



# Symbol of Freedom

The year was 1862. The Civil War gripped the nation, and an old sea captain in Nashville, Tennessee, had a secret. More than 30 years before, as Captain William Driver prepared for an important voyage, he had been given a special gift—a flag with 24 stars and 13 stripes. The first time he saw it flying, he said, “Old Glory!” and the name stuck. For 30 years, Captain Driver flew his banner proudly around the world and at home. But, in 1861, his home state seceded from the Union and a new flag was flown. It wasn’t until a year later, when Nashville again came under Union control, that his secret was revealed. His precious Old Glory had been spared, sewn inside the lining of an old quilt.

In the years after the Civil War, Old Glory became an important symbol of a united nation. B. J. Cigrand, a teacher in Wisconsin in 1885, wanted his students to celebrate the birthday of the flag of the United States. He wanted to teach a new generation the importance of honoring the flag and what it represented. What began as a small movement in a rural community soon expanded to cities like New York and Philadelphia. By the turn of the century, US flags were displayed on all public buildings and the celebration of Flag Day was spreading across the nation. Finally, in 1949, Congress approved legislation that named June 14 as the official observance of Flag Day.

Today, the flag reminds us of those who gave their lives to secure our liberty and the hope that freedom can endure for future generations.

Celebrate Flag Day on June 14.

## For Younger Children

- Invite neighborhood children to take part in a Flag Day party.
- Color pictures of the American flag and discuss the meaning of each color. (See [usflag.org/colors.html](http://usflag.org/colors.html).)
- Provide each child with a small flag and an instrument. Encourage children to participate in a Flag Day parade around the neighborhood.
- Teach children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance with their hands over their hearts. Explain the meaning of words like *allegiance* and *republic*.
- Encourage your children to thank God for our country and our freedom. Sing some patriotic songs.

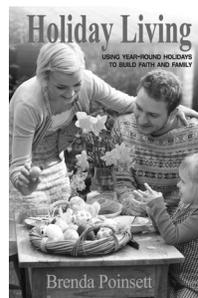
## For Older Children and Teens

- Create flag pins from beads and take them to local police and firefighters. Pray for these officials as they put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms we enjoy.
- Check out books from your local library about Betsy Ross and Francis Scott Key. Read together about the creation of the US flag and “The Star-Spangled Banner.” Find out what each part of the flag represents.
- Research the US Flag Code guidelines to learn about the proper handling of the flag. (See [usflag.org/uscode36.html](http://usflag.org/uscode36.html).)
- Play “capture the flag” and help young people understand what it means to unite around and defend a flag.
- Attend a ceremony where old flags are retired. Contact your local Veterans of Foreign Wars post for more information.

## For All Ages

The flag represents the freedoms available in the US, but remember that many people in the US and through all of North America have not received the freedom that only Jesus offers. Let the flag remind us not only of the freedom of worship but also of the freedom God gives us to tell others about Christ wherever we are.

—From *Missions Mosaic*, June 2016



Find more family ideas like this in *Holiday Living* (N134102 • \$14.99). Visit [NewHopePublishers.com](http://NewHopePublishers.com) for more information.