



THE WHITE HOUSE  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

## Faith and White House History NEW ISSUE *White House History Quarterly* Magazine

May 1, 2026 (Washington, D.C.) – Ever since President John Adams moved into the newly built White House in 1800, the American presidents have brought to the house their own traditions for practicing their faith. "With this issue we visit some of the churches where presidents worshipped, preached, taught, celebrated, and mourned as active members or occasional visitors," explains Marcia Mallet Anderson, editor of *White House History Quarterly* in her opening foreword.

WHITE  
HOUSE  
HISTORY  
*Quarterly*

Faith and  
White House History

The Journal of THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION Number 81

To request a review copy of [\*White House History Quarterly\* #81](#) or to interview the contributors, contact [press@whha.org](mailto:press@whha.org).



Featured articles include:

- **BRUTON PARISH:** Author **Jonathan L. Stolz** opens the issue with a visit to the historic Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia, where early future presidents worshipped even before the United States of America was founded. George Washington attended the baptism of fourteen of his godchildren here, and pew doors in memory of Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe remind us of the faith of the nation's Founders.
- **THE REVERE BELL:** Years later as president, James Monroe supported the effort to add a bell and bell tower to the first church in the President's Neighborhood, St. John's on Lafayette Square. Author **Richard F. Grimmett** takes us into the bell tower, where the 964-pound Revere bell purchased in 1822 has rung during every presidency for more than two hundred years.

- **ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE BLACK CHURCHES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.:** As the city of Washington grew throughout the nineteenth century, more than 135 churches were established, and many welcomed the presidents. Abraham Lincoln, who often worshipped at New York Presbyterian Church, took an interest in the efforts of Black congregations to build their own houses of worship. Author **Ann H. Slattery** follows Lincoln on commutes to and from the Soldiers' Home that took him past the "contraband camps" where he would often stop and join in the prayer and song.
- **AMERICA'S PREACHER PRESIDENT: C.W. Goodyear** looks at the role of faith in the life and political career of President James A. Garfield, a practicing minister with the Disciples of Christ and the only preacher to become president.
- **THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER: Christi Harlan** takes us to First Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., a half mile north of the White House, where President Jimmy Carter is remembered not only as an ordinary member but also as a teacher of the Couples Sunday School Class.
- **BILLY GRAHAM AND THE PRESIDENTS: Abigail Coker** recounts the story of Billy Graham, the evangelist who supported every president in good times and bad, for more than half a century. "He became a frequent visitor to the White House," she explains, "serving as a friend and spiritual adviser. His presence provided comfort and encouragement to the presidents, supporting them in the day-to-day burdens of their position as well as during times of personal and national crisis."
- **THE CHAPEL OF THE PRESIDENTS: J. Theodore Anderson** traces the evolution of the National Presbyterian Church from its beginnings at the Carpenter's Hall where the builders of the White House worshipped in the 1790s, to the 12-acre campus on Nebraska Avenue today. He leads us on a visit to the Chapel of the Presidents, which is dedicated to all presidents at the behest of member President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was baptized there.
- **THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL:** First envisioned in 1791 by Pierre Charles L'Enfant as a church "intended for national purposes, such as public prayer, thanksgivings, funerational orations, and assigned to the special use of no particular sect or denomination, but equally open to all," our presidential site for this issue is the Washington National Cathedral. Author **Jennifer I. Wojcek** presents the history of the sixth largest cathedral in the world, where President Woodrow Wilson lays at rest, and where, for more than one hundred years, presidents have been on hand for national observances and public worship.
- **REFLECTIONS: Stewart D. McLaurin**, the Association's president, closes the issue observing, that in the nation's Semiquincentennial year it is fitting to "reflect on

these histories, fostering a deeper appreciation for the interplay of spirituality and governance. In Lafayette Park's evolving story—from the Carpenter's Hall to presidential pew—we see faith's quiet persistence, guiding the nation toward unity and purpose from generation to generation."

This 104-page issue of *White House History Quarterly* retails for \$12.95. To purchase a single issue, visit [shop.whitehousehistory.org](http://shop.whitehousehistory.org).

To subscribe to *White House History Quarterly*, visit [whitehousehistoryjournal.org](http://whitehousehistoryjournal.org).

### **About the White House Historical Association**

Founded in 1961 by First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, the White House Historical Association is the nonprofit, nonpartisan organization entrusted with preserving and sharing the history of the White House. Supported entirely by private philanthropy and the sale of educational books and products, the Association reaches millions of students, teachers, and lifelong learners through research and scholarship initiatives, public programming, and the authoritative titles published by its independent press. Throughout each presidency, the Association works with the Offices of the First Lady and the White House Curator to acquire and preserve historic objects for the White House Fine and Decorative Arts Collection. The Association also operates The People's House: A White House Experience, a free, immersive, educational museum in Washington, D.C., which welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. To learn more about the White House Historical Association, please visit [WhiteHouseHistory.org](http://WhiteHouseHistory.org).

###