

It was to establish justice. That promised everything else. Justice and the system of justice in this country are worth protecting, and we shall do so. We shall continue to do so.

I promise that I will be in the trenches fighting with you, We the People.

As John Lewis used to say, let's go make some good trouble.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

□ 1900

CELEBRATING FAITH MONTH

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois was recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.)

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in recognition of Faith Month, a time that we set aside each year in this body to share the importance of our faith and how it inspires us in public service.

We just celebrated the greatest event in human history: the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

When Christ ascended into Heaven from the Mount of Olives, he promised that the Holy Spirit would comfort and guide us. He also left us with Scripture that provides answers to every problem we face.

Our Founding Fathers acknowledged the importance of God's Word and the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

In his "Notes on the State of Virginia," Thomas Jefferson wrote: "God, who gave us life, gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a Nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

Our first freedom, religious liberty, even finds its roots in Scripture in that God gives every man and woman the freedom to accept or reject His free gift of salvation.

Patrick Henry acknowledged that: "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great Nation was founded not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason, peoples of other faiths have

been afforded asylum, prosperity, and the freedom of worship here."

When the Constitutional Convention was about to fail, Benjamin Franklin called the delegates to prayer and declared: "I have lived, sir, a long time; and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings that 'except the Lord build the House, they labor in vain that build it.'"

"I firmly believe this; and I also believe, that without His concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel."

You can't design a building without a firm foundation, and that is why our Founders made sure our Republic was founded on Judeo-Christian principles.

The Bible contains the answer to every major political issue we face, whether it be life, marriage, family, or the difference between a man and a woman.

The Bible gives warnings to nations, governments, and rulers on how to properly lead its citizens. The Bible teaches us how to treat each other with dignity and respect and provides the ultimate source of purpose and contentment: a life committed to Jesus Christ.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BABIN).

Mr. BABIN. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely thank my very good friend (Mrs. MILLER of Illinois), a very strong lady of faith, for this Special Order. We really appreciate this.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to recognize and to celebrate what we call Faith Month, a time when we proudly and openly give voice to the faith that strengthens and sustains so many of us who serve up here and all across this great Nation of ours, both here in Congress and, as I said, the United States of America that was built, as my good friend Mrs. MILLER said, based on the Judeo-Christian Bible and faith that we were handed by our forefathers.

America was built on this foundation, as she said, of religious liberty: the very first freedom enshrined in our Bill of Rights. Our Founders understood that faith was not just a private matter but a powerful force for good in public life.

I get so weary of hearing people say: Oh, we don't want to hear about politics in church or we don't want to hear about church in Congress. Well, politics in church has become something—if it has to do with morals and good and evil, then it is not politics, folks. That is church.

We will talk about this very thing. It says right there before us: "In God We Trust." We know where our Forefathers stood on this issue. Without a doubt, we are going to continue this great thing called the United States of America and what we were built on.

We will honor this tradition. We recognize that faith is not something to be hidden away but is something to be lived out boldly and with joy. The Scripture reminds us that we are called to be a light on a hill, not to hide this light under a basket but to let it shine for all to see.

Each of us comes from very different backgrounds here and with very different traditions, but the thread of faith that is woven through the fabric of our national story, we must always remember to honor that. Our Constitution, our Bill of Rights, and our Declaration of Independence are built on those principles, those Biblical principles.

From prayers whispered on battlefields long ago to hymns sung in chapels, from the simple faith of farmers to the heartfelt petitions of families, faith has carried America through many, many trials, through triumphs and every moment in between, win or lose. Sometimes we profit when we lose, because we learn and we make ourselves better people that way.

During this Faith Month, I am very proud to stand alongside my colleagues right here and speak of my Christian faith right on this very floor.

I encourage every other Member to please join us to lift up the faith that guides us, to celebrate the freedom that protects us, and to remember that enduring truth that has been proclaimed from generation to generation: "Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord."

May we never take our religious freedom for granted, may we steward it wisely, and may we always seek to lead, to serve, and to govern with humility, with conviction, and that unwavering faith.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, our Founding Fathers, including George Washington, did not shy away from expressing their religious beliefs.

In 1854, Congress made the statement: "The great, vital and conservative element in our system is the belief of our people in the pure doctrines and the divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ." That is Congress, 1854.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mrs. HARSHBARGER).

Mrs. HARSHBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak on faith tonight.

You know, the Bible so beautifully defines faith. In Hebrews 11:1, it says: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen."

This Nation is in the midst of spiritual warfare—make no bones about it—for the soul of not only America but for the world. There is an assault on Christianity, and we have to be diligent in sharing our faith if we profess to be Christians.

As my colleague, Mr. BABIN, just quoted, Psalm 33:12 declares: "Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord." America is a Nation that is blessed, in

large part, because we are rooted in Judeo-Christian values.

I want to speak about faith as it pertains to politics. During the earliest beginnings of our Nation, it was abundantly evident that Christianity played a formative role in shaping our Nation's founding. Christian principles shaped the Founders' thinking in a profound way. They believed that humans are created in the image of God with an informed conscience of what is right and what is wrong. They believed that humans are inherently sinful, and because of that, we always would need laws and a system of checks and balances. They believed God is the source of moral standards and that legislation should be in agreement with the moral law. They believed that religious liberty is a God-given right and must be protected.

There was a British politician who served in the late 1700s, early 1800s. He was against the slave trade, and he devoted his life to promoting Christian values. His name was William Wilberforce. He wrote: "I am disturbed when I see the majority of so-called Christians having such little understanding of the real nature of the faith they profess. Faith is a subject of such importance that we should not ignore it because of the distractions or the hectic pace of our lives."

He goes on to say: "I would suggest that faith is everyone's business. The advance or decline of faith is so intimately connected to the welfare of a society that it should be a particular interest to a politician."

Being a Christian in a secular society is not an easy task, but we have examples who left benchmarks for not just our country to follow but for the world to follow.

This generation of leaders has a tremendous opportunity to leave a Christ-honoring legacy that can possibly change not only our country but the world. We should let our faith be the catalyst for every decision that we make.

I am thankful, as a Christian, I can share my faith from a platform that very few people will ever have the opportunity to share from, and that is right here in the House of Representatives.

Wilberforce's work is an example to generations going forward to integrate faith, reason and courage into our engagement with those we have been called to serve.

I am honored to be part of Faith Month "for such a time as this."

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is such a privilege to be able to meet with you and other legislators to pray for our Nation.

To quote another one of our Founding Fathers, Patrick Henry, Revolutionary general, legislator, the voice of liberty, ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, and Governor of Virginia. He said: "Righteousness alone can exalt America as a Nation. Whoever thou art, remember this and in thy sphere practice

virtue thyself, and encourage it in others."

One of the verses that I came to Washington, D.C., with to be a plumb line for me, to remind me, is II Corinthians 5:9: So whether we are at home or away—this is the Apostle Paul—we make it our aim to please Him, knowing that we are going to give an account for what we have done in our bodies whether for good or for evil.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. ALLEN), my good friend.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mrs. MILLER for her outward expression of faith and for being such a light here in this body to all of us, for her leadership and also putting together this Special Order tonight recognizing Faith Month.

Today, we are not only connected through our positions as public servants but also by the moral fabric of our Nation. This fabric is our Christian faith which ties together the sacrifice of our Founding Fathers with the dedication of today's leaders.

Faith Month holds profound significance across this land, serving as an all-encompassing reminder of the spiritual guidance that shapes our lives and the variety of beliefs that enrich our Nation and our Nation's rich heritage.

□ 1915

I believe that our Constitution is God-breathed, and so I ask the question: Where is our Nation today?

I am a member of a ministry, The LEAD HOUSE, and we are reading through the scriptures for, I think, our fourth year in a row.

We are in Judges right now. When you read Judges, God appointed judges to bring about rule and obedience among Israel because, every time that a judge passed on, Israel turned from God. Every time they turned from God, they were attacked. In fact, it was so bad that the Mennonites actually hid in caves in the hills. Every time, they cried out to God. Of course, we are reading about Gideon this week.

Yet, the one thing that, I think, captures our faith is a story I heard on Easter Sunday from our pastor in our church, and that is the story of the crucifixion. After the crucifixion, there were 11 disciples who went away, and they feared for their lives. In fact, they hid in a room.

Resurrection was 3 days later. Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave.

What that did for those 11 disciples was it gave them the power over death. They became fearless. They started a movement that the Roman Empire feared and were severely persecuted.

I tell you that, on Easter Sunday, over a third of the world celebrated the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the Roman Empire no longer exists. That is the power of the resurrection, and that is the power of faith.

As I reflect on these timeless teachings of the Bible, I am reminded of the

divine wisdom in Exodus. In those sacred passages, God established laws and governance to uphold justice and righteousness. Just as Moses, the only full face here, looks down on this body today and as we look at the flag, In God We Trust, really?

Do our actions actually align with the purpose that God set before us of restraining evil and promoting good in our society? What this proves is our belief in God must be reflected and represented in our daily lives, not simply spoken.

We are a nation founded in the Judeo-Christian value of family. Joshua 18 is one of the greatest promises in the scriptures. God told Joshua, who, of course, followed Moses:

"Do not let this book of law depart from your lips. Be careful to do what it says, meditate on it night and day, and you will be prosperous and successful."

This is the first book in the Bible that I memorized, and I say it every day. What I have discovered in my time here in Congress and in business and whatnot is that, unlike when I grew up, we have become a Bible-illiterate culture.

Why do we meditate on God's Word? Like Abraham, whose faith was credited to him as righteousness, we must trust in God's promises. They are abundant throughout his scriptures, and we must live obediently to His Word, or America will end up like Rome.

Let us seek God's blessing and protection as we navigate through the complexities of governance, acknowledging his sovereignty over all things.

It is during this time of such division that I often lean on the words of Mark 3:24, reminding us that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. America is at a tipping point. It is through our collective faith and drawing near to the Word of God that we find the path to unity, truth, and freedom.

During this special month, we are reminded of the profound impact of our faith. It is the beacon of hope, guiding us through life's trials and triumphs, and it unites us in a bond stronger than any earthly tie.

I hope those watching me tonight will join with me and reaffirm our commitment to worship the Lord and to draw strength and inspiration by meditating on His Word morning and night and be careful to do what it says.

May God bless each of us abundantly and guide our Nation as we walk in faith and righteousness, and may we never forget that we are, in fact, one nation under God.

Mr. Speaker, may God's grace be with us all.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank Representative ALLEN for his faithfulness to show up to pray together for our country and to always be bold to share his faith.

I also thank the gentleman for the compliment that I am a light out here, but I do say along with the First Book of Peter 2:9: "... proclaim the

excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

What is the darkness? The darkness is sin. It is what has afflicted mankind since the Garden of Eden, and it causes humans to be self-consumed, rebellious, and foolish. Yet, we should draw near to the Lord and come boldly to his throne in time of need.

Hebrews says: “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), my good friend.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding. I am honored to be able to speak here and that Congresswoman MILLER has yielded me time to talk about Faith Month here.

When our country was founded, John Adams said that our country was made for a moral and religious people and totally unfit for every other kind.

We, therefore, must be especially concerned—and I realize there are many good people who do not go to church—that church attendance has fallen so overwhelmingly in the last 40 years, particularly in the last 20 years. I believe it has fallen 25 percent in a very short period of time.

I think we should be very concerned that the number of people who say that they don't believe in God of any sort has, from the statistics that I have seen in the Gallup poll, gone up by about 9 to 1 over the last 40 years.

Our country will be protected if we turn to God and ask for forgiveness. We will be given the wisdom and the good fortune to make our country the Bible-believing country that it has been through most of our history. We will get back to the moral country that we all envision the United States to be.

However, if we continue to go down the path of rejecting God and just thinking that all the wonderful blessings that we have are going to show up automatically, we will be in deep trouble.

I, like the other speakers tonight, ask the American people to ask for forgiveness and ask for God's wisdom and ask us to make the appropriate decisions that America again become the moral and religious country that John Adams wanted us to be.

Mrs. MILLER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I remind everybody again that our Founding Fathers did not shy away from sharing their faith.

Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Surgeon General of the Continental Army, ratifier of the American Constitution, father of American medicine, Treasurer of the U.S. Mint, father of public schools under the Constitution, said: “By renouncing the Bible, philosophers swing from their moorings upon all moral subjects. It is the only correct map of the human heart that ever has been published.”

Daniel Webster said: “The Bible is a book . . . which teaches man his own individual responsibility, his own dignity, and his equality with his fellow man.”

“Whatever makes men good Christians, makes them good citizens.”

“The Christian religion—its general principles—must ever be regarded among us as the foundation of civil society.”

I conclude by saying that I begin almost every morning by reading Psalm 25, and I encourage us as a country to read that and pray over it. I have almost gotten it memorized.

Psalm 25 reads:

“To You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust; let me not be put to shame; let not my enemies exult over me. Indeed, none who wait on You shall be put to shame; they shall be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. Make me to know Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation; for You, I wait all the day long.”

God's Word unites, and I believe this body would function a lot better if we took a little time each morning to pray and meditate on this Psalm. It is Psalm 25.

What a privilege that we get to share our faith on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I thank each of my colleagues for participating in this year's Faith Month Special Order. I especially thank the ladies of Concerned Women for America for their work in sharing their faith across our great Nation.

Mr. Speaker, may God continue to bless our Nation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

ENDING OF DEI PROGRAMS THROUGH EXECUTIVE ORDER

(Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2025, Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana was recognized for 30 minutes.)

Mr. FIELDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about something that happened on January 20.

On January 20, the President of the United States took the oath of office at this Capitol. Shortly thereafter, he signed several executive orders.

One executive order was Executive Order No. 14151. That executive order ended all DEI programs. The argument that DEI initiatives constitute reverse discrimination fundamentally misunderstands both the history and the purpose of these programs.

DEI initiatives emerged as thoughtful, evidence-based responses to documented inequities suffered by rural communities, minorities, women, the poor, and the disabled. These programs represent America at its best, acknowledging our Nation's shortcomings and tireless work to overcome them.

The ratification of the 14th Amendment in 1868 codified equal protection as a constitutional principle. Yet,

Americans soon discovered that simply declaring equal protection didn't automatically create it.

The real challenge was in translating these legal guarantees into everyday justice through their implementations. When the landmark Supreme Court decisions in 2023 and 2024 further restricted race-conscious university admissions and workplace policies, they accelerated a retreat from this understanding.

□ 1930

The history of DEI efforts in America is not some partisan agenda. It is part of our Nation's ongoing work to ensure that America's promise extends to every American. In 2025, as we face renewed attacks on these principles, we must renew our commitment to this work.

Let me be clear: Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not about guarantees and preferences; they are about removing barriers. They are not about lowering standards; they are about ensuring that the standards we apply don't inadvertently favor some groups while disadvantaging others who are equally qualified.

When our military, for example, embraced diversity and inclusion, it didn't become weaker. It became the most formidable fighting force in human history.

When our businesses embraced diverse talents and perspectives, they didn't become less competitive. They gained access to broader markets and built the strongest economy in the world.

When our universities created more inclusive learning environments, they didn't sacrifice excellence. Instead, they became global leaders in research and education.

The world is always watching us to see what we will accomplish, but now more than ever before, they are watching us to see who we will become.

I still believe in an America where a child's potential isn't limited to his ZIP Code, the color of his skin, their gender, or other factors beyond their control.

I believe in an America where we can acknowledge our imperfect past while working together toward a more perfect future.

Most of all, I believe in the fundamental goodness and fairness of the American people.

When we move beyond slogans, when we truly see each other as fellow citizens on one shared journey, we find that what unites us is far greater than what divides us.

While the temptation is great, we cannot let this moment divide us. We were never meant to be the divided States. We were created as and have thrived for over 250 years as the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON), the chairman of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honorable Congressman