

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

## **Remarks on Lighting the National Christmas Tree**

*December 5, 2024*

*The President.* Merry Christmas, everyone! Merry Christmas.

This Christmas tree lighting is one of my wife Jill's favorite events, so she truly regrets not being here tonight. She's on an international trip in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates and Sicily to—in order to promote women's health research. She sends her best wishes to all of you.

And on behalf of Kamala and Doug—where are you, Kamala and Doug? You—there you go. Welcome to the—on behalf of them, welcome to the National Christmas Tree lighting.

Thank you, Mickey, all the artists who are performing tonight.

A special thanks to the Jones family for their service and sacrifice and our military families. Tonight they'll help light this beautiful Christmas tree.

Mickey, will you start the countdown?

*Musician Mickey Guyton.* All right, y'all. Let's count down together, people.

*Audience members.* Five, four, three, two, one!

*[At this point, the YNC Samuel Jones III, USN, his wife Navy veteran Patrice L. Jones, and their children Nia and Ava joined the President in lighting the National Christmas Tree.]*

*The President.* Whoa!

*Ms. Guyton.* Merry Christmas!

*[A choir sang "Joy to the World."]*

*The President.* Folks, as we gather here in President's Park just outside the White House, a special thanks to the National Park Service and the National Park Foundation. I mean it.

This 30-foot red spruce represents the spirit embodied in this year's White House holiday theme, which Jill unveiled earlier this week. The theme is "A Season of Peace and Light"—of peace and light—the peace we feel as we pause and reflect on our blessing and the light—the light—we see as we gather with loved ones that cherish our time together.

During this season of reflection and renewal, many of us will sing "O Holy Night." A phrase in the song is: "His law is love; His gospel is peace." May [My; White House correction] wish for you and for the nation, now and always, is we continue to seek the light of liberty and love, kindness and compassion, dignity and decency.

Merry Christmas, America. Merry Christmas to all of you. And may God bless you all, and may God protect—[*applause*—may God protect our troops.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:14 p.m. on the Ellipse at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Vice President Kamala D. Harris and her husband Douglas C. Emhoff. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 6.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : National Christmas Tree lighting.

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