



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 2, 2011

President Obama Proclaims National Day of Prayer

On April 29, two weeks after the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the National Day of Prayer, President Obama proclaimed May 5 as the date for Americans to come together in a unified time of prayer for the nation. Obama's latest proclamation continues a tradition that goes back to before the nation's founding, when the Continental Congress called for "a day of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer" to be observed on July 20, 1775.

Prayer has played an important role in the American story and in shaping our Nations leaders, noted the President in his proclamation, recalling the words of his predecessor, Abraham Lincoln, who noted during the War Between the States that he had been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go.



Obama recalled that from the earliest years of our countrys history, Congress and Presidents have set aside days to recognize the role prayer has played in so many definitive moments in our history.

He appealed to the American people to use this years observance in expressing their thankfulness to God for the liberty that allows people of all faiths to worship or not worship according to the dictates of their conscience, and for the many other freedoms and blessings that we often take for granted.

Noting the conflicts that have placed Americas military forces in harms way around the world, Obama asked the nation to pray for the men and women of our Armed Forces and the many selfless sacrifices they and their families make on behalf of our Nation. In addition, he counseled prayer for the sustenance and guidance for all of us to meet the great challenges we face as a Nation.

Noting the uncertainty and unrest that plague people all over the word, the President advised concerted prayer for men and women everywhere who seek peace, human dignity, and the same rights we treasure here in America.

The President concluded his official proclamation by inviting all citizens of our Nation, as their own faith or conscience directs them, to join me in giving thanks for the many blessings we enjoy [and] in asking God for guidance, mercy, and protection for our Nation.

That there would even be a proclamation from the President this year was in doubt until April 14, when the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a lower court ruling that the national observance was a violation of the First Amendments supposed separation of church and state.

As reported by [The New American](#), the circuit court decision trumped the April 2010 verdict of U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb (pictured above), who had ruled that the National Day of Prayer, officially



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established by Congress in 1952 and proclaimed by every President since Harry Truman, amounted to an unconstitutional call for religious action on the part of the government a decision President Obama had appealed.

A three-member panel of the circuit court determined that a presidential prayer proclamation imposes no requirement on a person to do anything, and so no one is injured by what amounts to an invitation. Wrote Judge Frank Easterbrook in the unanimous ruling: The Judicial Branch does not censor a Presidents speech. Those who do not agree with a Presidents statement may speak in opposition to it; they are not entitled to silence the speech of which they disapprove.

While religious-minded Americans applauded the President for his prayer proclamation, just days earlier Obama had received severe criticism for not issuing a traditional presidential Easter proclamation, while he did release a statement in honor of the secular Earth Day observance.

According to the [American Family Association](#) (AFA), not only had Obama ignored Easter in favor of an Earth Day proclamation, but he had also neglected any mention of the Christian holy day in his weekly Saturday address to the nation on the day before Easter.

The AFAs president, Tim Wildmon, noted angrily that Obama ignored Easter on his radio address. He ignored Easter in terms of a proclamation from the White House. But, Wildmon noted, hes happy to do that if its Ramadan or another Islamic holiday; hell issue proclamations [for Muslim observances] all day long.

As reported by [OneNewsNow.com](#), Wildmon believes it is impossible that the omission was a mistake or an oversight. He cites what the AFA calls previous egregious examples of disregard for the nations Christian heritage. The conservative online news site quoted Wildmon as saying that in three different instances Obama left out [the phrase] endowed by our Creator when referencing the Declaration of Independence and quoting from it in speeches that he gave, not to mention that in the past he had canceled National Day of Prayer celebrations and commemorations at the White House.

OneNewsNow.com noted that while the President did not issue an official Easter proclamation, the White House had nonetheless hosted what the president dubbed the second annual Easter Prayer Breakfast, where he said the struggles of Jesus Christ through death and resurrection put the political battles of Washington in perspective.

Added the conservative news report, When it comes to understanding what is truly important, said President Obama, nothing beats scripture and the reminder of the eternal.



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