



**The Washington Flyer**  
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*We at AACCS wish you a blessed Thanksgiving as you reflect on God’s great goodness.*

On June 20, 1676, the governing council of Charlestown, Massachusetts crafted the first Thanksgiving proclamation, praising God that even “in the midst of his judgments he hath remembered mercy.” That sentiment was repeated many years later by President Abraham Lincoln in his famed Thanksgiving proclamation of 1863. In a year of momentous national strife and after a period of forty-eight years without a national presidential Thanksgiving proclamation, a solemn Lincoln recognized the personal work of God in his life. Though Lincoln was no stranger to trials, including the death of his son, it was not until he walked among the gravestones of 50,000 Americans who had died at Gettysburg that Lincoln stated, “I then and there consecrated myself to Christ.” Personal gratitude for the faithful mercy of God shone in that 1863 proclamation, as Lincoln praised God for His great abundance even in the midst of His righteous judgment on our nation.

No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High God, who while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy. It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and 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.

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

Abraham Lincoln (October 3, 1863, passed by an Act of Congress)