



PRESIDENTIAL THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATIONS
1900-1909: William McKinley,
Theodore Roosevelt, William H. Taft

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1900

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

It has pleased Almighty God to bring our nation in safety and honor through another year. The works of religion and charity have everywhere been manifest. Our country through all its extent has been blessed with abundant harvests. Labor and the great industries of the people have prospered beyond all precedent. Our commerce has spread over the world. Our power and influence in the cause of freedom and enlightenment have extended over distant seas and lands. The lives of our official representatives and many of our people in China have been marvelously preserved. We have been generally exempt from pestilence and other great calamities; and even the tragic visitation which overwhelmed the city of Galveston made evident the sentiments of sympathy and Christian charity by virtue of which we are one united people.

Now, therefore, I, William McKinley, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart Thursday, the 29th of November next, to be observed by all the people of the United States, at home or abroad, as a day of thanksgiving and praise to Him who holds the nations in the hollow of His hand. I recommend that they gather in their several places of worship and devoutly give Him thanks for the prosperity wherewith He has endowed us, for seedtime and harvest, for the valor, devotion, and humanity of our armies and navies, and for all His benefits to us as individuals and as a nation; and that they humbly pray for the continuance of His divine favor, for concord and amity with other nations, and for righteousness and peace in all our ways.

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 nine hundred, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-fifth.

WILLIAM McKINLEY

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1901

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

The season is nigh when, according to the time-hallowed custom of our people, the President appoints a day as the especial occasion for praise and thanksgiving to God. This Thanksgiving finds the people still bowed with sorrow for the death of a great and good President. We mourn President McKinley because we so loved and honored him; and the manner of his death should awaken in the breasts of our people a keen anxiety for the country, and at the same time a resolute purpose not to be driven by any calamity from the path of a strong, orderly, popular liberty, which, as a nation, we have thus far safely trod.

Yet, in spite of this great disaster, it is nevertheless true that no people on earth have such abundant cause for thanksgiving as we have. The past year, in particular, has been one of peace and plenty. We have prospered in things material, and have been able to work for our own uplifting in things intellectual and spiritual. Let us remember that, as much has been given us, much will be

expected from us, and that true homage comes from the heart as well as from the lips, and shows itself in deeds. We can best prove our thankfulness to the Almighty by the way in which on this earth and at this time each of us does his duty to his fellow-men.

Now, therefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do hereby designate as a day of general thanksgiving Thursday, the 28th of this present November, and do recommend that throughout the land the people cease from their wonted occupations, and at their several homes and places of worship reverently thank the giver of all good for the countless blessings of our national life.

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 second day of November in the year of our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and One and of the Independence of the United States the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1902

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

According to the yearly custom of our people, it falls upon the President at this season to appoint a day of festival and thanksgiving to God. Over a century and a quarter has passed since this country took its place among the nations of the earth, and during that time we have had, on the whole, more to be thankful for than has fallen to the lot of any other people. Generation after generation has grown to manhood and passed away. Each has had to bear its peculiar burdens, each to face its special crisis, and each has known cares of grim trial, when the country was menaced by malice domestic or foreign levy, when the hand of the Lord was heavy upon it in drought or flood or pestilence, when in bodily distress and in anguish of soul it paid the penalty of folly and a froward heart. Nevertheless, decade by decade we have struggled onward and upward; we now abundantly enjoy material well-being, and under the favor of the Most High we are striving earnestly to achieve moral and spiritual uplifting. The year that has just closed has been one of peace and of overflowing plenty. Rarely has any people enjoyed greater prosperity than we are now enjoying. For this we render heartfelt thanks to the giver of Good; and we will 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.

Now, wherefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do hereby designate as a day of general thanksgiving, Thursday, the twenty-seventh of the coming November, and do recommend that throughout the land the people cease from their ordinary occupations, and in their several homes and places of worship render thanks unto Almighty God for the manifold blessings of the past year.

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 nine hundred and two, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-seventh.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1903

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

The season is at hand when, according to the customs of our people, it falls upon the President to appoint a day of praise and thanksgiving to God.

During the last year the Lord has dealt bountifully with us, giving us peace at home and abroad, and the chance for our citizens to work for their welfare unhindered by war, famine, or plague. It behooves us not only to rejoice greatly because of what has been given us, but to accept it with a solemn sense of responsibility, realizing that under heaven it rests with us ourselves to show that we are worthy to use aright what has thus been intrusted to our care. In no other place and at no

other time has the experiment of government of the people, by the people, for the people, been tried on so vast a scale as here in our own country in the opening years of the twentieth century. Failure would not only be a dreadful thing for us, but a dreadful thing for all mankind, because it would mean loss of hope for all who believe in the power and the righteousness of liberty. Therefore, in thanking God for the mercies extended to us in the past, we beseech Him that He may not withhold them in the future, and that our hearts may be roused to war steadfastly for good and against all the forces of evil, public and private. We pray for strength and light, so that in the coming years we may with cleanliness, fearlessness, and wisdom, do our allotted work on the earth in such manner as to show that we are not altogether unworthy of the blessings we have received.

Now, therefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do hereby designate as a day of general thanksgiving, Thursday, the 26th of the coming November, and do recommend that throughout the land people cease from their wonted occupations, and in their several homes and places of worship render thanks unto Almighty God for His manifold mercies.

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 31st day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and three, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and twenty-eighth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1904

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

It has pleased Almighty God to bring the American people in safety and honor through another year, and, in accordance with the long unbroken custom handed down to us by our forefathers, the time has come when a special day shall be set apart in which to thank Him, who holds all nations in the hollow of His hand, for the mercies thus vouchsafed to us. During the century and a quarter of our national life, we, as a people, have been blessed beyond all others, and for this we owe humble and heartfelt thanks to the author of all blessings.

The year that has closed has been one of peace within our own borders as well as between us and all other nations. The harvests have been abundant, and those who work, whether with hand or brain, are prospering greatly. Reward has waited upon honest effort. We have been enabled to do our duty to ourselves and to others. Never has there been a time when religious and charitable effort have been more evident. Much has been given to us and much will be expected from us. We speak of what has been done by this nation in no spirit of boastfulness or vainglory, but with full and reverent realization that our strength is as nothing unless we are helped from above.

Hitherto we have been given the heart and strength to do the tasks allotted to us as they severally arose. We are thankful for all that has been done for us in the past, and we pray that in the future we may be strengthened in the unending struggle to do our duty fearlessly and honestly, with charity and good will, with respect for ourselves and with love toward our fellow-men. In this great Republic, the effort to combine national strength with personal freedom is being tried on a scale more gigantic than ever before in the world's history. Our success will mean much, not only for ourselves, but for the future of all mankind, and every man or woman in our land should feel the grave responsibility resting upon him or her, for in the last analysis this success must depend upon the high average of our individual citizenship, upon the way in which each of us does his duty by himself and his neighbors.

Now, therefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do hereby appoint and set apart Thursday, the twenty-fourth of this November, to be observed as a day of festival and thanksgiving by all the people of the United States at home or abroad, and do recommend that on that day they cease from their ordinary occupations and gather in their several places of worship or in their homes, devoutly to give thanks unto almighty God for the benefits He has conferred upon

us as individuals and as a nation, and to beseech Him that in the future His divine favor may be continued to us. 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 1st day of November, in the year of our Lord One thousand nine hundred and four, and of the independence of the United States the One hundred and twenty-ninth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1905

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

When nearly three centuries ago the first settlers came to the country which has now become this great republic they fronted not only hardship and privation, but terrible risk to their lives. In those grim years the custom grew of setting apart one day in each year for a special service of thanksgiving to the Almighty for preserving the people through the changing seasons. The custom has now become national and hallowed by immemorial usage. We live in easier and more plentiful times than our forefathers, the men who with rugged strength faced the rugged days; and yet the dangers to national life as quite as great now as at any previous time in our history.

It is eminently fitting that once a year our people should set apart a day for praise and thanksgiving to the Giver of Good, and at the same time that they express their thankfulness for the abundant mercies received should manfully acknowledge their shortcomings and pledge themselves solemnly and in good faith to strive to overcome them.

During the past year we have been blessed with bountiful crops. Our business prosperity has been great. No other people has ever stood on as high a level of material well-being as we now stand. We are not threatened by foes from without. The foes from whom we should pray to be delivered are our own passions, appetites, and follies; and against these there is always need that we should war.

Therefore I now set apart Thursday, the 30th day of this November, as a day of thanksgiving for the past and of prayer for the future, and on that day I ask that throughout the land the people gather in their homes and places of worship and, in rendering thanks unto the Most High for the manifold blessings of the past year, consecrate themselves to a life of cleanliness, honor, and wisdom, so that this nation may do its allotted work on the earth in a manner worthy of those who founded it and of those who preserved it.

Done at the city of Washington, this second day of November in the year of our Lord One thousand nine Hundred and five, and of the Independence of the United States the One hundred and Thirtieth.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1906

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

The time of year has come when, in accordance with the wise custom of our forefathers, it becomes my duty to set aside a special day of thanksgiving and praise to the Almighty because of the blessings we have received, and of prayer that these blessings may be continued. Yet another year of widespread well-being has passed. Never before in our history or in the history of any other nation has a people enjoyed more abounding material prosperity than is ours; a prosperity so general that it should rouse in us no spirit of reckless pride, and least of all a spirit of heedless disregard of our responsibilities; but rather a sober sense of our many blessings, and a resolute purpose under Providence, not to forfeit them by any action of our own.

Material well-being, indispensable though it is, can never be anything but the foundation of true national greatness and happiness. If we build nothing upon this foundation, then our national life will be meaningless and empty as a house where only the foundation has been laid. Upon our material well-being must be built a superstructure of individual and national life in accordance with

the laws of the highest morality, or else our prosperity itself will in the long run turn out a curse instead of a blessing. We should be both reverently thankful for what we have received, and earnestly bent upon turning it into a means of grace and not of destruction.

Accordingly, I hereby set apart Thursday, the 29th day of November next, as a day of thanksgiving and supplication, on which the people shall meet in their homes or their churches, devoutly to acknowledge all that has been given them, and to pray that they may in addition receive the power to use these gifts aright.

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 the 22nd day of October in the year of our Lord 1906, and of the independence of the United States 131st.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1906

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

The time of year has come when, in accordance with the wise custom of our forefathers, it becomes my duty to set aside a special day of thanksgiving and praise to the Almighty because of the blessings we have received, and of prayer that these blessings may be continued. yet another year of widespread well-being has passed. Never before in our history or in the history of any other nation has a people enjoyed more abounding material prosperity than is ours; a prosperity so general that it should arouse in us no spirit of reckless pride, and least of all a spirit of heedless disregard of our responsibilities; but rather a sober sense of our many blessings, and a resolute purpose under Providence, not to forfeit them by any action of our own.

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Accordingly, I hereby set apart Thursday, the 29th day of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and supplication, on which the people shall meet in their home or their churches, devoutly to acknowledge all that has been given them, and to pray that they may in addition receive the power to use these gifts aright.

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 the 22nd day of October, in the year of our 1906, and of the independence of the United States, the 131st.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1907

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

Once again the season of the year has come when, in accordance with the custom of our forefathers for generations past, the president appoints a day as the special occasion for all our people to give praise and thanksgiving to God.

During the past year we have been free from famine, from pestilence, from war. We are at peace with all the rest of mankind. Our natural resources are at least as great as those of any other nation. We believe that in ability to develop and take advantage of these resources the average man of this nation stands at least as high as the average man of any other. Nowhere else in the world is there such an opportunity for a free people to develop to the fullest extent all its powers of body, of mind, and of that which stands above both body and mind - character.

Much has been given us from on high, and much will rightly be expected of us in return. Into our care the ten talents have been entrusted; and we are to be pardoned neither if we squander and waste them, nor yet if we hide them in a napkin; for they must be fruitful in our hands. Ever throughout the ages, at all times and among all peoples, prosperity has been fraught with danger, and it behooves us to beseech the Giver of all things that we may not fall into lose of ease and luxury; that we may not lose our sense of moral responsibility; that we may not forget our duty to God, and to our neighbor.

A great democracy like ours, a democracy based upon the principles of orderly liberty, can be perpetuated only if in the heart of ordinary citizens there dwells a keen sense of righteousness, and justice. We should earnestly pray that this spirit of righteousness and justice may grow in the hearts of all of us, and that our souls may be inclined ever more both toward the virtues that tell for gentleness and tenderness, for loving kindness and forbearance, one toward another, and toward those no less necessary virtues that make for manliness and rugged hardihood; for without these qualities neither nation nor individual can rise to the level of greatness.

Now, therefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do set apart Thursday, the 28th day of November, as a day for general Thanksgiving and Prayer, and on that day I recommend that the people shall cease from their daily work, and in their homes or in their churches, meet devoutly to thank the Almighty for the many and great blessings they have received in the past, and to pray that they may be given the strength so to order their lives as to deserve a continuation of these blessings in the future.

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 the 26th day of October in the year of our Lord, 1907, and of the Independence of the United States, the 132nd.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1908

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

Once again the season is at hand when, according to the ancient custom of our people, it becomes the duty of the President to appoint a day of prayer and of thanksgiving to God.

Year by year this nation grows in strength and worldly power. During the century and a quarter that has elapsed since our entry into the circle of independent peoples, we have grown and prospered in material things to a degree never known before, and not now known in any other country. The thirteen colonies which struggled along the seacoast of the Atlantic and were hemmed in but a few miles west of tidewater by the Indian-haunted wilderness, have been transformed into the mightiest republic which the world has ever seen. Its domains stretch across the continent from one to the other of the two greatest oceans, and it exercises dominion alike in the arctic and tropic realms. The growth in wealth and population has surpassed even the growth in territory. Nowhere else in the world is the average of individual comfort and material well-being as high as in our fortunate land.

For the very reason that in material well-being we have thus abounded, we owe it to the Almighty to show equal progress in moral and spiritual things. With a nation, as well the individuals who make up a nation, material well-being is an indispensable foundation. But the foundation avails nothing by itself. That life is wasted, and worse than wasted, which is spent in piling, heap upon heap, those things which minister merely to the pleasure of the body and to the power that rests only on wealth.

Upon material well-being as a foundation must be raised the structure of the lofty life of the spirit, if this nation is properly to fulfill its great mission and to accomplish all that we so ardently hope and desire. The things of the body are good; the things of the intellect better; but best of all are the things of the soul; for, in the nation as in the individual, in the long run it is character that counts. Let us therefore as a people set our faces resolutely against evil, and with broad charity, with

kindness and good will toward all men, but with unflinching determination to smite down wrong, strive with all the strength that is given us for righteousness in public and in private life. Now, therefore, I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, do set apart Thursday, the 26th day of November next, as a day of general thanksgiving and prayer, and on that day I recommend that the people shall cease from their daily work, and, in their homes or in their churches, meet devoutly to thank the Almighty for the many and great blessings they have received in the past, and to pray that they may be given strength so to order their lives as to deserve a continuation of these blessings in the future.

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 thirty-first day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eight, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-third.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THANKSGIVING DAY - 1909

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

The season of the year has returned when, in accordance with the reverent custom established by our forefathers, the people of the United States are wont to meet in their usual places of worship on a day of thanksgiving appointed by the civil magistrate, to return thanks to God for the great mercies and benefits which they have enjoyed.

During this past year we have been highly blessed. No great calamities of flood or tempest or epidemic sickness have befallen us. We have lived in quietness, undisturbed by wars or rumors of war. Peace and the plenty of bounteous crops and of great industrial production animate a cheerful and resolute people to all the renewed energies of beneficent industry and material and moral progress. It is altogether fitting that we should humbly and gratefully acknowledge the divine source of these blessings.

Therefore, I hereby appoint Thursday, the 25th day of November, as a day of general Thanksgiving, and I call upon the people on that day, laying aside their usual vocations, to repair to their churches and unite in appropriate services of praise and thanks to Almighty God.

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 15th day of November in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and nine, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-fourth.

WILLIAM H. TAFT