

# In The Fathers' Corner

by Keith Davis

Our country was founded by God fearing, religious and spiritual believers. We know this because their writings reflect their devotion and praise to the Creator and His Word as revealed in the Bible. They knew God was instrumental in the formation of the United States of America. In each issue of the *People's Pen*, we look at just a few of the many writings that exemplify the Founding Fathers' beliefs.

## Founding Fathers' Words:

No journey into the Christian history of America would be complete without a look back to the very first steps of the earliest of our founders, the Pilgrims.

Their desire for religious freedom led them first to Holland then back to England, enduring more than ten years of various difficulties. By the time they left England, bound for and contracted to live in the Hudson River area, they were seasoned, knowledgeable and determined settlers.



After sailing for 65 days, enduring storms and damage, on November 9, 1620, with William Bradley thanking and praising God by reading Psalm 100, they arrived at Provincetown harbor. That being outside the original destination and deciding to stay, on November 11, 1620, the colonists drew up what later came to be known as the *Mayflower Compact*.

The Mayflower Compact was necessary, at least provisionally, to establish concordance of the membership until a grant by the government of title to public lands (a “patent”) could be issued by the King James of England. While the original version was lost, later versions were penned in 1622, 1646 and 1669.

This is the modernized version of the Mayflower Compact:

In the name of God, Amen. We, whose names are underwritten, the Loyal Subjects of our dread Sovereign Lord King James, by the Grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, defender of the Faith, etc.:

Having undertaken, for the Glory of God, and advancements of the Christian faith, and the honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the Northern parts of Virginia; do by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God, and one another; covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic; for our better

ordering, and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame, such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cape Cod the 11th of November, in the year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord King James, of England, France, and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, 1620.

The opening line, “In the name of God, Amen,” says that what follows is a solemn oath. Their voyage and purpose of setting up a new colony was to be for the “advancements of the Christian faith” and was for the “Glory of God.” As they vowed to set up a “civil body politic,” it was to be done in the “presence of God,” thus assuring Christian values were to be behind “laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices.”



All documents and writings which followed up to the founding of the country were in the same spirit. Praise God!

### **Historic footnotes:**

41 Pilgrims signed the Mayflower Compact. These included Myles Standish, John Alden, John Carver, who would become the first governor of the colony, and William Bradford, the second, who first described the settlers as “pilgrims:”

So they lefte [that] goodly & pleasante citie, which had been ther resting place, nere 12 years; but they knew they were pilgrimes ...

102 Pilgrims and about 20 crew members had left Europe. On December 20, they arrived across Cape Cod Bay in Plymouth, not knowing the hardships to come. By March of 1621, only 47 of the pilgrims and half of the ship’s crew were alive, cared for by a handful of the strongest. The subsequent survival of the Plymouth Colony can only be described as a miracle.