



PRESIDENTIAL THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATIONS
1890-1899: Benjamin Harrison,
Grover Cleveland, William McKinley

THANKSGIVING DAY 1890

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

By the grace and favor of Almighty God the people of this nation have been led to the closing days of the passing year, which has been full of the blessings of peace and the comforts of plenty. Bountiful compensation has come to us for the work of our minds and of our hands in every department of human industry.

Now, therefore, I, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States of America, do hereby appoint Thursday, the 27th day of the present month of November, to be observed as a day of prayer and thanksgiving; and I do invite the people upon that day to cease from their labors, to meet in their accustomed houses of worship, and to join in rendering gratitude and praise to our beneficent Creator for the rich blessings He has granted to us as a nation and in invoking the continuance of His protection and grace for the future. I commend to my fellow-citizens the privilege of remembering the poor, the homeless, and the sorrowful. Let us endeavor to merit the promised recompense of charity and the gracious acceptance of our praise.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 8th day of November, A.D. 1890, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and fifteenth.

BENJ. HARRISON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1891

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

It is a very glad incident of the marvelous prosperity which has crowned the year now drawing to a close that its helpful and reassuring touch has been felt by all our people. It has been as wide as our country, and so special that every home has felt its comforting influence. It is too great to be the work of man's power and too particular to be the device of his mind. To God, the beneficent and the all-wise, who makes the labors of men to be fruitful, redeems their losses by His grace, and the measure of whose giving is as much beyond the thoughts of man as it is beyond his deserts, the praise and gratitude of the people of this favored nation are justly due.

Now, therefore, I, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States of America, do hereby appoint Thursday, the 26th day of November present, to be a day of joyful thanksgiving to God for the bounties of His providence, for the peace in which we are permitted to enjoy them, and for the preservation of those institutions of civil and religious liberty which He gave our fathers the wisdom to devise and establish and us the courage to preserve. Among the appropriate observances of the day are rest from toil, worship in the public congregation, the renewal of family ties about our American firesides, and thoughtful helpfulness toward those who suffer lack of the body or of the spirit.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be

affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 13th day of November, A.D. 1891, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and sixteenth.

BENJ. HARRISON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1892

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

The gifts of God to our people during the past year have been so abundant and so special that the spirit of devout thanksgiving awaits not a call, but only the appointment of a day when it may have a common expression. He has stayed the pestilence at our door; He has given us more love for the free civil institutions in the creation of which His directing providence was so conspicuous; He has awakened a deeper reverence for law; He has widened our philanthropy by a call to succor the distress in other lands; He has blessed our schools and is bringing forward a patriotic and God-fearing generation to execute His great and benevolent designs for our country He has given us great increase in material wealth and a wide diffusion of contentment and comfort in the homes of our people; He has given his grace to the sorrowing.

Wherefore, I, Benjamin Harrison, President of the United States, do call upon all our people to observe, as we have been wont, Thursday, the 24th day of this month of November, as a day of thanksgiving to God for His mercies and of supplication for His continued care and grace.

In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 4th day of November, 1892, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and seventeenth.

BENJ. HARRISON

THANKSGIVING DAY 1893

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

While the American people should every day remember with praise and thanksgiving the divine goodness and mercy which have followed them since their beginning as a nation, it is fitting that one day in each year should be especially devoted to the contemplation of the blessings we have received from the hand of God and to the grateful acknowledgment of His loving kindness.

Therefore, I, Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, do hereby designate and set apart Thursday, the 30th day of the present month of November, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to be kept and observed by all the people of our land. On that day let us forego our ordinary work and employments and assemble in our usual places of worship, where we may recall all that God has done for us and where from grateful hearts our united tribute of praise and song may reach the Throne of Grace. Let the reunion of kindred and the social meeting of friends lend cheer and enjoyment to the day, and let generous gifts of charity for the relief of the poor and needy prove the sincerity of our thanksgiving.

Witness my hand and the seal of the United States, which I have caused to be hereto affixed.

Done at the city of Washington on the 3d day of November, A.D. 1893, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighteenth.

GROVER CLEVELAND

THANKSGIVING DAY 1894

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

The American people should gratefully render thanksgiving and praise to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, who has watched over them with kindness and fostering care during the year that has passed; they should also with humility and faith supplicate the Father of All Mercies for continued blessings according to their needs, and they should by Deeds of charity seek the favor of the Giver of Every Good and Perfect Gift.

Therefore, I, Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart Thursday, the 29th day of November instant, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to be kept and observed by all the people of the land.

On that day let our ordinary work and business be suspended and let us meet in our accustomed places of worship and give thanks to Almighty God for our preservation as a nation, for our immunity from disease and pestilence, for the harvests that have rewarded our husbandry, for a renewal of national prosperity, and for every advance in virtue and intelligence that has marked our growth as a people.

And with our thanksgiving let us pray that these blessings may be multiplied unto us, that our national conscience may be quickened to a better recognition of the power and goodness of God, and that in our national life we may clearer see and closer follow the path of righteousness.

And in our places of worship and praise, as well as in the happy reunions of kindred and friends on that day, let us invoke divine approval by generously remembering the poor and needy. Surely He who have given us comfort and plenty will look upon our relief of the destitute and our ministrations of charity as the work of hearts truly grateful and as proofs of the sincerity of our thanksgiving.

Witness my hand and the seal of the United States, which I have caused to be hereto affixed.

Done at the city of Washington on the 1st day of November, A.D. 1894 and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and nineteenth.

GROVER CLEVELAND

THANKSGIVING DAY 1895

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

The constant goodness and forbearance of Almighty God which have been vouchsafed to the American people during the year which is just past call for their sincere acknowledgment and devout gratitude.

To the end, therefore, that we may with thankful hearts unite in extolling the loving care of our Heavenly Father, I, Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart Thursday, the 28th day of the present month of November, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer to be kept and observed by all our people.

On that day let us forego our usual occupations and in our accustomed places of worship join in rendering thanks to the Giver of Every Good and Perfect Gift for the bounteous returns that have rewarded our labors in the fields and in the busy marts of trade, for the peace and order that have prevailed throughout the land, for our protection from pestilence and dire calamity, and for the other blessings that have been showered upon us from an open hand.

And with our thanksgiving let us humbly beseech the Lord to so incline the hearts of our people unto Him that He will not leave us nor forsake us as a nation, but will continue to us His mercy and protecting care, guiding us in the path of national prosperity and happiness, enduing us with rectitude and virtue, and keeping alive within us a patriotic love for the free institutions which have been given to us as our national heritage.

And let us also on the day of our thanksgiving especially remember the poor and needy, and by deeds of charity let us show the sincerity of our gratitude.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 4th day of November, A.D. 1895, and in the one hundred and twentieth year of the Independence of the United States.

GROVER CLEVELAND

THANKSGIVING DAY 1896

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA – A PROCLAMATION

The people of the United States should never be unmindful of the gratitude they owe the God of Nations for His watchful care, which has shielded them from dire disaster and pointed out to them

the way of peace and happiness. Nor should they ever refuse to acknowledge with contrite hearts their proneness to turn away from God's teachings and to follow with sinful pride after their own devices.

To the end that these thoughts may be quickened it is fitting that on a day especially appointed we should join together in approaching the Throne of Grace with praise and supplication.

Therefore, I Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, do hereby designate and set apart Thursday, the 26th day of the present month of November, to be kept and observed as a day of thanksgiving and prayer throughout our land.

On that day let all our people forego their usual work and occupation, and, assembled in their accustomed places of worship, let them with one accord render thanks to the Ruler of the Universe for our preservation as a nation and our deliverance from every threatened danger, for the peace that has dwelt within our boundaries, for our defense against disease and pestilence during the year that has passed, for the plenteous rewards that have followed the labors of our husbandmen, and for all the other blessings that have been vouchsafed to us.

And let us, through the mediation of Him who has taught us how to pray, implore the forgiveness of our sins and a continuation of heavenly favor.

Let us not forget on this day of thanksgiving the poor and needy, and by deeds of charity let our offerings of praise be made more acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

Witness my hand and the seal of the United States, which I have caused to be hereto affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 4th day of November, A.D. 1896, and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and twenty-first.

GROVER CLEVELAND

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1897

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - A THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATION

In remembrance of God's goodness to us during the past year, which has been so abundant. "Let us offer Him our thanksgiving and pay our vows unto the Most High." Under His watchful providence, industry has prospered, the conditions of labor have been improved, the rewards of the husbandman have been increased, and the comforts of our homes multiplied. His mighty hand has preserved peace and protected the nation. Respect for law and order has been strengthened, love of free institutions cherished, and all sections of our beloved country brought into closer bonds of fraternal regard and generous cooperation.

For these great benefits it is our duty to praise the Lord in a spirit of humility and gratitude, and to offer up to Him our most earnest supplications. That we may acknowledge our obligation as a people to Him who has so graciously granted us the blessings of free government and material prosperity, I, William McKinley, President of the United States, do hereby designate and set apart Thursday, the twenty-fifth day of November, for national thanksgiving and prayer, which all of the people are invited to observe with appropriate religious services in their respective places of worship.

On this day of rejoicing and domestic reunion, let our prayers ascend to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for the continuance of His love and favor to us, that our hearts may be filled with charity and good will, and that we may be ever worthy of His beneficent concern.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington this twenty-ninth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE FOR THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

Executive Mansion, Washington, July 6, 1898

To the People of the United States of America :

At this time, when to the yet fresh remembrance of the unprecedented success which attended the operations of the United States fleet in the bay of Manila on the 1st day of May last are added the tidings of the no less glorious achievements of the naval and military arms of our beloved country at Santiago de Cuba, it is fitting that we should pause and, staying the feeling of exultation that too naturally attends great deeds wrought by our countrymen in our country's cause, should reverently bow before the throne of divine grace and give devout praise to God, who holdeth the nations in the hollow of His hands and worketh upon them the marvels of His high will, and who has thus far vouchsafed to us the light of His face and led our brave soldiers and seamen to victory.

I therefore ask the people of the United States, upon next assembling for divine worship in their respective places of meeting, to offer thanksgiving to Almighty God, who in His inscrutable ways, now leading our hosts upon the waters to unscathed triumph; now guiding them in a strange land, through the dread shadows of death, to success, even though at a fearful cost; now bearing them, without accident or loss, to far distant climes, has watched over our cause and brought nearer the success of the right and the attainment of just and honorable peace.

With the nation's thanks let there be mingled the nation's prayers that our gallant sons may be shielded from harm alike on the battlefield and in the clash of fleets, and be spared the scourge of suffering and disease while they are striving to uphold their country's honor; and withal let the nation's heart be stilled with holy awe at the thought of the noble men who have perished as heroes die, and be filled with compassionate sympathy for all those who suffer bereavement or endure sickness, wounds, and bonds by reason of the awful struggle. And above all, let us pray with earnest fervor that He, the Dispenser of All good, may speedily remove from us the untold afflictions of war and bring to our dear land the blessings of restored peace and to all the domain now ravaged by the cruel strife the priceless boon of security and tranquility.

WILLIAM McKINLEY

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1898

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - A PROCLAMATION

The approaching November brings to mind the custom of our ancestors, hallowed by time and rooted in our most sacred traditions, of giving thanks to Almighty God for all the blessings He has vouchsafed to us during the year.

Few years in our history have afforded such cause for thanksgiving as this. We have been blessed by abundant harvests; our trade and commerce have wonderfully increased; our public credit has been improved and strengthened; all sections of our common country have been brought together and knitted into closer bonds of national purpose and unity.

The skies have been for a time darkened by the cloud of war, but as we were compelled to take up the sword in the cause of humanity we are permitted to rejoice that the conflict has been of brief duration and the losses we have had to mourn, though grievous and important, have been so few, considering the great results accomplished, as to inspire us with gratitude and praise to the Lord of Hosts. We may laud and magnify His holy name that the cessation of hostilities came so soon as to spare both sides the countless sorrows and disasters that attend protracted war.

I do therefore invite all my fellow-citizens, as well as those who may be at sea or sojourning in foreign lands as those at home, to set apart and observe Thursday, the 24th day of November, as a day of national thanksgiving, to come together in their several places of worship for a service of praise and thanks to almighty God for all the blessings of the year, for the mildness of the seasons and the fruitfulness of the soil, for the continued prosperity of the people, for the devotion and valor of our countrymen, for the glory of our victory and the hope of a righteous peace, and to pray that the divine guidance which has brought us heretofore to safety and honor may be graciously continued in the years to come.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the city of Washington, this 28th day of October, A.D. 1898, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-third.

WILLIAM McKINLEY

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1899

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA - A PROCLAMATION

A national custom dear to the heart of the people calls for the setting apart of one day in each year as an occasion of special thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings of the preceding year. This honored observance acquires with time a tender significance. It enriches domestic life. It summons under the family roof the absent children to glad reunion with those they love. Seldom has this nation had greater cause for profound thanksgiving. No great pestilence has invaded our shores. Liberal employment waits upon labor. Abundant crops have rewarded the efforts of the husbandman. Increased comforts have come to the home. The national finances have been strengthened, and public credit has been sustained and made firmer. In all branches of industry and trade there has been an unequaled degree of prosperity, while there has been a steady gain in the moral and educational growth of our national character. Churches and schools have flourished. American patriotism has been exalted. Those engaged in maintaining the honor of the flag with such signal success have been in a large degree spared from disaster and disease. An honorable peace has been ratified with a foreign nation with which we were at war, and we are now on friendly relations with every Power on earth.

The trust which we have assumed for the people of Cuba has been faithfully advanced. There has been marked progress toward restoration of healthy industrial conditions, and under wise sanitary regulations the island has enjoyed unusual exemption from the scourge of fever. The hurricane which swept over our new possession of Porto Rico, destroying the homes and property of the inhabitants, called forth the instant sympathy of the people of the United States, who were swift to respond with generous aid to the sufferers. While the insurrection still continues in the island of Luzon, business is resuming its activity, and confidence in the good purpose of the United States is rapidly established throughout the archipelago.

For these reasons and countless others, I, William McKinley, President of the United States, do hereby name Thursday, the thirtieth day of November next, as a day of general thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed as such by all people on this continent and in our newly acquired islands, as well as by those who may be at sea or sojourning in foreign lands; and I advise that on this day religious exercises shall be conducted in the churches or meeting places of all denominations, in order that in the social features of the day its real significance may not be lost sight of, but prayers may be offered to the Most High for a continuance of the divine guidance without which man's efforts are vain, and for divine consolation to those whose kindred and friends have sacrificed their lives for country.

I recommend also that on this day, so far as may be found practicable, labor shall cease from its accustomed toil and charity abound toward the sick, the needy, and the poor.

In witness whereof, I have set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this twenty-fifth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-fourth.

WILLIAM McKINLEY