



# Freedom's Feast PRESIDENTS' DAY

On-line Ceremonies to get the most out of your AMERICAN holiday Celebrations.

## CELEBRATING OUR PRESIDENTS AND OUR FREEDOM

Together, we sing:

**THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND**

*This land is your land,  
this land is my land From California to the New York Island  
From the Redwood Forest  
to the Gulf Stream Water  
This land was made for you and me.*



- Leader:** Presidents' Day celebrates the birthday of two of our greatest presidents, **George Washington** and **Abraham Lincoln**. Electing a president as our country's leader is natural for us now. But when the United States of America was created in the late 1700s, having a president was a new idea.
- Reader:** America had just won the American Revolutionary War against Great Britain, a very powerful nation. The men, women and children who fought for independence believed that King George and the British Parliament had been unfair in their dealings with the American colonies.
- Reader:** Our complaints against the British were listed in **The Declaration of Independence**. We had new ideas about the way a people should be governed. We claimed a natural right to rule ourselves. No government should be allowed to tell its people what to think or say. We would no longer accept a king as our leader.
- Reader:** Once we were free from British rule we had to govern ourselves with our new ideas.
- Reader:** For a while, our thirteen colonies lived with Articles of Confederation. But our new government structure soon began to fail. A **Constitutional Convention** was called to fix the problems.
- Reader:** After four months of heated debate, our founders agreed on a new structure defined by a set of articles called the **Constitution** for the United State of America. It reflected lessons they had learned from studying governments of other nations and from the injustices of British rule. At 4,440 words, it is the shortest and oldest national constitution in the world.
- Reader:** It distributed power across three branches of government: the legislative, executive, and judicial. Through checks and balances, it was designed to ensure open national debate and to keep any one branch from having too much power.
- Reader:** It guaranteed that we, the people, would live in a society ruled by laws created by our elected representatives.

## Preamble to the Constitution

**ALL:** **We the people of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.**

We have it in our power  
to begin the world again.

THOMAS PAINE  
1737-1809  
REVOLUTIONARY,  
FOUNDING FATHER

Great Britain: taxed the  
colonies without  
representation in  
parliament; forced  
colonists to house British  
soldiers; ruled with a  
brutal king from afar; put  
British interests before  
diverse American ones;  
worked on a system of  
inherited privilege.

One country, one  
constitution, one  
destiny.

DANIEL WEBSTER  
1782-1852  
U.S. SENATOR

Avarice, ambition,  
revenge, or gallantry,  
would break the  
strongest cords of our  
Constitution as a whale  
goes through a net. Our  
Constitution was made  
only for a moral and  
religious people. It is  
wholly inadequate for  
the government of any  
other.

JOHN ADAMS  
1735-1826  
SECOND U.S. PRESIDENT  
NEGOTIATED END OF  
REVOLUTIONARY WAR

**NOTE:** The preamble which  
states the Constitution's  
purpose is followed by  
seven Articles. The Articles  
(most with sections)  
describe a function or  
characteristic of  
government, set limits on  
government, and define the  
rights of all citizens. See  
"Celebrate Your Way" for a  
summary of the articles  
and questions to relate the  
Constitution and Bill of  
Rights to your life and  
experience.



*It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practice either of them.*

**MARK TWAIN**  
1835–1910  
AUTHOR, HUMORIST

*If the first amendment means anything, it means that a state has no business telling a man, sitting alone in his house, what books he may read.*

**THURGOOD MARSHALL**  
1908–1993  
SUPREME COURT JUSTICE



Chambers of the U.S. Supreme Court. PHOTO: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

*In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.*

**DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**  
1929–1968  
CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

*...I was not included in "We the People"...But through the process of amendment and interpretation and court decision I have finally been included in "We the People."*

**BARBARA C. JORDAN**  
1936–1996  
AFRICAN-AMERICAN  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

- Reader:* We have survived a civil war, two world wars and several others. We have come through the Great Depression and many periods of civic unrest and financial difficulty.
- Reader:* Presidents have come and gone. Some have been disappointing, others have been truly great. And every presidential transition has been smooth despite 4 assassinations.
- Reader:* Thousands of laws have been created since 1789. The Supreme Court has made hundreds of decisions.
- Reader:* Seventeen more constitutional amendments have been added since 1791. Some of the ways we govern our country changed. We outlawed slavery. Alcohol was prohibited, then allowed. African Americans and women got the vote they deserved.
- Reader:* Eighteen year olds who are old enough to serve in the military are also now able to vote. America stays vibrant as long as everyone obeys the law—or chooses to properly challenge it. This is our strength.
- Reader:* The Constitution has given us the stability and flexibility its creators wanted.
- Reader:* The true power in our government rests with three simple words: “we the people....” When “we the people” take responsibility for our freedom, the United States has the best chance of being the country our founders imagined.
- Leader:* Hear what these presidents said about freedom and our Constitution.
- Reader:* “The Bill of Rights, contained in the first ten amendments to the Constitution is every American’s guarantee of Freedom.”  
**HARRY S. TRUMAN, 33RD PRESIDENT**
- Reader:* “Those who deny freedoms to others do not deserve it for themselves.”  
**ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 16TH PRESIDENT**
- Reader:* “Let us never forget that government is ourselves and not an alien power over us. The ultimate rulers of our democracy are... the voters of this country.”  
**FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT, 32ND PRESIDENT**
- Reader:* “I wish the Constitution which is offered had been made more perfect, but I sincerely believe it is the best that could be obtained at this time; and... a constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter.”  
**GEORGE WASHINGTON, 1ST PRESIDENT**
- Reader:* “Liberty without learning is always in peril and learning without liberty is always in vain.” **JOHN F. KENNEDY, 35TH PRESIDENT**
- Reader:* “No man is above the law and no man is below it; nor do we ask any man’s permission when we require him to obey it. Obedience to the law is demanded as a right; not asked as a favor.” **THEODORE ROOSEVELT, 26TH PRESIDENT**



*Reader:* "Public opinion sets bounds to every government, and is the real sovereign in every free one."

**JAMES MADISON, 4TH PRESIDENT**

*Reader:* "Books and ideas are the most effective weapon against intolerance and ignorance."

**LYNDON B. JOHNSON, 36TH PRESIDENT**

*Reader:* "The People... are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty."

**THOMAS JEFFERSON, 4TH PRESIDENT**

*Reader:* We were given a great gift over 200 years ago. On this Presidents' Day we remember that our government belongs to us. We must never take it granted.

**ALL:** "Why is the Constitution of the United States so exceptional? Well, the difference is so small that it almost escape you, but it tells you the whole story in just three words: We the people. Here is America, we the people are in charge."

**RONALD REAGAN, 40TH PRESIDENT**

Write your own quote about freedom or the Constitution and share it on our [Facebook](#) page.

*Freedom is an indivisible word. If we want to enjoy it, and fight for it, we must be prepared to extend it to everyone, whether they are rich or poor, whether they agree with us or not, no matter what their race or the color of their skin.*

**WENDELL WILKIE  
1812-1944  
ATTORNEY &  
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE**

*Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but not to their own facts.*

**DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN  
1927-2013  
U.S. SENATOR, CABINET  
MEMBER, SOCIOLOGIST**



*Either the United States will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the United States.*

**W.E.B. DUBOIS  
1868-1963  
AFRICAN AMERICAN  
HISTORIAN, ACTIVIST,  
AUTHOR**

*Congress is functioning the way the Founding Fathers intended—not very well.*

**BARBER B. CONABLE, JR.  
1922-2003  
U.S. CONGRESSMAN,  
PRESIDENT OF WORLD  
BANK**

Please visit "Celebrate Your Way" and enjoy using our resources to raise politically engaged citizens.

See "Create a Keepsake" to make a cause button.

Learn more about our presidents and the Constitution at "Explore More."

Enjoy your holiday and please visit us again at [www.freedomfeast.us/memorial-day](http://www.freedomfeast.us/memorial-day)



MEMORIAL DAY



INDEPENDENCE DAY



LABOR DAY



THANKSGIVING



MLK DAY