Join the Peaceful Juneteenth Celebration March and Rally for Social Justice Friday, June 19, 4 pm-5:30 pm organized by the Community of Caring, an independent group of concerned, caring citizens

On Juneteenth, people across the country celebrate the end of slavery in the United States. On Friday, the Community of Caring is organizing a peaceful march to the Walton County Courthouse in Defuniak Springs.

This year, the holiday is particularly significant as we grapple with making that freedom a reality.

Let's work together in Walton County to move the symbols of oppression from our courthouse grounds to private property. In Walton County, a Confederate flag flies next to a Confederate monument.

We are one of only four counties in the country that has a Confederate flag on the courthouse lawn. The monument remembers those who died in the Civil War and is thought to be Florida's first, erected in 1871 at Valley Church. It was moved to the county seat in Euchee Anna and later to Defuniak Springs. We should remember history and our ancestors ...in an appropriate location.

Let's assemble peacefully to celebrate the end of slavery and to learn and to teach.

The Marines, Navy, NASCAR and government agencies are among the many organizations disallowing the Confederate flag and moving monuments.

While the Walton County flag is not the battle flag, it is a historic states flag commemorating the Confederacy. Instead of removing the Confederate symbol, our commissioners voted to replace the battle flag with a lesser-known "states" flag.

Juneteenth is a national celebration that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States. On June 19, 1865, Union Gen. Gordon Granger landed in Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and the enslaved were now free. This occurred a year and a half after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation was enacted on January 1, 1863. Juneteenth has been celebrated since the 1860s. Today, 47 states and Washington, D.C., recognize Juneteenth as either a state holiday or ceremonial holiday, and many businesses are marking it this year.

Juneteenth March for Social Justice

Please know, rally participants are being asked to wear masks and social distance. Assemble at the Mt. Nemo Missionary Baptist Church, at 185 N. 11th St. in Defuniak Springs and march (or follow in your car) to the Walton County Courthouse for a celebration and rally. This is being organized by the Community of Caring.