



Senator Luann Ridgeway – Serving Clay County

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It's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is already here. My staff and I send you our very best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving. We hope you will take time to reflect on how very blessed we are to live in such a great nation and to thank God for those who have brought those blessings into our lives. We especially hope that you will take a moment to thank our soldiers or a veteran, who made personal sacrifices to protect us at home and abroad.

America has a long tradition of taking time to give thanks to God for our many blessings. I won't try to improve on the words of many of our national leaders, but instead, will pass them along to you. I hope you will share them with the children in your life.

George Washington was the first president to issue a Thanksgiving Proclamation in 1789. His text included these words:

"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...recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favors of Almighty God..."

But Washington wasn't the first to issue such a Proclamation. On November 1, 1777, the Continental Congress sent out a Thanksgiving Day proclamation that said:

"It is therefore recommended to the legislative or executive powers of these United States to set apart Thursday, the eighteenth day of December next, for solemn thanksgiving and praise: That at one time and with one voice, the good people may express the grateful

feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their Divine Benefactor ... that it may please God through the merits of Jesus Christ.”

Years later, FDR said:

“I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, do set aside and appoint Thursday, the thirtieth day of November 1933, to be a Day of Thanksgiving for all our people. May we on that day in our churches and in our homes give humble thanks for the blessings bestowed upon us during the year past by Almighty God.”

And in 1964, President Lyndon Johnson declared:

“...it is our desire to observe, in the custom and tradition of our forebears, a special day dedicated to giving thanks to God—a day on which to lay aside our daily tasks and cares and pay joyous homage to Him. We are impelled to raise our voices in His praise and to proclaim our heartfelt gratitude...”

Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

(Note: Quotes taken from Enjoying Everyday Life, p. 28, November 2009 edition)

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