor our ancestors, share their stories, and remember our history. We celebrate our liberation today and recreate a new future full of hope. Our tradition tells us: "B'chol dor vador chayav adam lirot et atzmo k'ilu hu yatza mimitzrayim. In every generation, each person must see themselves as if they had come out of Mitzrayim." As though we ourselves are coming into liberation during this time. It is our duty to act as the Royalty we really are, as a profound act of resistance and radical choice.

May we continue to create liberation every day in every way.

Say one of these blessings:	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You G-d, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
פרי הגפן: אתה נשטה "לחיים".	
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!" The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"</i>	

Our Seder Plate

Red foods are customary for Juneteenth, crimson being a symbol of ingenuity and resilience in bondage. Hibiscus tea, red soda, hot sauce, hot links, watermelon, red velvet cake, strawberry pie. We offer this year a Juneteenth seder plate bringing together the legacies of two periods of enslavement to remember that although our ancestors were once slaves we have fought for our liberation and taken many steps toward freedom. This seder plate uses the food tradition of Juneteenth and the American South to construct an altar of abundance for all to partake.

- Z'roa: זרוע – Beets
- Karpas: קרפס – Okra
- Beitzah: ביצה – Black eyed peas/Eggs boiled in hibiscus tea
- Maror: מרור – Hot red pepper
- Charoset: חרוסת – Baked sweet potato
- Lehem: לחם – Tea cakes or cornbread
- Cup: כוס – Red soda/hibiscus tea

Elijah & Miriam's Bowl

In many pan-African traditions, it is customary to honor the ancestors. Today we ask the ancestors permission to continue our gathering through the offering of our hibiscus tea (sorrel or bissap) into Elijah and Miriam's Bowl. May our ancestors sustain us for the long haul and into the future.



Photo from Juneteenth 2018 in NYC by Laylah Amatullah Barrayn

Pour Second Cup; Uncover the Bread	
FEMININE LANGUAGE	TRADITIONAL
ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.	ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.
<i>Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.</i>	<i>Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (me-lekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.</i>
Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.	Blessed are You G-d, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.
HUMANIST	
פרי הגפן: אתה נשתי "לחיים."	
<i>P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!" The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"</i>	

Love & Support

We must love and support each other, and for that love and support to have any meaning, it must be material as well as spiritual.

The Torah says: *And if thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock ... And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt.*

Black liberation is something that has been compromised again and again, through actions monstrous and tiny — the incomprehensible violations we promise to never forget, and the endless diminutions we all decide to ignore. Black liberation means that we commit to uprooting all of the oppressive systems that serve to dehumanize us, including but not limited to white supremacy works, patriarchy, capitalism, transphobia, ableism, adultism, colorism, the list goes on. We navigate through these systems every day, and they exist within us too, showing up as both internalized oppression and internalized privilege. In our commitment to Black liberation, we commit to do and be in a way that respects all Black lives and we show up to support one another and center the most marginalized voices among us.

"We affirm the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, undocumented folks, folks with records, women, and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. Our network centers those who have been marginalized within Black liberation movements."-blacklivesmatter.com

And so we ask each other to think about what it means to commit to reparation — to take a small but challenging step toward accountability, allyship, and accomplice-hood—a step that also leads toward a bolder, more moral, more vibrant future for all Black people and beyond. We call on each other to continue to show up to learn, advocate, break down, build up, imagine anew, and be in right relationship to one another and to the communities that sustain us. We call on each other to lean into the Jewish values of rachamim (compassion), kavod (respect), Kehillah (community), and ahava (love).



HONORING ANCESTORS

We honor the lives lost to COVID-19 and to state violence. We honor the lives of those lost to economic injustice and intra-community violence. We honor the lives of those lost to the violences of white supremacy, capitalism, patriarchy, colorism, transphobia, ableism and all forms of systemic oppression. We pray for our people grieving years of sacrifice and trauma. As we meditate on the words and to the music of *Mi Shebeirach*, we send the healing energies to repair our broken hearts and the soul of our nation. We embrace Black joy, and a long tradition of healing practices to revive our mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual health.

Mi Shebeirach

May the One who blessed our ancestors
Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah
bless and heal the one who is ill:
(*name of ancestor*) child of (*name*) .
May the Holy Blessed One
overflow with compassion upon them,
to restore them,
to heal them,
to strengthen them,
to enliven them.
The One will them speedily,
a complete healing —
healing of the soul and healing of the body —
along with all the ill,
among all humankind,
soon,
speedily,
without delay,
and let us all say: Amen!

The transliterated text below presents the prayer with pronouns for masculine/feminine

Avoteinu: Avraham, Yitzhak, v'Yaakov,
v'Imoteinu: Sarah, Rivka, Rachel v'Leah,
Hu yivarech virapei
et hacholeh/hacholah (name) ben/bat (name)
HaKadosh Baruch Hu
yimalei rachamim alav/aleha,
l'hachalimo/l'hachlimah,
u-l'rap'oto/u-l'rap'otah,
l'hachaziko/l'hazikah,
u-l'chay-oto/u-l'chay-otah.
V'yishlach lo/lah bim-hera
r'fuah shlemah,
r'fu-at hanefesh u-r'fu-at hagoof,
b'toch sh'ar cholei Yisrael v'cholei yoshvei tevel,
hashta ba'agalah u-vizman kariv,
v'no-mar, Amen!



Richmond, VA, Juneteenth Parade, 1905



Austin, TX, Juneteenth Parade, 2017
Photo by Jorge Sanhueza-Lyon

Raise glass. Say one of these blessings:

FEMININE LANGUAGE

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.

Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

TRADITIONAL

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (m-lekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You G-d, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

HUMANIST

פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לחיים".

P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!"

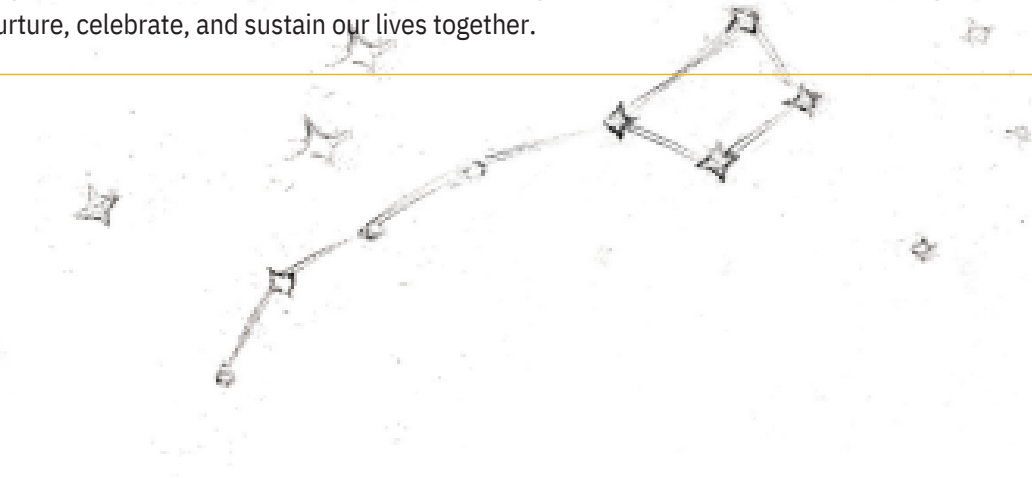
The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"



Ava by Leah King

THE MEAL

Now we eat! We recognize that a communal meal is one of the strongest tools we have for peacekeeping and community building. We all must eat to nurture, celebrate, and sustain our lives together.



Raise bread/teacake, say one of the following:

FEMININE LANGUAGE

ברוכה את יהשכנה אלתינו מלכת העולם המוציאה לחם
מן הארץ.

*Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu
malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.*

Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of
the universe, who brings food from the
earth.

TRADITIONAL

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (me-
lekh) ha'olam hamotzi lechem min
ha'aretz.*

Blessed are You G-d, Spirit (Sovereign) of
the universe, who brings food from the
earth.

HUMANIST

נוציא מצה לחם מן הארץ—כדי שנסתפק ונתכלכל בלנו.

Notzi matzah - lechem min ha'aretz—k'dei sh'nistapek v'nitkalkel kulanu.

Let us bring forth bread from the land—so we all may be satisfied and sustained.



Raise glass, say one of the following:

FEMININE LANGUAGE

ברוך אתה יהוה אלהינו מלכת העולם בורא פרי הגפן.

Brucha at Yah, Shekhina, eloheinu malkat ha'olam bora p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are you, Shekhinah, Queen of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

TRADITIONAL

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו רוח (מלך) העולם בורא פרי הגפן.

Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu ruach (melekh) ha'olam borei p'ri hagafen.

Blessed are You G-d, Spirit (Sovereign) of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.

HUMANIST

פרי הגפן: אתו נשתה "לחיים".

P'ri hagafen, ito nishteh, "l'chayim!" The fruit of the vine, with it let us drink "to life!"



Josef Nassy, *Reading to a Youth* (Most likely planning the preparations for a Bar Mitzvah.) Exact date unknown.

Josef Nassy was a Black Jewish artist who was born in Surinam and grew up in New York City. Caught in the German occupation of Belgium during WWII, Nassy endured three years in Belgian and German internment camps. After the war he returned to Belgium and continued to make art until his death in 1976.

Nassy is known for his paintings of life in the internment camps, as well as intimate domestic scenes.

CONNECTING TO WATER

Water for baptisms and mikvahs; water to speed our escape from Mitzrayim, halt our escapes from the cotton fields. Water to deliver Moses to Pharaoh and carry him to Batya. Water to swallow up Pharaoh's pursuing armies and oceans to hold the nations of kid-napped Africans destroyed by the Middle Passage. The currents that bore Robert Smalls to freedom and the undertow that forced the last breath from Emmett Till.

Donkor Nsuo in Ghana, where Africans who had been marched hundreds of miles to the coast took their last bath before they were displayed for sale to European slavers. The river healing and cleansing them after one demolishing journey, while preparing them for the next. The Underground Railroad brought us across the Ohio River on our way to freedom in Canada. At Igbo Landing in Georgia, a shipload of kidnapped Igbo — survivors of the Middle Passage — drowned themselves rather than submit to enslavement. The Combahee River, where Harriet Tubman led 727 souls to freedom in 1863.

Water in Drexciya, the foundational Afrofuturist mythology created by Detroit electronic music duo of the same name (James Stinson and Gerald Donald). It imagines a "Black Atlantis" at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, populated by the aquatic descendants of pregnant African women thrown overboard during the Middle Passage.

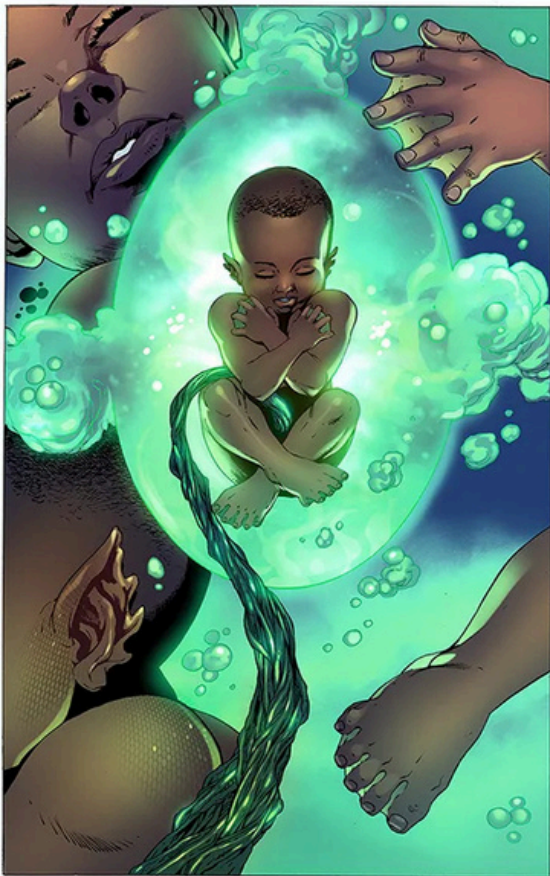


Image from *The Book of Drexciya*, graphic novel created by Abu Qadim Haqq and Dai Sato, 2019

Song: *Wade in the Water*

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade, in the water
G-d's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young girl dressed in red
Wade in the water
Must be the children that Moses led
G-d's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water,
G-d's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young girl dressed in white
Wade in the water
Must be the children of the Israelite
Oh, G-d's gonna trouble the water.

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water,
G-d's gonna trouble the water

Who's that young girl dressed in blue
Wade in the water
Must be the children that's coming through,
G-d's gonna trouble the water, yeah

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water,
G-d's gonna trouble the water

You don't believe I've been redeemed,
Wade in the water
Just so the whole lake goes looking for me
G-d's gonna trouble the water

Wade in the water, wade in the water children
Wade in the water
G-d's gonna trouble the water



Image by Matice M. Moore

CREDITS

Juneteenth Seder Haggadah was originally authored by members and friends of BJLC including: JFREJ Jews of Color Caucus and Black Yids Matter, Graie Barasch-Hagans, Shoshana Brown, Leo Ferguson, Koach Baruch Frazier, Sara Goldberg, Megan Madison, Alexis Ortiz, Yehudah Webster, Tarece Johnson, and Jessica Valoris. Thanks to April Baskin, Raket Joseph, Leah King, Amparo Abel-Bey, Isaiah Rothstein, Autumn Leonard, Teresa Basi-lio, Ana Rubenstein, Yavilah McCoy, Meg Sullivan/JCC Harlem, Solar One, Lucas Shapiro & Jules Skloot, Cecilia Lim. Special thanks to Mackenzie Reynolds for haggadah coordination and editorial support. Exodus artwork by Sarah Quinter. Updated in 2026 by Leah King and Autumn Leonard.

ABOUT BLACK JEWISH LIBERATION COLLECTIVE

We are a collective of Black Jews based in the United States who amplify and uplift our voices through cultural and political organizing. We create spaces for Black Jews to build community and strategize. Our work seeds liberation by dismantling white supremacist patriarchy, racialized capitalism, and antisemitic violence.

www.blackjewishliberation.org
[@blackjewishliberation](https://www.instagram.com/blackjewishliberation)

