

First Landing Day- America's Christian Founding

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The planting of the first permanent English colony on the shores of North America began on April 26, 1607 when 104 settlers and Parson Robert Hunt landed at Cape Henry. Their first official act was to conduct a Lord's Day service. Several days later, on April 29th, they conducted a service and dedicated America to God. This has become the day that we recognize and celebrate as *First Landing Day*. Today at the original site there is a State Park that was recently renamed *First Landing Park* in honor and recognition of this event.

What was the religious motive behind the planting of this colony? You will find the answer to this question in a series of four charters, published 1606-1628, that authorized this colony. Richard Hakluyt, Robert Hunt and other members of the Virginia Company wrote the first charter for the colonizing of Virginia. All four charters state that it was the purpose of this endeavor to bring the gospel to the people who live in darkness. As stated in the 1606 Charter:

*...Wee, greatly commending and graciously accepting of thiere desires to the furtherance of soe noble a worke which may, by the providence of Almighty God, hereafter tende to the glorie of His Divine Majestie in propagating of the Christian religion to suche people as yet live in darknesse and miserable ignorance of the true knowledge and worshippe of God may in tyme bring the infidels and salvages living in those parts to humane civilitie and to a settled and quiet govrmente, doe by these our letters patents graciously accepte of and agree to thaire humble and well intended desires; ...*ⁱ

In this first charter it was also recognized that the Christian faith was to be preached and therefore planted:

*...and wee doe especially ordaine, charge and require the said Presidents and Councells and the ministers of the said several Colonies respectively, within their several limits and precincts, that they with all diligence, care and respect doe provide that the true word of God and Christian faith be preached, planted and used, not only within every of the said several Colonies and plantacions but alsoe as much as they may amongst the salvage people which doe or shall adjoine unto them, according to the doctrine, rights and religion now professed and established within our realm of England; ...*ⁱⁱ

As we celebrate the 418th anniversary of the Christian founding of our nation, let us remember the mighty and providential acts of our awesome God and let us purpose to continue to bring the gospel to all who are in our sphere of influence.

ⁱ *The Charters of Virginia 1606-1621*

ⁱⁱ *Ibid*, chapter two