

The First National Thanksgiving

In the first year of the United States of America under its new Constitution, 235 years ago on Nov. 26, 1789, the new nation celebrated its first Thanksgiving.

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President George Washington's proclamation, thanking the Lord for His protection and provision, and praying for unity, repentance and good government, is as relevant today as it was 1789:

Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection and favor

Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the twenty-sixth day of November next, to be devoted by the people of these United States . . . that we then may all unite unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation; for the signal and manifold mercies and the favorable interpositions of His providence in the course and conclusion of the late war; for the great degree of tranquility, union, and plenty which we have since enjoyed; for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national one now lately instituted; for the civil and religious liberty with which we are now blessed. . . .

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our

prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations, and beseech Him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the People, by constantly being a government of wise, just and constitutional laws, discretely and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord, to promote the knowledge and practice for the true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as He alone knows best.

Since Washington first proclaimed Thanksgiving Day, the nation has seen wars, rebellions, panics, plagues and natural disasters. Yet God had kept us through it all.

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So let us follow Washington's admonition to be thankful, united and prayerful this Thanksgiving.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
—Philippians 4:6-7

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men and between believers. He is the founder of American Wake Up Call.