

Lincoln Presidential Library to Display Handwritten Gettysburg Address

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SPRINGFIELD – The Gettysburg Address is Abraham Lincoln’s most famous speech. It helped changed the way America looked at the Civil War and at itself. And now the address will be on display at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum for two weeks.

The handwritten copy will be displayed in the museum Nov. 18-30. An actor portraying President Lincoln will visit the museum to answer visitors' questions about the Gettysburg Address and Lincoln's life on the anniversary of the speech, Thursday, Nov. 19.

The document – one of just five surviving copies written by Lincoln – stays in a climate-controlled vault most of the time to protect it from light and humidity. The display in the museum's Treasures Gallery offers visitors a rare chance to see the paper where Lincoln wrote "Four score and seven years ago ..."

The presidential library is also offering an [online discussion](#) of the speech Nov. 19 at 7 p. m. Central time. Historian Christian McWhirter and Education Director Heather Nice will appear on Facebook Live from the museum room dedicated to Gettysburg.

The free discussion will delve into the meaning of the Gettysburg Address, the ALPLM mural that tells the Gettysburg story, and educational resources that parents and teachers might find useful.

Lesson plans on Gettysburg and a host of other topics can be found in the "[Educator Resources](#)" section of the ALPLM website, www.PresidentLincoln.Illinois.gov.

Teachers might also be interested in a free professional-development program on Monday, Nov. 17, at 6 p.m. Central time. Called "Exploring the Gettysburg Address," it offers strategies for teaching the speech's full context and legacy. Register at bit.ly/ALPLMtix.

Lincoln delivered the speech in 1863 at the dedication of a cemetery for soldiers killed in the Battle of Gettysburg. He said the fallen soldiers had already consecrated the site "far above our poor power to add or detract." It was now the duty of the living, he said, to seek "a new birth of freedom."

Afterwards, Lincoln wrote out a copy that was sold to raise money for the benefit of wounded soldiers. Four score years later, it was for sale again, and Illinois schoolchildren donated pennies and nickels so the state could buy the document. That copy of the address is the one now housed at the presidential library.

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum uses a combination of rigorous scholarship and high-tech showmanship to immerse visitors in Lincoln's life and times. The library holds an unparalleled collection of Lincoln books, documents, photographs, artifacts and art, as well as some 12 million items pertaining to all aspects of Illinois history.

Visitors will find the facility is meticulously cleaned and disinfected. All visitors must wear facial coverings and undergo a brief screening before entering.

The museum is spacious enough that everyone can easily stay one “Lincoln” apart – 6 feet, 4 inches, the equivalent of Lincoln’s height. Visitation is currently capped at 375, a small percentage of the museum’s full capacity.

Buy tickets in advance at www.PresidentLincoln.Illinois.gov or by calling 217-558-8844. Follow the ALPLM on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).