

By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation

Whereas it is the duty of all citizens to acknowledge the true and  
sole authority of the President of the United States, and to  
obey his laws and execute his office - and whereas the  
President of the United States, a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be  
observed in acknowledgment with grateful hearts of the many signal mercies  
of Almighty God, especially in affording them an opportunity peaceably  
to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness

That the President of the United States, and every citizen  
of the United States, be and he is directed to the People of the United States  
to the giving of that great and glorious Thanksgiving to the merciful  
Father of all the good that has been done in that part of the world - that we  
may then all unite in rendering unto him our praise and humble  
thanks - for his kind care and protection of the People of this country  
previous to their becoming a Nation - for the signal and manifold  
mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, which  
are experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war -  
for the great degree of tranquillity, union and plenty which we have  
been enjoying - for the peaceable and rational manner in which we  
have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our just  
and lawful rights and liberties, the national Oath now being instituted  
- for the virtuous and patriotic conduct of our late ~~War~~, and  
the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge  
and in general for all the great and various mercies which he hath  
been pleased to confer upon us.

And whereas it is the duty of all citizens to acknowledge the true and  
sole authority of the President of the United States, and to  
obey his laws and execute his office - and whereas the  
President of the United States, a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be  
observed in acknowledgment with grateful hearts of the many signal mercies  
of Almighty God, especially in affording them an opportunity peaceably  
to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness

Given under my hand at the City of New York, the third  
day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.

George Washington



**The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799.  
John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.**

[Note 77: A copy of this proclamation was sent to the executives of the States by the President in a brief form letter (October 3). This form is recorded in the "Letter Book" in the Washington Papers.]

City of New York, October 3, 1789.

Whereas 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, and Whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee<sup>78</sup> requested me "to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanks-giving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness."

[Note 78: The Senate concurred in the House resolve to this effect, September 26.]

Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th. day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States 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. That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks, for his kind care and protection of the People of this country previous to their becoming a Nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war, for the great degree of tranquillity, union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed, for the peaceable and rational manner in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted, for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed, and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us.

And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the People, by constantly being a government of wise, just and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the encrease of science among them and Us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best.<sup>79</sup>

[Note 79: From the original in the writing of William Jackson. It was signed by Washington, who had written in the day "third" in the date.

This was the first national Thanksgiving Day proclamation under the Constitution.]