

# THANKSGIVING DAY

25 NOVEMBER 2004 AT 10 A.M.  
PRERECORDED FOR TELEVISION



THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF  
SAINT PETER AND SAINT PAUL

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OFFICIANT  
THE RIGHT REVEREND A. THEODORE EASTMAN  
*VICAR OF THE CATHEDRAL*  
*WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL*

LITANIST  
THE REVEREND CANON EUGENE T. SUTTON  
*CANON PASTOR & DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR PRAYER & PILGRIMAGE*  
*WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL*

ASSISTANT  
THE REVEREND CAROL L. WADE  
*PRIEST ASSOCIATE FOR LITURGY*  
*WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL*

PREACHER  
THE RIGHT REVEREND JOHN BRYSON CHANE  
*BISHOP OF WASHINGTON & DEAN OF THE CATHEDRAL*  
*DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON*

IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CATHEDRAL THIS WEEK

*STATE - NORTH CAROLINA*



*CHURCH COMMUNITY - KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA*

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## THE ENTRANCE RITE

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INTROIT - Steal Away

*Sung by the Choir.*

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;  
Steal away, steal away home,  
I han't got long to stay here.

My Lord, He calls me, He calls me by the thunder,  
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I han't got long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;  
Steal away, steal away home,  
I han't got long to stay here.

Green trees a-bending, poor sinner stands a-trembling,  
The trumpet sounds within-a my soul,  
I han't got long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus;  
Steal away, steal away home,  
I han't got long to stay here.

One of five Negro spirituals  
from *A Child of Our Time* (1958).  
Musical arrangement by Michael Tippett (1905-1998).  
Text traditional.

A BIDDING & WELCOME

*(A prerecording by Presiding Bishop Griswald)*

*The People stand at the Procession, as they are able.*

HYMN AT THE PROCESSION - 290

*Sung by all.*

tune: *St. George's, Windsor*

Come, ye thankful people, come,  
Raise the song of harvest-home:  
All is safely gathered in  
Ere the winter storms begin.  
God, our Maker, doth provide  
For our wants to be supplied;  
Come to God's own temple, come,  
Raise the song of of harvest-home.

All the world is God's own field,  
Fruit unto his praise to yield;  
Wheat and tares together sown,  
Unto joy or sorrow grown:  
First the blade, and then the ear,  
Then the full corn shall appear;  
Grant O harvest Lord, that we  
Wholesome grain and pure may be.

For the Lord our God shall come,  
And shall take his harvest home;  
From his field shall in that day  
All offenses purge away;  
Give his angels charge at last  
In the fire the tares to cast,  
But the fruitful ears to store  
In his garner evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come  
To thy final harvest-home;  
Gather thou thy people in,  
Free from sorrow, free from sin;  
There, forever purified,  
In thy presence to abide;  
Come, with all thine angels come,  
Raise the glorious harvest-home.

Words: Henry Alford (1819-1871)  
Music: George Job Elvey (181601893)  
Descant: Craig Sellar Lang (1893-1971).

*Officiant* Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his name;  
make known God's deeds among the people.

*People* O Lord, open our lips.  
And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

*The People are seated.*

FOR THE INVITATORY PSALM

*Sung by the Choir.*

*William Billings*

O praise the Lord of heaven;  
Praise him in the height; praise him the depth;  
O praise the Lord of heaven;  
Praise him all ye angels, praise Jehovah.

Praise him, sun and moon and blazing comets;  
Praise the Lord.

Let them praise the name of the Lord,  
For he spake the word, and all were made;  
He commanded and they were created;  
Admire, adore.

Ye dragons whose contagious breath  
People the abode of death,  
Change your dire hissings into heavenly songs,  
And praise your maker with your forked tongues.  
O praise the Lord of heaven.

Fire, hail, and snow, wind and storms,  
Beasts and cattle, creeping insects, flying fowl,  
Kings and princes, men and angels,  
Praise the Lord!  
Jew and gentile, male and female, bond and free,  
Earth and heaven, land and water,  
Praise the Lord!  
Young men and maids, old men and babes,  
Praise the Lord!  
Join, creation, preservation and redemption, join in one.  
No exemption, nor dissension,  
One invention and intention, reigns through the whole,  
To praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!  
Hallelujah, hallelujah! Praise the Lord.  
Hallelujah, hallelujah! Praise the Lord.

from William Billings's Continental Harmony.  
Music by Wm. Billings (1746-1800),  
ed. Lawrence Bennett.  
Text based on Ps. 148  
with additions by Billings and  
by Wentworth Dillon (4th Earl Roscommon).

## THE READINGS

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*The People remain seated for the Lessons.*

A READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Deuteronomy 8:1-3, 6-10, 17-20

Moses said to all Israel, "This entire commandment that I command you today you must diligently observe, so that you may live and increase, and go in and occupy the land that the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Therefore keep the commandments of the Lord your God, by walking in his ways and by fearing him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. You shall eat your fill and bless the Lord your God for the good land that he has given you. Do not say to yourself, 'My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.' But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today. If you do forget the Lord your God and follow other gods to serve and worship them, I solemnly warn you today that you shall surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord is destroying before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God."

Here ends the Reading.

PSALM 65 - *Te decet hymnus*

*Sung by the Choir.*

Chant: *Dirksen (1921-2003)*

You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;  
to you shall vows be performed in Jerusalem.

To you that hear prayer shall all flesh come,  
because of their transgressions.

Our sins are stronger than we are,  
but you will blot them out.

Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!  
they will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.

Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,  
O Hope of all the ends of the earth and of the seas that are far away.

You make fast the mountains by your power;  
they are girded about with might.

You still the roaring of the seas,  
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;  
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.

You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous;  
the river of God is full of water.

You prepare the grain,  
for so you provide for the earth.

You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;  
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.

You crown the year with your goodness,  
and your paths overflow with plenty.

May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,  
and the hills be clothed with joy.

May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain;  
let them shout for joy and sing.

#### A READING FROM THE NATIVE AMERICAN TRADITION

##### *WE GIVE THEM THANKS*

- ◆ To be a human being is an honor, and we offer thanksgiving for all the gifts of life.
- ◆ Mother Earth, we thank you for giving us everything we need.
- ◆ Thank you, deep blue waters around Mother Earth, for you are the force that takes thirst away from all living things.
- ◆ We give thanks to green grasses that feel so good against our bare feet, for the cool beauty you bring to Mother Earth's floor.
- ◆ Thank you, good foods from Mother Earth, our life sustainers, for making us happy when we are hungry.
- ◆ Fruits and berries, we thank you for your color and sweetness.

- ♦ We are all thankful to good medicine herbs, for healing us when we are sick.
- ♦ Thank you, all the animals in the world, for keeping our precious forests clean.
- ♦ All the trees in the world, we are thankful for the shade and warmth you give us.
- ♦ Thank you, all the birds in the world, for singing your beautiful songs for all to enjoy.
- ♦ We give thanks to you, gentle Four Winds, for bringing clean air for us to breathe from the four directions.
- ♦ Thank you, Grandfather Thunder Beings, for bringing rains to help all living things grow.
- ♦ Elder Brother Sun, we send thanks for shining your light and warming Mother Earth.
- ♦ Thank you, Grandmother Moon, for growing full every month to light the darkness for children and sparkling waters.
- ♦ We give you thanks, twinkling stars, for making the night sky so beautiful and for sprinkling morning dew drops on the plants.
- ♦ Spirit Protectors of our past and present, we thank you for showing us ways to live in peace and harmony with one another.
- ♦ And most of all, thank you, Great Spirit, for giving us all these wonderful gifts, so we will be happy and healthy every day and every night.

*The above is transcribed from the publication  
Giving Thanks: a Native American Good Morning Message by  
Chief Jake Swamp (Lee & Low Books, © 1995).*

Here ends the Reading.

*The People remain seated.*

JUBILATE DEO

*Sung by the Choir.*

*William Walton (1902-1983)*

O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands:  
serve the Lord with gladness,  
and come before his presence with a song.

Be ye sure that the Lord he is God,  
it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves,  
and not we ourselves;  
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

O go your way into his gates with thanksgiving,  
and into his courts, into his courts with praise:  
be thankful unto him and speak good of his name.

For the Lord is gracious, his mercy is everlasting:  
and his truth endureth from generation to generation.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
world without end. Amen.

A READING FROM THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

Matthew 6:25-33

Jesus said, "I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Here ends the Reading.

HYMN 779

*Sung by all, standing.*

*Dunedin*

The Church of Christ, in every age,  
Beset by sin but spirit led,  
Must claim and test its heritage,  
And keep on rising from the dead.

Across the world, across the street,  
The victims of injustice cry  
For shelter and for bread to eat  
And never live until they die.

Then let the servant church arise.  
A caring church that longs to be  
A partner in Christ's sacrifice,  
And clothed in Christ's humanity.

For Christ alone, whose blood was shed  
Can cure the fever in our blood.  
And teach us how to share our bread  
And feed the starving multitude.

We have no mission but to serve  
In full obedience to our Lord:  
To care for all without reserve,  
And spread Christ's liberating word.

*From Wonder, Love, and Praise. Tune: Dunedin;*  
Words: Fred Pratt Green (b.1903);  
Music: Vernon Griffiths (1894-1985).

SERMON

*(A prerecording by Bishop Chane)*

*Please be seated.*

ANTHEM - "Have Ye Not Known?" & "Ye Shall Have a Song",

*Randal Thompson*

*(prerecorded)*

*Sung by the Cathedral Choral Society.*

Have ye not known? Have ye not heard? Hath it not been told you from the beginning?  
Have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth?

Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept;  
and gladness of heart as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord.

"Have Ye Not Known?" and "Ye Shall Have a Song",  
movements 7 and 8 from *The Peaceable Kingdom* (1936).  
Music by Randall Thompson (1899-1984)  
Text: Isaiah 40:21 and 30:39.

COLLECT FOR THANKSGIVING DAY

*The People stand.*

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Officiant* Let us pray.

Almighty and gracious Father, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season and for the labors of those who harvest them. Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, for the provision of our necessities and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*Assistant*

Almighty God, who has given us this good land for our heritage: We humbly pray that we may always prove ourselves to be a people mindful of your favor and glad to do your will. Bless our land with honorable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogance, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought to this land out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in your Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to your law, we may show forth your praise among the nations of the earth. In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, let not our trust in you fail; all of which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Look with pity, O heavenly Father, upon the people in this world who live with injustice, terror, disease, and death as their constant companions. Have mercy upon us. Help us to eliminate our cruelty to these our neighbors and grant that every one of us may enjoy a fair portion of the riches of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

LITANY OF THANKSGIVING

*Led by Canon Sutton*

Let us give thanks to God for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us.

For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

For the communion of saints, in all times and places,  
*We thank you, Lord.*

Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;  
*To him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.*

#### THE BLESSING

May the Abundance of God fulfill you; May the Love of God nourish you; May the Grace of God strengthen and empower you; And may the Blessing of God be upon you this day and forever more. *Amen.*

#### HYMN AT THE CLOSING 719

*Sung by all.*

tune: *Materna*

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain;  
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!  
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,  
Who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life!  
America! America! God mend thine every flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years  
Thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears!  
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

*Materna*: Words: Katherine Lee Bates (1859-1929);  
Music: Samuel Augustus Ward (1848-1903)

#### THE DISMISSAL

*Assistant* Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

*The Congregation remains standing for the retiring procession.*

#### POSTLUDE - Chorale-Improvisation

on "Nun danket alle Gott" Op. 65 no. 59 (1909)

*Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)*

FLOWERS THROUGHOUT THE CATHEDRAL ARE GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD. Flowers at the High Altar are given in memory of Harry Lee Rust. Flowers in Saint Mary's Chapel are given in thanksgiving for the lives of the Wildman New England Ancestors. Flowers in Children's Chapel are given in thanksgiving for the life of Philip Hubert Frohman. Flowers in Holy Spirit Chapel are given in memory and in honor of the Davis and Capers families. Flowers in Bethlehem Chapel are given in loving memory of David Edwards Varner. Thanksgiving flowers throughout the Cathedral are given in memory of William D. Thompson, in honor of and in thanksgiving for W. Donald Rolar, In loving memory of Elsie Jeannette Rolar and Velma Ruth Ellingsworth and the Thanksgiving flowers in St. Mary's Chapel are given in honor of Georgia Booth.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL WELCOMES YOU TO THIS SERVICE. You are part of a national congregation today and one of more than three-quarters of a million people who will come here this year. The Cathedral receives no regular operating support from any national religious body or any government. Your contribution toward the daily ministry is truly needed. A gift to the Cathedral is an important way of sharing this house of prayer with others.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE HELD ON SUNDAYS AT WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL: Holy Eucharist Rite I at 8 am in St. Mary's Chapel; Holy Eucharist Rite II at 9 am in Bethlehem Chapel; Contemporary Folk Eucharist at 10 am in St. Joseph's Chapel; Holy Eucharist Rite II at 11 am in the Nave; Evensong at 4 pm in the Great Choir; Holy Eucharist with the Laying on of Hands for Healing (1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays of the month) at 6:30 pm in War Memorial Chapel; Ecumenical Taizé Service of Chant, Meditation and Prayer (2nd and 4th Sundays of the month) at 6:30 pm in St. Joseph's Chapel.

CHORAL EVENSONG AT THE CATHEDRAL: The Cathedral Choirs sing Choral Evensong on Sundays at 4 pm and during the school term Monday through Thursday at 5:30 pm. There will not be Evensong on Sunday, November 21.

#### PROGRAMS IN SPIRITUALITY & RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

On Tuesday, December 7, enjoy an intimate evening of conversation with one of the world's most celebrated operatic talents. In her new book, *The Inner Voice*, Renée Fleming describes her commitment to artistic excellence and the heart-throat-mind connection that powers her art. Come meet this down-to-earth diva at this one-of-a-kind D.C. area appearance.

On Tuesday, November 30, join us at Cathedral Crossroads for a forward-looking conversation about initiatives some in the church community are pursuing on international and domestic social justice issues, now that the presidential election is behind us. Then be nourished by a lively and inspiring poetry reading presented by a trio of Latin American artistic voices. The evening also features the labyrinth with live music, centering prayer and Compline.

INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION: (202) 537-2221 OR [WWW.NATIONALCATHEDRAL.ORG/REGISTER](http://WWW.NATIONALCATHEDRAL.ORG/REGISTER)

#### UPCOMING ORGAN RECITALS

**Sundays, 5pm following Evensong**

November 28 - Scott Hanoian, Washington, DC

**THE ADVENT PROCESSION OF LESSONS AND CAROLS**

SUNDAY, 28 NOVEMBER, 4 PM

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS.*

**HANDELS MESSIAH**

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHORAL SOCIETY*

FRIDAY, 3 DECEMBER, 7:30 PM, AND SUNDAY 5 DECEMBER, 4 PM

**THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS**

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHORAL SOCIETY*

SATURDAY, 11 DECEMBER, 4 PM, SUNDAY, 12 DECEMBER, 4 PM AND MONDAY, 13 DECEMBER, 7:30 PM

*INCLUDES AN ADVENT WREATH PROCESSION, SEASONAL FAVORITES AND CAROLS FOR ALL TO SING.*

**CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

SUNDAY, 19 DECEMBER, 4 PM

*THIS CHILD-FRIENDLY WORSHIP SERVICE INCLUDES A REENACTMENT OF THE STORY OF JESUS' BIRTH.*

**CHRISTMAS EVE**

FRIDAY, 24 DECEMBER, 6 AND 10 PM

THE CHRISTMAS EVE PROCESSION OF LESSONS AND CAROLS AT 6 PM

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS (PASSES REQUIRED)*

THE FESTIVAL HOLY EUCHARIST OF CHRISTMAS EVE AT 10 PM

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS (PASSES REQUIRED).*

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

SATURDAY, 25 DECEMBER, 9 AM, NOON AND 4 PM

THE FESTIVAL HOLY EUCHARIST OF CHRISTMAS DAY AT 9 AM

*WITH THE CATHEDRAL CHOIRS FOLLOWED BY A QUARTER PEAL RUNG BY THE WASHINGTON RINGING SOCIETY.*

*THE 9 AM SERVICE WILL BE TELECAST AND WILL INCLUDE SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION AND CLOSED CAPTIONING.*

THE HOLY EUCHARIST OF CHRISTMAS DAY AT NOON

THE VESPERS OF CHRISTMAS DAY AT 4 PM

## WELCOMING ADDRESS

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*(Opening, prerecorded earlier by Presiding Bishop Griswald.)*

It is my pleasure to welcome you this Thanksgiving morning as we gather to give thanks to the One from whom all blessings flow. As the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, I am grateful for your presence, whether you are worshipping in the Washington National Cathedral, or are part of the extended congregation through the medium of electronic communication.

On this day, all around this great nation of ours, it is a tradition to gather with family and friends to take part in familiar rituals, among them the eating of turkey and watching football. The joy and comfort of these familiar patterns is indeed something for which we can give thanks. At the same time they might serve as an invitation to be aware of the many other things for which we can be thankful.

As we pause on this day and turn our awareness to our many blessings, let us as well be mindful of the needs of others, and of the opportunities we always have to lighten the burdens of those closest to us, of those in our communities and of our brothers and sisters in other parts of our world.

Those who are gathered in the Cathedral are about to take part in a eucharist. The word eucharist comes from the Greek word for thanksgiving. The eucharist is the particular way in which we give thanks for the gift God has given us in the person of Jesus Christ and in the sacred meal of his abiding presence. Celebrating the eucharist, therefore, is a most appropriate way to observe this national day of thanksgiving and to grow in gratitude.

May God grant each of you a thankful heart and, in a spirit of gratitude, may you reach out to others, especially those at home and abroad who bear burdens of desperate need, so that they too may have occasion to be thankful.

For those of you taking part in this service electronically, please know that the Episcopal Church in its many congregations across our land is always eager to welcome you, and to share its life and its mission of proclaiming God's reconciling love to our broken world.

*The Most Reverend Frank T. Griswold  
Presiding Bishop and Primate, The Episcopal Church, USA  
Thanksgiving, 2004*

## A THANKSGIVING ADDRESS TO THE NATION

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*(Sermon, prerecorded earlier by Bishop Chane.)*

On October 3, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln, wearied by a bloody Civil War that threatened to destroy the Union and the very future of the American Dream, proclaimed a day of National Thanksgiving. He did so with a somewhat heavy heart, reminding the people of America that this great land, even as it was engaged in a war with itself had much to be thankful for. And he believed that appropriate expressions of thankfulness for the beauty and great abundance of the newly emerging Nation must be directed to the Almighty. Said he: "The year that is drawing to its close has been filled with the blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies. To these bounties, which are so constantly enjoyed that we are prone to forget the source from which they come, others have been added which are of so extraordinary a nature that they cannot fail to penetrate and soften even the heart, which is habitually insensible to the ever-watchful providence of Almighty God.

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 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 Him for such singular deliverance and blessings, they 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 full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union."

The thought of a day set aside and celebrated by the nation as a whole and named "Thanksgiving" is still a powerful force even during these times of religious plurality and extreme secularism. And from its outset Thanksgiving Day was set aside by both President Lincoln and the Congress of the United States so that all Americans could gather together in their own way to give thanks and pray, thanking God for the many blessings bestowed upon this great nation and each of us.

As a native New Englander, Thanksgiving for me has always taken on a unique, historic perspective. It was a time for our own "regional" recollection of Thanksgiving... the very first Thanksgiving celebrated in 1621 to commemorate the bountiful harvest that had come to the settlers of the Plymouth Colony after the very severe winter of 1620.

And adding to the significance of that first Thanksgiving in Massachusetts was the day's sharing with the Pilgrim settlers neighbors, the Wampanoag Indians, who came to the celebration bringing their own bounty to the feast, which some have said was the very first pot luck supper ever celebrated on American shores.

Sarah Hale, a noted author of President Lincoln's time, encouraged the President to declare a National Day of Thanksgiving. And so the beleaguered President saw such an established day of rest, reflection, prayer and feasting as a way of uniting a war-torn Nation. And so it did! Lincoln accomplished what President George Washington had attempted to do in 1789 but failed. Given the politics of his time, Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation was greeted with significant opposition by some of the Colonies opposed to designating any day set aside to commemorate the hardships of a few Pilgrims; "those people."

Given that politics are often quite dicey in this great land of ours, it logically followed that President Franklin D. Roosevelt would amend Lincoln's Declaration. Thanksgiving, said Roosevelt would be celebrated nationally on the third Thursday of November. And such was the case in the years 1939, 1940 and 1941 in an effort by the President to stimulate and lengthen the Christmas shopping season

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so as to strengthen the Nation's economy. But in 1941, the Congress of the United States in a legislative reversal decreed that Thanksgiving would always fall on the fourth Thursday of November where it remains to this day. And to the politicians of this great land I say, let's not mess anymore with a "good thing!"

Behind me is a very famous statue of Abraham Lincoln, located in the Northwest corner of Washington National Cathedral. And more often than not, whenever I pass by this statue, I reach out and touch the outstretched hand and fingers of this great President.

And I am not alone in doing this! If you come to visit this cathedral, the Sixth largest cathedral in the world, you will see that Lincoln's bronzed fingers are worn and brightly polished by millions of other fingers that have passed by this majestic likeness and reached out in a symbolic way to touch greatness.

And what was so special about this President that still quickens the hearts of generations who never knew him, and a President who continues to rest in our consciousness as a president defined by the word "greatness"? Was he great because he was handsome? Most would say he wasn't. Was he great because he was a brilliant writer? Many would say no. Was he great because he was a passionate orator? There were some who would disagree. Was he great because he was a brilliant military strategist? His Generals could not agree on that point. Was he great because he freed the slaves and personally saved the Union? Some speaking from the context of broad history would say that was not all that defined his political complexity. Well then, why was he great?

Each of us will bring our own opinions to bear on this questions that arise about Abraham Lincoln's greatness, but let me answer from my perspective on this Thanksgiving Day. Lincoln was a great man and President because in the midst of severe trouble and crisis in the life of this new Democracy, he took the time to stop and reflect that his was a life of servanthood, as he understood it to be from his reading of the Bible. He was a president who redefined the word tolerance. He wrote; "our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid, as a nation we began by declaring that all men are created equal. When the 'Know Nothings' get control, it will read all men are created equal except Negroes, foreigners and Catholics. When it comes to this, I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty, where despotism can be taken pure and without the base alloy of hypocrisy."

And because of his humility as a servant and his understanding of tolerance, he asked a war-torn Nation to stop and remember that in the best and worst of times we are all children of God and all that we are and all that we have comes, from a most "High God." And from that simple theological understanding he gave birth to what is truly the only distinct American Holiday that all Americans really share, a National Day of Thanksgiving.

I have had the great opportunity as Bishop of Washington and Dean of Washington National Cathedral to travel throughout this great land and around the Globe. And when I return from a foreign shore I am always thankful to be an American and to be back home. For with all of our troubles, our disagreements, our social and political struggles, we are truly a great Nation and one of the few Nations on earth that can say that our America is a country whose greatness is defined by our diversity.

For all of us, and I mean all of us, can trace our ancestral roots to another shore, to another time and to another place and country. Even the first Americans are believed to have come to this magnificent land by way of a land bridge from Asia.

My family came to America from Ireland, and Canada, and they came for a better life and the hope of better tomorrows. And they found them here in America! Where did your family tree begin? How did your ancestors come to find America?

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And along with the truth that we are a nation of immigrants and some who were forced immigrants as slaves, so we have had to learn to live together in harmony. And that has not been all that easy. But as Americans we work hard at it. And we continue to strive to be tolerant and to be respectful of each other's cultural and religious heritage and differences. And in the great American experiment of democracy, an experiment so successfully and yet painfully lived out by President Abraham Lincoln, we have had to learn tolerance, as did he.

Thanksgiving is a time to step back from the challenges of our daily lives, and from the painfulness of a too often broken world and our own nation, emerging out of the passions, jubilations, disappointments and disagreements of the most recently concluded national elections and be silent if only for a moment and give thanks, as President Lincoln did so long ago for the many blessings bestowed upon this country by the Creator's hand. For that was the greatness of Abraham Lincoln; a man who knew his limitations and gave thanks every day for the honor bestowed upon him to serve his country, to serve his fellow man, and to ultimately to serve his God.

Happy Thanksgiving and may God's Blessing be upon to each of you, from all of us here in the Nation's Capital and from the Washington National Cathedral.

*The Right Reverend John Bryson Chane D.D.  
Bishop of Washington and Dean of Washington National Cathedral  
Thanksgiving, 2004*

WELCOME TO WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL,  
YOUR CHURCH IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL.

YOU ARE PART OF A NATIONAL CONGREGATION TODAY AND ONE OF MORE THAN THREE-QUARTERS OF A MILLION PEOPLE WHO WILL COME HERE THIS YEAR. WHATEVER YOUR DENOMINATION, THIS NATIONAL HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL PEOPLE WELCOMES YOU AND INVITES YOUR PARTICIPATION.



DURING THE PRELUDE AND THE SERVICE, PLEASE SET ALL CELL PHONES, PAGERS AND ALARM WATCHES TO SILENT SETTINGS. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO OR STILL, DURING THE PRELUDE OR SERVICE.



DEVICES TO ASSIST THE HEARING-IMPAIRED ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE USHERS AT NO CHARGE AND MAY BE USED ANYWHERE ON THE MAIN FLOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL.



RESTROOMS ARE LOCATED AT THE WEST END OF THE CATHEDRAL – GO THROUGH THE NORTHWEST CLOISTER AND DOWN THE STEPS TO THE LOWER LEVEL. DRINKING FOUNTAINS AND A PUBLIC TELEPHONE ARE LOCATED IN THE NORTHWEST CLOISTER.



IN CASE OF AN ILLNESS OR INJURY, PLEASE CONTACT AN USHER FOR ASSISTANCE.



WHEELCHAIRS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE NAVE. A HANDICAPPED-ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM IS LOCATED NEAR THE LINCOLN STATUE AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE NAVE.



OUR CONCERN IS FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL VISITORS AND WORSHIPPERS. TO INSURE THIS SAFETY, ALL NO PARKING SIGNS MUST BE STRICTLY OBSERVED IN ORDER FOR THESE SPACES TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO EMERGENCY VEHICLES.

*WE THANK YOU FOR WORSHIPING WITH US TODAY.*

FEEL FREE TO TAKE THIS SERVICE LEAFLET AWAY WITH YOU – IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO TAKE YOUR LEAFLET, PLEASE LEAVE IT ON YOUR SEAT SO THAT WE CAN RECYCLE IT.



The Right Reverend John Bryson Chane, M. Div., D.D.  
Bishop of Washington and Dean of the Cathedral

The Right Reverend A. Theodore Eastman, D.D., L.H.D.  
Vicar, Washington National Cathedral

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