



PRESIDENTIAL THANKSGIVING PROCLAMATIONS **1990-1999: George Bush, William J. Clinton**

Proclamation 6229 of November 14, 1990
THANKSGIVING DAY, 1990

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

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

**Proclamation 6380 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1991
November 25, 1991**

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

From 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 most 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

Proclamation 6508 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1992

November 20, 1992

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

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

**Proclamation 6625 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1993
November 17, 1993**

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

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

Proclamation 6751 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1994

October 27, 1994

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

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

Proclamation 6849 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1995

November 9, 1995

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

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

Proclamation 6954 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1996

November 11, 1996

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

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

Proclamation 7052 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1997

November 21, 1997

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

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

Proclamation 7148 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1998

November 17, 1998

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

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

Proclamation 7255 - THANKSGIVING DAY, 1999

November 20, 1999

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

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