

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1989 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George H. W. Bush

On Thanksgiving Day, we Americans pause as a Nation to give thanks for the freedom and prosperity with which we have been blessed by our Creator. Like the pilgrims who first settled in this land, we offer praise to God for His goodness and generosity and rededicate ourselves to lives of service and virtue in His sight.

This annual observance of Thanksgiving was a cherished American tradition even before our first President, George Washington, issued the first Presidential Thanksgiving proclamation in 1789. In his first Inaugural Address, President Washington observed that "No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States." He noted that the American people - blessed with victory in their fight for Independence and with an abundance of crops in their fields - owed God "some return of pious gratitude." Later, in a confidential note to his close advisor, James Madison, he asked "should the sense of the Senate be taken on ... a day of Thanksgiving?" George Washington thus led the way to a Joint Resolution of Congress requesting the President to set aside "a day of public Thanksgiving and Prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal Favors of Almighty God."

Through the eloquent words of President Washington's initial Thanksgiving proclamation - the first under the Constitution - we are reminded of our dependence upon our Heavenly Father and of the debt of gratitude we owe to Him. "It is the Duty of all Nations," wrote Washington, "to acknowledge the Providence of almighty God, to obey his Will, to be grateful for his Benefits, and humbly to implore His Protection and Favor."

President Washington asked that on Thanksgiving Day the people of the United States:

unite in rendering unto [God] 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 great degree of Tranquility, Union and Plenty which we have since enjoyed; for ... the civil and religious Liberty with which we are blessed, and ... for all the great and various Favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

Two hundred years later, we continue to offer thanks to the Almighty - not only for the material prosperity that our Nation enjoys, but also for the blessings of peace and freedom. Our Nation has no greater treasures than these.

As we pause to acknowledge the kindnesses God has shown to us - and, indeed, His gift of life itself - we do so in a spirit of humility as well as gratitude. When the United States was still a fledgling democracy, President Washington asked the American people to unite in prayer to the "great Lord and ruler of Nations," in order to:

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, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed; to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations ... and to bless them with good Government, peace and Concord.

Today, we, too, pause on Thanksgiving with humble and contrite hearts, mindful of God's mercy and forgiveness and of our continued need for His protection and guidance. On this day, we also remember

that one gives praise to God not only through prayers of thanksgiving, but also through obedience to His commandments and service to others, especially those less fortunate than ourselves.

While some Presidents followed Washington's precedent, and some State Governors did as well, President Lincoln - despite being faced with the dark specter of civil war - renewed the practice of proclaiming a national day of Thanksgiving. This venerable tradition has been sustained by every President since then, in times of strife as well as times of peace and prosperity.

Today, we continue to offer thanks and praise to our Creator, that "Great Author of every public and private good," for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. In so doing, we recall the timeless words of the 100th Psalm:

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before His presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.

For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 23, 1989, as a National Day of Thanksgiving, and I call upon the American people to gather together in homes and places of worship on that day of thanks to affirm by their prayers and their gratitude the many blessings God has bestowed upon us and our Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1990 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George H. W. Bush

In the first Presidential Thanksgiving Day proclamation, George Washington observed that "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 to implore His Protection and Favor." As a people who have long enjoyed unparalleled material prosperity and the priceless blessings of peace and freedom, we Americans cannot fail to fulfill this great, yet joyous, duty. Thus, we pause each year on Thanksgiving Day to express our gratitude for the goodness and generosity of our Creator and to ask His continued protection and guidance in all our endeavors, both as individuals and as a Nation.

The observance of Thanksgiving was a cherished tradition in America long before George Washington called his countrymen "to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be." Indeed, we trace the tradition of giving thanks back to some of the earliest settlers in this country - not only the Pilgrims at Plymouth but also early colonists at Jamestown, New Amsterdam, and St. Augustine. With hands clasped in prayer and hearts full of gratitude, these men and women gave public thanks to God for having been sustained through times of hardship and peril.

William Bradford's account of the experience of the settlers at Plymouth Colony is not only a moving description of the trials of emigration to a wilderness but also captures their profound faith and contains a timeless exhortation to succeeding generations:

Being thus passed the vast ocean ... they had now no friends to welcome them, nor inns to entertain or refresh their weatherbeaten bodies, no houses or much less towns to repair to ... And for the season it was winter, and they that know the winters of that country know them to be sharp and violent ... Besides, what could they see but a hideous and desolate wilderness? ... Neither could they, as it were, go to the top of Pisgah, to view from this wilderness a more godly country to feed their hopes, for which way soever they turned their eyes (save upwards to the heavens) they could have little solace or content ... what could now sustain them but the spirit of God and His grace? They cried to the Lord, and He heard their voice, and looked on their adversity. Let them therefore praise the Lord, because He is good, and His mercies endure for ever.

The historic observance of a day of thanksgiving at Plymouth in 1621 was one of many occasions on which our ancestors paused to acknowledge their dependence on the mercy and favor of Divine Providence. Today, on this Thanksgiving Day, likewise observed during a season of celebration and harvest, we have added cause for rejoicing: the seeds of democratic thought sown on these shores continue to take root around the world. In Central and Eastern Europe, in Latin America, and elsewhere, courageous men and women are beginning to reap the blessings of freedom and self-government. Peoples who once suffered under the heavy yoke of totalitarianism have begun to claim the liberty to which all are heirs.

Our gratitude for the rights and opportunities we enjoy as Americans may be measured by how carefully we use and preserve these gifts, as when we cultivate in our children a love of freedom and an understanding of the responsibilities that freedom demands of us. We tend the precious blossom of our liberty when we recall the example of our ancestors and strive to ensure that our own lives are firmly rooted in faith. Like our forebears, we must cherish the values and beliefs that are the foundation of strong, loving families and caring communities and recognize the importance of learning and hard work, because these are the wellspring of progress and prosperity.

The great freedom and prosperity with which we have been blessed is cause for rejoicing - and it is equally a responsibility. Indeed, Scripture tells us that much will be asked of those to whom much has been given. Our "errand in the wilderness," begun more than 350 years ago, is not yet complete. Abroad, we are working toward a new partnership of nations. At home, we seek lasting solutions to the problems facing our Nation and pray for a society "with liberty and justice for all," the alleviation of want, and the restoration of hope to all our people.

This Thanksgiving, as we enjoy the company of family and friends, let us gratefully turn our hearts to God, the loving Source of all Life and Liberty. Let us seek His forgiveness for our shortcomings and transgressions and renew our determination to remain a people worthy of His continued favor and protection. Acknowledging our dependence on the Almighty, obeying His Commandments, and reaching out to help those who do not share fully in this Nation's bounty is the most heartfelt and meaningful answer we can give to the timeless appeal of the Psalmist: "O give thanks to the Lord for He is good: for his steadfast love endures forever."

Finally, on this Thanksgiving Day, let us also remember all those Americans abroad who labor to advance the ideals for which this great Nation stands. Whether Peace Corps volunteers or military or diplomatic personnel, these selfless individuals often accept great personal risks and sacrifices to serve our country. Let us remember, in particular, those Americans held hostage and members of the Armed Forces serving in the Persian Gulf region. On this day, let us pray for their well-being and their safe return to the United States. And let us be thankful that such fine men and women are still willing to answer the call of duty to country and to defend the cause of liberty.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby call upon the American people to observe Thursday, November 22, 1990, as a National Day of thanksgiving and to gather together in homes and places of worship on that day of thanks to affirm by their prayers and their gratitude the many blessings God has bestowed upon us.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fifteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1991 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George H. W. Bush

**F**rom the moment it was "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," our Nation has enjoyed the mercy and protection of Almighty God. Thus, when we join with family and friends on Thanksgiving, we celebrate not only the many blessings that we have received as individuals - including the gift of life itself - but also our great fortune as one nation under God. On this occasion, Americans of every race, creed, and walk of life are united by a profound sense of gratitude and duty.

As we continue the Thanksgiving tradition, a tradition cherished by every generation of Americans, we reflect in a special way on the blessings of the past year. When this Nation and its coalition partners took up arms in a last-resort effort to repel aggression in the Persian Gulf, we were spared the terrible consequences of a long and protracted struggle. Indeed, the millions of people who prayed for a quick end to the fighting saw those prayers answered with a swiftness and certainty that exceeded all expectations. During the past year, we have also witnessed the demise of communism and welcomed millions of courageous people into the community of free nations.

Of course, as we give thanks for these and other developments, we also remember the less fortunate - those who do not yet share in the promise of freedom; those who do not know the comfort of peace and security; and those whose tables do not reflect prosperity and plenty.

Time and again, Scripture describes our Creator's special love for the poor. As the Psalmist wrote, "He pours contempt upon princes ... yet sets the poor on high from affliction." In this great nation, we have a special obligation to care for the ill and the destitute. Therefore, recalling that much will be asked of those to whom much has been given, let us resolve to make food drives and other forms of charity an increasingly important part of our Thanksgiving tradition.

On this occasion, as we count our blessings and reach out to help the less fortunate, we also do well to remember that, in many ways, the poorest nations are those who neither recognize nor revere what our Founders called "the laws of Nature and of Nature's God." Indeed, we have seen totalitarian regimes impoverish entire peoples, not just economically, but spiritually, by denigrating religion and by denying the inherent dignity and worth of individuals. The moral bankruptcy of communism should remind every free nation of the dangers of cynicism and materialism.

Similarly, can any individual be truly rich or truly satisfied if he or she has not discovered the rewards of service to one's fellowman? Since not of us first experience the love of God through the goodness and generosity of others, what better gift could we give our children than a positive example?

Finally, as we gather with family and friends on Thanksgiving, we know that our greatest blessings are not necessarily material ones. Indeed, perhaps the best thing about this occasion is that it reminds us that God loves each and every one of us. Like a faithful and loving parent, He always stands ready to comfort, guide, and forgive. That is our real cause for Thanksgiving, today and every day of our lives.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1991, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I urge all Americans to gather together in their homes and in places of worship on that day to offer thanks to Almighty God for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon us as individuals and as a Nation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-fifth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and sixteenth.

GEORGE BUSH

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1992 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George H. W. Bush

At no time of year are Americans more mindful of our heritage as one Nation under God than at Thanksgiving - a day when people of every race, creed, and walk of life join in celebrating the many blessings that we have received as individuals and as a Nation. Thanksgiving is among the happiest of days because it fills our hearts with appreciation for the things that matter most: the goodness of our Creator, the love of family and friends, and, of course, the gift of life itself. In addition to giving thanks for our individual blessings, we Americans also join on this occasion in celebrating our shared legacy of freedom.

Since the earliest days of our Republic, Americans have been deeply aware of our indebtedness to the Almighty and our obligations as a people He has blessed. Even in the course of long, difficult journeys to these shores, our ancestors gratefully acknowledged the sustaining power of God - and the faithfulness they owed in return. Recognizing their quest for freedom as an enterprise no less historic than the ancient Israelites' exodus from Egypt, John Winthrop reminded his fellow pilgrims in 1630:

Now if the Lord shall please to hear us, and bring us in peace to the place that we desire, then hath He ratified this covenant and sealed our commission, [and] will expect a strict performance of the articles contained in it ... to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with our God.

By remaining grateful for, and faithful to, that divine commission, America has become a model of freedom and justice to the world - as our pilgrim ancestors envisioned, a shining "city upon a hill."

Ever grateful for our freedom and security, we Americans have worked to share these blessings with others, and today we rejoice in the fact that the seeds of democratic thought sown on these shores more than 300 years ago continue to blossom around the globe. Yet, even as we give thanks for the demise of imperial communism and for the current harvest of liberty throughout the world, like our ancestors we also recall our duties as stewards of this great and blessed land. As General Dwight Eisenhower said during World War II:

The winning of freedom is not to be compared to the winning of a game, with the victory recorded forever in history. Freedom has its life in the hearts, the actions, the spirits of men, and so it must be daily earned and refreshed - else like a flower cut from its life-giving roots, it will wither and die.

The liberty that we enjoy today is clearly rooted in our Nation's Judeo-Christian moral heritage and in the timeless values that have united Americans of all religions and all walks of life: love of God and family, personal responsibility and virtue, respect for the law, and concern for others. If the American Experiment is to continue to bear fruit in generations to come, we must cultivate those values in our children and teach them, by word and example, the difference between liberty and license, between the grateful exercise of freedom and the misuse of our precious rights.

This Thanksgiving, as we reflect on our Nation's heritage and give thanks to God for our many blessings, let us renew the solemn commitment that John Winthrop and his fellow pilgrims made more than 300 years ago. At a time when so many of the world's peoples look to America's example, let us stand for a liberty "to that only which is good, just, and honest." Mindful, too, that "he that gives to the poor lends to the Lord," let us reach out with generosity to persons in need - strangers who are hungry and homeless, neighbors who are sick or lonely, and loved ones who are eager for our time, attention, and encouragement.

I am both confident and grateful that - in the future, as in the past - this thanksgiving tradition will continue to bind us in appreciation of life's greatest blessings: our families and friends, our rich heritage of freedom, and, most of all, the unchanging wisdom and presence of Almighty God.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 26, 1992, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I urge all Americans to gather in their homes and in places of worship on that day to offer thanks to the Almighty for the many blessings that He has granted us as individuals and as a Nation. May we always strive to remain worthy of them.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventeenth.

GEORGE BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 1993  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

From the beginnings of our Nation, we have sought to recognize the providence and mercy of God with words and acts of gratitude, indeed with effort and energy toward helping others wherever need occurred. In the colorful days and weeks when the autumn of the year brings ripe and fruitful harvest across our land, Americans give thanks for many blessings. It is a time of bounty and generosity, a time to come together in peace.

This is the true spirit of Thanksgiving: acknowledging God's graciousness, and in response, reaching out in service to others. This spirit was apparent in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1621, when Pilgrim immigrants sat down with native Americans and celebrated their common harvest.

This same spirit of Thanksgiving inspires our great nation and our people to act with justice and concern toward all the peoples of the world and toward one another here at home. We are grateful for the dramatic progress made towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and for the Agreement signed in our United States; we are thankful for the relief efforts that our Nation and other have undertaken where natural disasters have struck unmercifully.

Still, in this final decade of the twentieth century, we face great challenges. The troubled areas of our world continue to challenge our ability to find peaceful and equitable solutions. On this Thanksgiving Day, the hospitality and harmony of loved ones, friends, and neighbors, remind each of us that we belong to the larger family of mankind.

As we gather together during this sacred and cherished time, let us pledge to build a new America where everyone will have a place at the table, and no one will be left out. In this way we will truly maintain the spirit of thanksgiving that has enriched our country since its beginnings. While recognizing the importance of individual responsibility, we will continue to place the strength and benevolence of this great Nation at the service of all its people, indeed of all the peoples of the earth. Then, in these richer years, we will reap a true and fruitful harvest.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 1993, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to gather in their homes, places of worship, or wherever they may choose to express heartfelt thanks for the abundance bestowed on us throughout our history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1994  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

As the end of another year draws closer, we are again filled with thankfulness for the blessings of a fruitful land. For more than 200 years, Americans have welcomed autumn's harvest with gratitude and goodwill. On Thanksgiving Day, we set aside our daily routines to acknowledge the bounty and mercy of Divine Providence. With full hearts, we bask in the warmth of family and community gatherings, and we reflect on the challenge, responsibility, and privilege that are ours as citizens of these United States.

It is our great fortune to live in a country of abundance and promise--a land of freedom for all. Still only a few generations removed from our Nation's founders, we continue to blaze a trail toward stability and justice. Aspiring to lift ourselves closer to God's grace, we remain determined to ease the pain of the many people who know only poverty and despair. Clearly, ours is an unfinished journey.

Our destination must be to create the means for every one of us to prosper, to enjoy sound education, meaningful work experience, protective health care, and personal security. It is our responsibility to prompt the national conscience so that by fostering virtue, wisdom, and moral values, we rejoice in our growth as a people.

Our challenge is to give assistance and encouragement that are equitable and just and that alleviate human suffering. Our responsibility is to nurture the processes of peace and equal human rights everywhere with compassion and concern. And like other pioneers before us, it is our privilege to be able to aim toward lofty goals.

Across this land as people gather together with loved ones to savor the bounty of the Thanksgiving Holiday, I invite each family, each religious congregation, each community and city, to celebrate your experience of the American heritage. Reach out in friendship and cooperation to the people of your hometown. Take responsibility for bringing harmony and hope, peace and prosperity to all of the inhabitants of our world. Share the privileges of freedom and the challenge of working for a better world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 24, 1994, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I urge the citizens of this great Nation to continue this beloved tradition and to strengthen it by gathering in their homes and places of worship to express their heartfelt gratitude for the many blessings of our lives.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and nineteenth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1995 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

In 1621, Massachusetts Bay Governor William Bradford invited members of the neighboring Wampanoag tribe to join the Pilgrims as they celebrated their first harvest in a new land. This 3-day festival brought people together to delight in the richness of the earth and to give praise for their new friendships and progress. More than 300 years later, the tradition inspired by that gathering continues on Thanksgiving Day across America--a holiday that unites citizens from every culture, race, and background in common thanks for the gifts we receive from God.

As we pause to reflect on the events of the past year, we recognize anew our Nation's many and wonderful blessings. We are deeply grateful for the abundance that keeps America strong and prosperous; for our freedoms and the freedom spreading to people all over the world; for the new hope of peace in regions where people have suffered much but are working hard toward reconciliation; for the 50 years of international cooperation that have followed the end of World War II; and especially for the generosity and love that united our Nation after the tragedy in Oklahoma City. Let us open our hearts to the grace that makes all good things possible and acknowledge God's care for our world.

Let us each take time to offer thanks for the bounty of our own lives and for the relatives and friends that gather with us to share food and companionship on this special day. We give praise for the relationships that sustain us--in our families, churches, schools, and communities. We voice our appreciation for the satisfaction of work and the joys of leisure, and, most of all, we give thanks for the children that enrich our lives and remind us daily that we are the stewards of the earth and all its possibilities.

This cherished season also calls us to look forward to the challenges that lie before us as individuals and as a country. With God's help, we can shoulder our responsibilities so that future generations will inherit the wealth of opportunities we now enjoy. In everything we do, we must plan for the Thanksgivings to come and continue our efforts to build an America where everyone has a place at the table and a fair share in our Nation's harvest.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 23, 1995, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt gratitude for the blessings of life; and to reach out in friendship to our brothers and sisters in the larger family of mankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this ninth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

# THANKSGIVING DAY 1996 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

America's oldest tradition, Thanksgiving is also a reaffirmation of our most deeply held values; a public recognition that, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, "God who gave us life gave us liberty." In gratitude for God's gift of freedom and "for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us," George Washington made Thanksgiving his first proclamation for the new Nation, and it is one we are privileged to renew each year.

Much has changed for America in the two centuries since that first Thanksgiving proclamation. Generations of hardworking men and women have cultivated our soil and worked the land, and today America's bounty helps feed the world. The promise of freedom that sustained our founders through the hardships of the Revolution and the first challenging days of nationhood has become a reality for millions of immigrants who left their homelands for a new life on these shores. And the light of that freedom now shines brightly in many nations that once lived in the shadows of tyranny and oppression.

But across the years, we still share an unbroken bond with the men and women who first proclaimed Thanksgiving in our land. Americans today still cherish the fresh air of freedom, in which we can raise our families and worship God as we choose without fear of persecution. We still rejoice in this great land and in the civil and religious liberty it offers to all. And we still--and always--raise our voices in prayer to God, thanking Him in humility for the countless blessings He has bestowed on our Nation and our people.

Let us now, this Thanksgiving Day, reawaken ourselves and our neighbors and our communities to the genius of our founders in daring to build the world's first constitutional democracy on the foundation of trust and thanks to God. Out of our right and proper rejoicing on Thanksgiving Day, let us give our own thanks to God and reaffirm our love of family, neighbor, and community. Each of us can be an instrument of blessing to those we touch this Thanksgiving Day--and every day of the year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 1996, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt gratitude for the blessings of life; and to reach out in friendship to our brothers and sisters in the larger family of mankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1997  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

Another year has passed on our American journey. The seasons have completed another cycle, and it is harvest time in America. Once again, millions of us will gather with family and friends to give thanks to God for the many blessings that He has bestowed upon us.

This Thanksgiving Day, as every day, we are grateful for the gift of freedom, for the vision made real by our Nation's founders and preserved by the courage, vigilance, and sacrifice of generations of Americans. We are thankful for the bounty and beauty of this great land, which has welcomed so many to its shores across the years. We cherish the love of our families and friends. We value the opportunity to provide for our children's future with the fruits of our honest labor. And, like the Pilgrims who celebrated Thanksgiving more than 300 years ago, we thank God for bringing us safely to the threshold of a new world, full of exhilarating challenge and promise.

In this new world, our children are growing up free from the shadows of the Cold War and the threat of nuclear holocaust. Nations once held captive by communism are learning the lessons of liberty and democracy. A revolution in technology has brought the world closer together and holds the prospect of greater knowledge and prosperity for people across the globe.

More than three centuries of change and growth separate us from the Pilgrims and their Native American friends who sat down together for their Thanksgiving meal. But the example and experience of those early Americans still hold great meaning for us today. They remind us that God's love strengthens and sustains us, both as individuals and as a Nation. They remind us that everyone has something to contribute, and that we are all richer when we learn to share. They teach us a simple but powerful lesson that each new generation of Americans must learn and pass on: we need one another. Like the Pilgrims, if we are to flourish in our new world, we must do so not as isolated individuals, but as members of a family, one America, sharing our gifts and leaving no one behind.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 1997, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt thanks to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us; and to reach out in true friendship to our brothers and sisters across this land who, together, comprise our great American family.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1998  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

Thanksgiving Day is one of America's most beloved and widely celebrated holidays. Whether descendants of the original colonists or new citizens, Americans join with family and friends to give thanks to a provident God for the blessings of freedom, peace, and plenty.

We are a Nation of people who have come from many countries, cultures, and creeds. The colonial Thanksgiving at Plymouth in 1621, when the Pilgrims of the Old World mingled in fellowship and celebration with the American Indians of the New World, foreshadowed the challenge and opportunity that such diversity has always offered us: to live together in peace with respect and appreciation for our differences and to draw on one another's strengths in the work of building a great and unified Nation.

And so at Thanksgiving we must also remember to be thankful for the many contributions each generation of Americans has made to preserve our blessings. We are thankful for the brave patriots who have fought and died to defend our freedom and uphold our belief in human dignity. We are thankful for the men and women who have worked this land throughout the decades, from the stony farms of New England to the broad wheat fields of the Great Plains to the fertile vineyards of California, sharing our country's bounty with their fellow Americans and people around the world. We are thankful for the leaders and visionaries who have challenged us through the years to fulfill America's promise for all our people, to make real in our society our fundamental ideals of freedom, equality, and justice. We are thankful for the countless quiet heroes and heroines who work hard each day, raise their families with love and care, and still find time and energy to make their communities better places in which to live. Each of us has reason to be proud of our part in building America, and each of us has reason to be grateful to our fellow Americans for the success of these efforts.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 26, 1998, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of goodwill and prayer; to express heartfelt thanks to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us; and to reach out in true gratitude and friendship to our brothers and sisters across this land who, together, comprise our great American family.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1999  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

Well over three and a half centuries ago, strengthened by faith and bound by a common desire for liberty, a small band of Pilgrims sought out a place in the New World where they could worship according to their own beliefs. Surviving their first harsh winter in Massachusetts and grateful to a merciful God for a sustaining harvest, the men and women of Plymouth Colony set aside three days as a time to give thanks for the bounty of their fields, the fruits of their labor, the chance to live in peace with their Native American neighbors, and the blessings of a land where they could live and worship freely.

We have come far on our American journey since that early Thanksgiving. In the intervening years, we have lived through times of war and peace, years of poverty and plenty, and seasons of social and political upheaval that have shaped and forever changed our national character and experience. As we gather around our Thanksgiving tables again this year, it is a fitting time to reflect on how the events of our rich history have affected those we care about and those who came before us. As we acknowledge the past, we do so knowing that the individual blessings for which we give thanks may have changed, but our gratitude to God and our commitment to our fellow Americans remain constant.

Today we count among our national blessings a time of unprecedented prosperity, with an expanding economy, record low rates of poverty and unemployment among our people, and the limitless opportunities to improve the quality of life that new technologies present to us. We can give thanks today that for the first time in history, more than half the world's people live under governments of their own choosing. And we remain grateful for the peace and freedom America continues to enjoy thanks to the courage and patriotism of our men and women in uniform.

But the spirit of Thanksgiving requires more than just an acknowledgment of our blessings; it calls upon us to reach out and share those blessings with others. We must strive to fulfill the promise of the extraordinary era in which we live and enter the new century with a commitment to widen the circle of opportunity, break down the prejudices that alienate us from one another, and build an America of understanding and inclusion, strong in our diversity, responsible in our freedom, and generous in sharing our bounty with those in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 1999, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to share the spirit of fellowship and prayer and to reinforce the ties of family and community; to express heartfelt thanks to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us; and to reach out in true gratitude and friendship to our brothers and sisters in the larger family of humankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THANKSGIVING DAY 2000  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

William J. Clinton

We have much to be grateful for this Thanksgiving Day. Our Nation is free, prosperous, and at peace. The remarkable growth in human knowledge and technological innovation offers real hope for defeating the age-old enemies of humanity: poverty, famine, and disease. Our dynamic economy continues to generate millions of new jobs, and, as wages rise and unemployment falls to its lowest level in more than a generation, millions of American families are sharing in the bounty of this great land for the first time.

Sharing in God's blessings is at the heart of Thanksgiving and at the core of the American spirit. At Plymouth in 1621, the Pilgrims celebrated their first harvest in the New World thanks to the generosity of their Native American neighbors. In return, the Pilgrims invited these tribal members to share in their harvest festival. At Thanksgiving this year and every year, in worship services and family celebrations across our country, Americans carry on that tradition of giving, sharing not only with family and friends, but also with those in need throughout their communities.

Every generation of Americans has benefited from the generosity, talents, efforts, and contributions of their fellow citizens. All of us have been enriched by the diverse cultures, traditions, and beliefs of the millions of people who, by birth or choice, have come to call America their home. All of us are beneficiaries of our founders' wisdom and of the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform. While Americans are an independent people, we are interdependent as well, and our greatest achievements are those we have accomplished together.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, let us remember with gratitude that despite our differences in background, age, politics, or race, each of us is a member of our larger American family and that, working together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish in this promising new century.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 23, 2000, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to assemble in their homes, places of worship, and community centers to share the spirit of fellowship and prayer and to reinforce the ties of family and community; to express heartfelt thanks to God for our many blessings; and to reach out in gratitude and friendship to our brothers and sisters across this land who, together, comprise our great American family.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2001 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

Nearly half a century ago, President Dwight Eisenhower proclaimed Thanksgiving as a time when Americans should celebrate "the plentiful yield of our soil . . . the beauty of our land . . . the preservation of those ideals of liberty and justice that form the basis of our national life, and the hope of international peace." Now, in the painful aftermath of the September 11 attacks and in the midst of our resolute war on terrorism, President Eisenhower's hopeful words point us to our collective obligation to defend the enduring principles of freedom that form the foundation of our Republic.

During these extraordinary times, we find particular assurance from our Thanksgiving tradition, which reminds us that we, as a people and individually, always have reason to hope and trust in God, despite great adversity. In 1621 in New England, the Pilgrims gave thanks to God, in whom they placed their hope, even though a bitter winter had taken many of their brethren. In the winter of 1777, General George Washington and his army, having just suffered great misfortune, stopped near Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to give thanks to God. And there, in the throes of great difficulty, they found the hope they needed to persevere. That hope in freedom eventually inspired them to victory.

In 1789, President Washington, recollecting the countless blessings for which our new Nation should give thanks, declared the first National Day of Thanksgiving. And decades later, with the Nation embroiled in a bloody civil war, President Abraham Lincoln revived what is now an annual tradition of issuing a presidential proclamation of Thanksgiving. President Lincoln asked God to "heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and Union."

As we recover from the terrible tragedies of September 11, Americans of every belief and heritage give thanks to God for the many blessings we enjoy as a free, faithful, and fair-minded land. Let us particularly give thanks for the self-less sacrifices of those who responded in service to others after the terrorist attacks, setting aside their own safety as they reached out to help their neighbors. Let us also give thanks for our leaders at every level who have planned and coordinated the myriad of responses needed to address this unprecedented national crisis. And let us give thanks for the millions of people of faith who have opened their hearts to those in need with love and prayer, bringing us a deeper unity and stronger resolve.

In thankfulness and humility, we acknowledge, especially now, our dependence on One greater than ourselves. On this day of Thanksgiving, let our thanksgiving be revealed in the compassionate support we render to our fellow citizens who are grieving unimaginable loss; and let us reach out with care to those in need of food, shelter, and words of hope. May Almighty God, who is our refuge and our strength in this time of trouble, watch over our homeland, protect us, and grant us patience, resolve, and wisdom in all that is to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 2001, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage Americans to assemble in their homes, places of worship, or community centers to reinforce ties of family and community, express our profound thanks for the many blessings we enjoy, and reach out in true gratitude and friendship to our friends around the world.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-sixth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2002  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

In celebration of Thanksgiving Day 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt wrote, "Rarely has any people enjoyed greater prosperity than we are now enjoying. For this we render heartfelt and solemn thanks to the Giver of Good; and we seek to praise Him -- not by words only -- but by deeds, by the way in which we do our duty to ourselves and to our fellow men." President Roosevelt's words gracefully remind us that, as citizens of this great Nation, we have much for which to be thankful; and his timeless call inspires us to meet our responsibilities to help those in need and to promote greater understanding at home and abroad.

As the Pilgrims did almost four centuries ago, we gratefully give thanks this year for the beauty, abundance, and opportunity this great land offers. We also thank God for the blessings of freedom and prosperity; and, with gratitude and humility, we acknowledge the importance of faith in our lives.

Throughout the Thanksgiving holiday, let us renew our commitment to make our country and our world better. As we welcome new opportunities and face new challenges, we are thankful for the resolve and generosity of so many of our people who are touching countless hearts and souls through thoughtful acts of kindness. By answering the call to serve others, Americans are building a culture of service that strengthens our Nation. We also honor and salute the selfless sacrifice of the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who are defending our lives and liberty at home and abroad with skill, honor, and dedication.

This Thanksgiving, we recognize the ties of friendship and respect that bind us together. And we renew our pledge to uphold the timeless principles of freedom, equality, and opportunity that have made our country into a great Nation. By working together, we will continue to build mutual trust, peace, and hope for all across this land and around the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 2002, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage Americans to gather in their homes, places of worship, and community centers to share the spirit of understanding and unity, and of prayer, as we express our thanks for the many blessings we enjoy. I also encourage Americans to reach out in friendship to the larger family of humankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2003  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

Each year on Thanksgiving, we gather with family and friends to thank God for the many blessings He has given us, and we ask God to continue to guide and watch over our country.

Almost 400 years ago, after surviving their first winter at Plymouth, the Pilgrims celebrated a harvest feast to give thanks. George Washington proclaimed the first National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, and Abraham Lincoln revived the tradition during the Civil War. Since that time, our citizens have paused to express thanks for the bounty of blessings we enjoy and to spend time with family and friends. In want or in plenty, in times of challenge or times of calm, we always have reasons to be thankful.

America is a land of abundance, prosperity, and hope. We must never take for granted the things that make our country great: a firm foundation of freedom, justice, and equality; a belief in democracy and the rule of law; and our fundamental rights to gather, speak, and worship freely.

These liberties do not come without cost. Throughout history, many have sacrificed to preserve our freedoms and to defend peace around the world. Today, the brave men and women of our military continue this noble tradition. These heroes and their loved ones have the gratitude of our Nation.

On this day, we also remember those less fortunate among us. They are our neighbors and our fellow citizens, and we are committed to reaching out to them and to all of those in need in our communities.

This Thanksgiving, we again give thanks for all of our blessings and for the freedoms we enjoy every day. Our Founders thanked the Almighty and humbly sought His wisdom and blessing. May we always live by that same trust, and may God continue to watch over and bless the United States of America.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 2003, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage Americans to gather in their homes, places of worship, and community centers to share the spirit of understanding and prayer and to reinforce ties of family and community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2004  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

All across America, we gather this week with the people we love to give thanks to God for the blessings in our lives. We are grateful for our freedom, grateful for our families and friends, and grateful for the many gifts of America. On Thanksgiving Day, we acknowledge that all of these things, and life itself, come from the Almighty God.

Almost four centuries ago, the Pilgrims celebrated a harvest feast to thank God after suffering through a brutal winter. President George Washington proclaimed the first National Day of Thanksgiving in 1789, and President Lincoln revived the tradition during the Civil War, asking Americans to give thanks with "one heart and one voice." Since then, in times of war and in times of peace, Americans have gathered with family and friends and given thanks to God for our blessings.

Thanksgiving is also a time to share our blessings with those who are less fortunate. Americans this week will gather food and clothing for neighbors in need. Many young people will give part of their holiday to volunteer at homeless shelters and food pantries. On Thanksgiving, we remember that the true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of the American people. By seeking out those who are hurting and by lending a hand, Americans touch the lives of their fellow citizens and help make our Nation and the world a better place.

This Thanksgiving, we express our gratitude to our dedicated firefighters and police officers who help keep our homeland safe. We are grateful to the homeland security and intelligence personnel who spend long hours on faithful watch. And we give thanks for the Americans in our Armed Forces who are serving around the world to secure our country and advance the cause of freedom. These brave men and women make our entire Nation proud, and we thank them and their families for their sacrifice.

On this Thanksgiving Day, we thank God for His blessings and ask Him to continue to guide and watch over our Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 2004, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship to reinforce the ties of family and community and to express gratitude for the many blessings we enjoy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-ninth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2005  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

**T**hanksgiving Day is a time to remember our many blessings and to celebrate the opportunities that freedom affords. Explorers and settlers arriving in this land often gave thanks for the extraordinary plenty they found. And today, we remain grateful to live in a country of liberty and abundance. We give thanks for the love of family and friends, and we ask God to continue to watch over America.

This Thanksgiving, we pray and express thanks for the men and women who work to keep America safe and secure. Members of our Armed Forces, State and local law enforcement, and first responders embody our Nation's highest ideals of courage and devotion to duty. Our country is grateful for their service and for the support and sacrifice of their families. We ask God's special blessings on those who have lost loved ones in the line of duty.

We also remember those affected by the destruction of natural disasters. Their tremendous determination to recover their lives exemplifies the American spirit, and we are grateful for those across our Nation who answered the cries of their neighbors in need and provided them with food, shelter, and a helping hand. We ask for continued strength and perseverance as we work to rebuild these communities and return hope to our citizens.

We give thanks to live in a country where freedom reigns, justice prevails, and hope prospers. We recognize that America is a better place when we answer the universal call to love a neighbor and help those in need. May God bless and guide the United States of America as we move forward.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 24, 2005, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship with family, friends, and loved ones to reinforce the ties that bind us and give thanks for the freedoms and many blessings we enjoy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirtieth.

GEORGE W. BUSH

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2006 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

As Americans gather with family and friends to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, we give thanks for the many ways that our Nation and our people have been blessed.

The Thanksgiving tradition dates back to the earliest days of our society, celebrated in decisive moments in our history and in quiet times around family tables. Nearly four centuries have passed since early settlers gave thanks for their safe arrival and pilgrims enjoyed a harvest feast to thank God for allowing them to survive a harsh winter in the New World. General George Washington observed Thanksgiving during the Revolutionary War, and in his first proclamation after becoming President, he declared November 26, 1789, a national day of "thanksgiving and prayer." During the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln revived the tradition of proclaiming a day of thanksgiving, reminding a divided Nation of its founding ideals.

At this time of great promise for America, we are grateful for the freedoms guaranteed by our Constitution and defended by our Armed Forces throughout the generations. Today, many of these courageous men and women are securing our peace in places far from home, and we pay tribute to them and to their families for their service, sacrifice, and strength. We also honor the families of the fallen and lift them up in our prayers.

Our citizens are privileged to live in the world's freest country, where the hope of the American dream is within the reach of every person. Americans share a desire to answer the universal call to serve something greater than ourselves, and we see this spirit every day in the millions of volunteers throughout our country who bring hope and healing to those in need. On this Thanksgiving Day, and throughout the year, let us show our gratitude for the blessings of freedom, family, and faith, and may God continue to bless America.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 23, 2006, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship with family, friends, and loved ones to reinforce the ties that bind us and give thanks for the freedoms and many blessings we enjoy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-first.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2007  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

Americans are a grateful people, ever mindful of the many ways we have been blessed. On Thanksgiving Day, we lift our hearts in gratitude for the freedoms we enjoy, the people we love, and the gifts of our prosperous land.

Our country was founded by men and women who realized their dependence on God and were humbled by His providence and grace. The early explorers and settlers who arrived in this land gave thanks for God's protection and for the extraordinary natural abundance they found. Since the first National Day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed by President George Washington, Americans have come together to offer thanks for our many blessings. We recall the great privilege it is to live in a land where freedom is the right of every person and where all can pursue their dreams. We express our deep appreciation for the sacrifices of the honorable men and women in uniform who defend liberty. As they work to advance the cause of freedom, our Nation keeps these brave individuals and their families in our thoughts, and we pray for their safe return.

While Thanksgiving is a time to gather in a spirit of gratitude with family, friends, and neighbors, it is also an opportunity to serve others and to share our blessings with those in need. By answering the universal call to love a neighbor as we want to be loved ourselves, we make our Nation a more hopeful and caring place.

This Thanksgiving, may we reflect upon the past year with gratefulness and look toward the future with hope. Let us give thanks for all we have been given and ask God to continue to bless our families and our Nation.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 2007, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship with family, friends, and loved ones to reinforce the ties that bind us and give thanks for the freedoms and many blessings we enjoy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

THANKSGIVING DAY 2008  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

George W. Bush

Thanksgiving is a time for families and friends to gather together and express gratitude for all that we have been given, the freedoms we enjoy, and the loved ones who enrich our lives. We recognize that all of these blessings, and life itself, come not from the hand of man but from Almighty God.

Every Thanksgiving, we remember the story of the Pilgrims who came to America in search of religious freedom and a better life. Having arrived in the New World, these early settlers gave thanks to the Author of Life for granting them safe passage to this abundant land and protecting them through a bitter winter. Our Nation's first President, George Washington, stated in the first Thanksgiving proclamation that "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 to implore His protection and favor." While in the midst of the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln revived the tradition of proclaiming a day of thanksgiving, asking God to heal our wounds and restore our country.

Today, as we look back on the beginnings of our democracy, Americans recall that we live in a land of many blessings where every person has the right to live, work, and worship in freedom. Our Nation is especially thankful for the brave men and women of our Armed Forces who protect these rights while setting aside their own comfort and safety. Their courage keeps us free, their sacrifice makes us grateful, and their character makes us proud. Especially during the holidays, our whole country keeps them and their families in our thoughts and prayers.

Americans are also mindful of the need to share our gifts with others, and our Nation is moved to compassionate action. We pay tribute to all caring citizens who reach out a helping hand and serve a cause larger than themselves.

On this day, let us all give thanks to God who blessed our Nation's first days and who blesses us today. May He continue to guide and watch over our families and our country always.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 27, 2008, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all Americans to gather together in their homes and places of worship with family, friends, and loved ones to strengthen the ties that bind us and give thanks for the freedoms and many blessings we enjoy.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-first day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-third.

GEORGE W. BUSH

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2009 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Barack H. Obama

What began as a harvest celebration between European settlers and indigenous communities nearly four centuries ago has become our cherished tradition of Thanksgiving. This day's roots are intertwined with those of our Nation, and its history traces the American narrative.

Today, we recall President George Washington, who proclaimed our first national day of public thanksgiving to be observed "by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God," and President Abraham Lincoln, who established our annual Thanksgiving Day to help mend a fractured Nation in the midst of civil war. We also recognize the contributions of Native Americans, who helped the early colonists survive their first harsh winter and continue to strengthen our Nation. From our earliest days of independence, and in times of tragedy and triumph, Americans have come together to celebrate Thanksgiving.

As Americans, we hail from every part of the world. While we observe traditions from every culture, Thanksgiving Day is a unique national tradition we all share. Its spirit binds us together as one people, each of us thankful for our common blessings.

As we gather once again among loved ones, let us also reach out to our neighbors and fellow citizens in need of a helping hand. This is a time for us to renew our bonds with one another, and we can fulfill that commitment by serving our communities and our Nation throughout the year. In doing so, we pay tribute to our country's men and women in uniform who set an example of service that inspires us all. Let us be guided by the legacy of those who have fought for the freedoms for which we give thanks, and be worthy heirs to the noble tradition of goodwill shown on this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 26, 2009, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to come together, whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place where family, friends and neighbors may gather, with gratitude for all we have received in the past year; to express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own; and to share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth.

BARACK OBAMA

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2010 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Barack H. Obama

A beloved American tradition, Thanksgiving Day offers us the opportunity to focus our thoughts on the grace that has been extended to our people and our country. This spirit brought together the newly arrived Pilgrims and the Wampanoag tribe -- who had been living and thriving around Plymouth, Massachusetts for thousands of years -- in an autumn harvest feast centuries ago. This Thanksgiving Day, we reflect on the compassion and contributions of Native Americans, whose skill in agriculture helped the early colonists survive, and whose rich culture continues to add to our Nation's heritage. We also pause our normal pursuits on this day and join in a spirit of fellowship and gratitude for the year's bounties and blessings.

Thanksgiving Day is a time each year, dating back to our founding, when we lay aside the troubles and disagreements of the day and bow our heads in humble recognition of the providence bestowed upon our Nation. Amidst the uncertainty of a fledgling experiment in democracy, President George Washington declared the first Thanksgiving in America, recounting the blessings of tranquility, union, and plenty that shined upon our young country. In the dark days of the Civil War when the fate of our Union was in doubt, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a Thanksgiving Day, calling for "the Almighty hand" to heal and restore our Nation.

In confronting the challenges of our day, we must draw strength from the resolve of previous generations who faced their own struggles and take comfort in knowing a brighter day has always dawned on our great land. As we stand at the close of one year and look to the promise of the next, we lift up our hearts in gratitude to God for our many blessings, for one another, and for our Nation. This Thanksgiving Day, we remember that the freedoms and security we enjoy as Americans are protected by the brave men and women of the United States Armed Forces. These patriots are willing to lay down their lives in our defense, and they and their families deserve our profound gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

This harvest season, we are also reminded of those experiencing the pangs of hunger or the hardship of economic insecurity. Let us return the kindness and generosity we have seen throughout the year by helping our fellow citizens weather the storms of our day.

As Americans gather for the time-honored Thanksgiving Day meal, let us rejoice in the abundance that graces our tables, in the simple gifts that mark our days, in the loved ones who enrich our lives, and in the gifts of a gracious God. Let us recall that our forebears met their challenges with hope and an unflinching spirit, and let us resolve to do the same.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 25, 2010, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage all the people of the United States to come together -- whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors -- to give thanks for all we have received in the past year, to express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and to share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand ten, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fifth.

BARACK OBAMA

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2011 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Barack H. Obama

One of our nation's oldest and most cherished traditions, Thanksgiving Day brings us closer to our loved ones and invites us to reflect on the blessings that enrich our lives. The observance recalls the celebration of an autumn harvest centuries ago, when the Wampanoag tribe joined the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony to share in the fruits of a bountiful season. The feast honored the Wampanoag for generously extending their knowledge of local game and agriculture to the Pilgrims, and today we renew our gratitude to all American Indians and Alaska Natives. We take this time to remember the ways that the first Americans have enriched our nation's heritage, from their generosity centuries ago to the everyday contributions they make to all facets of American life. As we come together with friends, family and neighbors to celebrate, let us set aside our daily concerns and give thanks for the providence bestowed upon us.

Though our traditions have evolved, the spirit of grace and humility at the heart of Thanksgiving has persisted through every chapter of our story. When President George Washington proclaimed our country's first Thanksgiving, he praised a generous and knowing God for shepherding our young republic through its uncertain beginnings. Decades later, President Abraham Lincoln looked to the divine to protect those who had known the worst of civil war, and to restore the nation "to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and union."

In times of adversity and times of plenty, we have lifted our hearts by giving humble thanks for the blessings we have received and for those who bring meaning to our lives. Today, let us offer gratitude to our men and women in uniform for their many sacrifices, and keep in our thoughts the families who save an empty seat at the table for a loved one stationed in harm's way. And as members of our American family make do with less, let us rededicate ourselves to our friends and fellow citizens in need of a helping hand.

As we gather in our communities and in our homes, around the table or near the hearth, we give thanks to each other and to God for the many kindnesses and comforts that grace our lives. Let us pause to recount the simple gifts that sustain us, and resolve to pay them forward in the year to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 24, 2011, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to come together — whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors — to give thanks for all we have received in the past year, to express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and to share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand eleven, and of the independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

# THANKSGIVING DAY 2012 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Barack H. Obama

On Thanksgiving Day, Americans everywhere gather with family and friends to recount the joys and blessings of the past year. This day is a time to take stock of the fortune we have known and the kindnesses we have shared, grateful for the God-given bounty that enriches our lives. As many pause to lend a hand to those in need, we are also reminded of the indelible spirit of compassion and mutual responsibility that has distinguished our Nation since its earliest days.

Many Thanksgivings have offered opportunities to celebrate community during times of hardship. When the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony gave thanks for a bountiful harvest nearly four centuries ago, they enjoyed the fruits of their labor with the Wampanoag tribe -- a people who had shared vital knowledge of the land in the difficult months before. When President George Washington marked our democracy's first Thanksgiving, he prayed to our Creator for peace, union, and plenty through the trials that would surely come. And when our Nation was torn by bitterness and civil war, President Abraham Lincoln reminded us that we were, at heart, one Nation, sharing a bond as Americans that could bend but would not break. Those expressions of unity still echo today, whether in the contributions that generations of Native Americans have made to our country, the Union our forebears fought so hard to preserve, or the providence that draws our families together this season.

As we reflect on our proud heritage, let us also give thanks to those who honor it by giving back. This Thanksgiving, thousands of our men and women in uniform will sit down for a meal far from their loved ones and the comforts of home. We honor their service and sacrifice. We also show our appreciation to Americans who are serving in their communities, ensuring their neighbors have a hot meal and a place to stay. Their actions reflect our age-old belief that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and they affirm once more that we are a people who draw our deepest strength not from might or wealth, but from our bonds to each other.

On Thanksgiving Day, individuals from all walks of life come together to celebrate this most American tradition, grateful for the blessings of family, community, and country. Let us spend this day by lifting up those we love, mindful of the grace bestowed upon us by God and by all who have made our lives richer with their presence.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 22, 2012, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to join together -- whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors -- and give thanks for all we have received in the past year, express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twentieth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-seventh.

BARACK OBAMA

THANKSGIVING DAY 2013  
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Thanksgiving offers each of us the chance to count our many blessings -- the freedoms we enjoy, the time we spend with loved ones, the brave men and women who defend our Nation at home and abroad. This tradition reminds us that no matter what our background or beliefs, no matter who we are or who we love, at our core we are first and foremost Americans.

Our annual celebration has roots in centuries-old colonial customs. When we gather around the table, we follow the example of the Pilgrims and Wampanoags, who shared the fruits of a successful harvest nearly 400 years ago. When we offer our thanks, we mirror those who set aside a day of prayer. And when we join with friends and neighbors to alleviate suffering and make our communities whole, we honor the spirit of President Abraham Lincoln, who called on his fellow citizens to "fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union."

Our country has always been home to Americans who recognize the importance of giving back. Today, we honor all those serving our Nation far from home. We also thank the first responders and medical professionals who work through the holiday to keep us safe, and we acknowledge the volunteers who dedicate this day to those less fortunate.

This Thanksgiving Day, let us forge deeper connections with our loved ones. Let us extend our gratitude and our compassion. And let us lift each other up and recognize, in the oldest spirit of this tradition, that we rise or fall as one Nation, under God.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 28, 2013, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to join together -- whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors -- and give thanks for all we have received in the past year, express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-eighth.

BARACK OBAMA

## THANKSGIVING DAY 2014 BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Thanksgiving Day invites us to reflect on the blessings we enjoy and the freedoms we cherish. As we gather with family and friends to take part in this uniquely American celebration, we give thanks for the extraordinary opportunities we have in a Nation of limitless possibilities, and we pay tribute to all those who defend our Union as members of our Armed Forces. This holiday reminds us to show compassion and concern for people we have never met and deep gratitude toward those who have sacrificed to help build the most prosperous Nation on earth. These traditions honor the rich history of our country and hold us together as one American family, no matter who we are or where we come from.

Nearly 400 years ago, a group of Pilgrims left their homeland and sailed across an ocean in pursuit of liberty and prosperity. With the friendship and kindness of the Wampanoag people, they learned to harvest the rich bounty of a new world.

Together, they shared a successful crop, celebrating bonds of community during a time of great hardship. Through times of war and of peace, the example of a Native tribe who extended a hand to a new people has endured. During the American Revolution and the Civil War, days of thanksgiving drew Americans together in prayer and in the spirit that guides us to better days, and in each year since, our Nation has paused to show our gratitude for our families, communities, and country.

With God's grace, this holiday season we carry forward the legacy of our forebears. In the company of our loved ones, we give thanks for the people we care about and the joy we share, and we remember those who are less fortunate. At shelters and soup kitchens, Americans give meaning to the simple truth that binds us together: we are our brother's and our sister's keepers. We remember how a determined people set out for a better world -- how through faith and the charity of others, they forged a new life built on freedom and opportunity.

The spirit of Thanksgiving is universal. It is found in small moments between strangers, reunions shared with friends and loved ones, and in quiet prayers for others. Within the heart of America's promise burns the inextinguishable belief that together we can advance our common prosperity -- that we can build a more hopeful, more just, and more unified Nation. This Thanksgiving, let us recall the values that unite our diverse country, and let us resolve to strengthen these lasting ties.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Thursday, November 27, 2014, as a National Day of Thanksgiving. I encourage the people of the United States to join together -- whether in our homes, places of worship, community centers, or any place of fellowship for friends and neighbors -- and give thanks for all we have received in the past year, express appreciation to those whose lives enrich our own, and share our bounty with others.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand fourteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-ninth.

Barack Obama