



**PROCLAMATION
RECOGNIZING THE ST. JOHN COLONY
ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION 2026**


- WHEREAS:** The visionaries of the Freedman Community of St. John Colony, Texas purchased 2,200 acres to establish The St. John Colony Emancipation Grounds, within a settlement already inhabited by Native American relatives and diverse settlers;
- WHEREAS:** Reverend John H. Winn, Sr. and fourteen pioneer families developed churches, schools, cemeteries, farms, ranches, a general store, a post office, a cotton gin, grist and sorghum mills, and a community hall – incorporating Mackiesville, and the areas now known as Lower and Upper St. John in Bastrop County;
- WHEREAS:** The Freedman Colony was established by industrious, self-reliant African American pioneers – freed slave preachers, businessmen, educators, innovators, midwives, military veterans, and hardworking citizens – who celebrated Juneteenth together;
- WHEREAS:** Seven years after Gordon Granger read the Emancipation Proclamation in Galveston, Texas, the celebration of June 19th began in 1872 in St. John Colony and was called Juneteenth;
- WHEREAS:** Descendants of the founding fourteen pioneer families continue gathering in the old-time tradition – with barbecuing, traditional recipes, singing, dancing, and fellowship – to honor and preserve this deep-rooted history;
- WHEREAS:** This celebration memorializes and educates future generations about the legacy of freed slaves who accomplished so much with so little, standing together in unity and love, and must be preserved with purposefulness for generations to come.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE CALDWELL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT THAT the third Saturday of June be designated as:

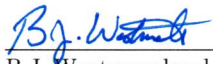
**THE WEEKEND OF THE ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION IN
ST. JOHN COLONY, TEXAS**

We call upon surrounding communities, counties, agencies at all levels of government, historical organizations, and individuals everywhere to observe Juneteenth in St. John Colony with activities and ceremonies among families, neighbors, and communities.


PROCLAIMED this the 11th day of June, 2026.




Hoppy Haden
Caldwell County Judge




B.J. Westmoreland
Commissioner, Precinct 1



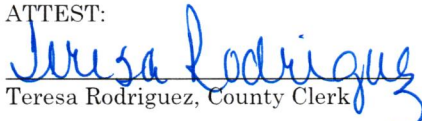
Rusty Horne
Commissioner, Precinct 2



Ed Theriot
Commissioner, Precinct 3



Dyrall Thomas
Commissioner, Precinct 4

ATTEST:


Teresa Rodriguez, County Clerk

