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“O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.”
Psalm 135:1

Special Thanksgiving Message

This year marks the 400th anniversary of the arrival of the Pilgrims to our shores, marking the beginning of the foundations which formed our great country. As preparations are made for Thanksgiving during this year of unprecedented challenges, we wanted to share with you some portions from [President Trump’s 2018 Thanksgiving Proclamation](#) which reflect on the importance of this holiday in our nation’s history.

On Thanksgiving Day, we recall the courageous and inspiring journey of the Pilgrims who, nearly four centuries ago, ventured across the vast ocean to flee religious persecution and establish a home in the New World. They faced illness, harsh conditions, and uncertainty, as they trusted in God for a brighter future. The more than 100 Pilgrims who arrived at Plymouth, Massachusetts, on the Mayflower, instilled in our Nation a strong faith in God that continues to be a beacon of hope to all Americans. Thanksgiving Day is a time to pause and to reflect, with family and friends, on our heritage and the sacrifices of our forebearers who secured the blessings of liberty for an independent, free, and united country.

After surviving a frigid winter and achieving their first successful harvest in 1621, the Pilgrims set aside 3 days to feast and give thanks for God’s abundant mercy and blessings. Members of the Wampanoag tribe who had taught the Pilgrims how to farm in New England and helped them adjust and thrive in that new land shared in the bounty and celebration. In recognition of that historic event, President George Washington, in 1789, issued a proclamation declaring the first national holiday of thanksgiving. He called upon the people of the United States to unite in rendering unto God our sincere and humble gratitude “for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country” and “the favorable interpositions of his Providence.” President Abraham Lincoln revived this tradition as our fractured Nation endured the horrors of the Civil War. Ever since, we have set aside this day to give special thanks to God for the many blessings, gifts, and love he has bestowed on us and our country. . . .

Today, we particularly acknowledge the sacrifices of our service members, law enforcement personnel, and first responders who selflessly serve and protect our Nation. . . . Because of the men and women in uniform who volunteer to defend our liberty, we are able to enjoy the splendor of the American life. We pray for their safety, and for the families who await their return. . . .

I encourage all Americans to gather, in homes and places of worship, to offer a prayer of thanks to God for our many blessings.