

Richmond Times-Dispatch

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Youngkin recalls Henry's spark of Revolutionary history - and recent history

•[Dave Ress](#)



Governor Youngkin speaks at Virginia 250th anniversary of American Revolution Event

[Gov. Glenn Youngkin](#) kicked off Virginia's celebration of the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution on Tuesday at Richmond's [St. John's Church](#) with a reminder of what Patrick Henry said there in March 1775 before an audience that included George Washington and Thomas Jefferson.



Frank Vaughn, who played Thomas Jefferson, listens to his fellow performers at a reenactment of the Second Virginia Convention on Tuesday at St. John's Church in Richmond.

Margo Wagner, Times-Dispatch

Afterward, talking about the state budget, he recalled more recent history.

“Delegates gathered here for the second Virginia Convention, to debate Virginia's role in that momentous conflict with King George, and Patrick Henry delivered those words ... 'I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.'”



Gov. Glenn Youngkin greets reenactors dressed as Thomas Nelson Jr. and Benjamin Harrison, both Revolutionary War-era Virginia governors and signers of the Declaration of Independence, on Tuesday at St. John's Church in Richmond.

MARGO WAGNER, TIMES-DISPATCH

"These words sparked the flame," Youngkin told an audience gathered to mark the formation of an honorary leadership council for the [Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission](#).



Chris Dunn performs as Patrick Henry at a reenactment of the Second Virginia Convention on Tuesday at St. John's Church in Richmond.

MARGO WAGNER, TIMES-DISPATCH

Later, asked about the House of Delegates and Senate budgets presented over the weekend and the big difference with his own budget proposal, he cited history again.

Youngkin: Budget goes through ups and downs

“So first of all, the budget process is one that goes through many ups and downs and the House and Senate presented summaries of their budget proposals on Sunday,” Youngkin said.

“And I’m just reminded that over the course of the last two years of our administration, and every single instance, we’ve started in different places, and we’ve been able to come together and deliver for Virginians \$5 billion of tax relief, record investments in education, record investments in behavioral health and in law enforcement, and a real commitment and a requirement to do things on a bipartisan basis,” he said.



Second Virginia Convention reenactors stand outside of St. John’s Church on Tuesday in Richmond.
Margo Wagner, Times-Dispatch

“This is just the beginning of what is a normal process of budgeting in the commonwealth of Virginia ... because we have a lot of work to do,” he added.

The budgets emerging from the Democratic-lead House and Senate budget-writing committees both drop the income tax cut Youngkin proposed in his budget draft.

The Senate budget also dropped the framework for the \$2 billion arena and entertainment complex Youngkin is seeking as a new home for Washington’s professional hockey and basketball teams.

“I’m still waiting to review all of their half sheets and remember that what we heard on Sunday was a summary and a detailed one, but certainly none of the real specifics,” Youngkin told reporters, referring to the budget briefing papers the House Appropriations Committee and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee released on the weekend.

“I assume that as the budgets are passed on Thursday, and conferees are usually named shortly thereafter, I will have a chance to meet with them and I will directly express some things - that, one, I am very appreciative of where we’re coming together and other areas where I hope we can make more progress together,” he said.

Honoring Henry, Washington and Jefferson

Earlier, he said the 250th anniversary celebration is a chance to remember “the voice of Patrick Henry and the sword of George Washington and the pen of Thomas Jefferson would come together” to create the United States.

The 250th anniversary commission’s honorary leadership council comprises Youngkin, all nine living former governors, the state’s congressional delegation, Lt. Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears, Attorney General Jason Miyares, Speaker of the House of Delegates Don Scott Jr., D-Portsmouth, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate of Virginia, Sen. Louise Lucas, D-Portsmouth, and the commission’s national honorary chair Carly Fiorina, a former Hewlett-Packard CEO who sought the GOP presidential nomination in 2016.



Former Gov. George Allen and former first lady Susan Allen watch a reenactment of the Second Virginia Convention on Tuesday at St. John's Church in Richmond.
Margo Wagner, Times-Dispatch

Virginia is the only state in which governors may not serve consecutive terms. The state's nine living former governors are Democrat Chuck Robb, who served from 1982-86; Democrat Doug Wilder, 1990-94; Republican George Allen, 1994-98 - who was present at the church Tuesday; Republican Jim Gilmore, 1998-2002; Democrat Mark Warner, 2002-06; Democrat Tim Kaine, 2006-10; Republican Bob McDonnell, 2010-14; Democrat Terry McAuliffe, 2014-18; and Democrat Ralph Northam, 2018-22.

The council will lead a celebration that will reach all corners of Virginia, and touch on the victory of the American idea of rights and liberty, “the dark truths of a nation's failings, and the heroic moments between then and now that put us further along this collective pursuit of that perfect union,” Youngkin said.

And he said it was particularly important to launch that celebration at St. John’s Church.

“This is a special place in this next chapter that is defined by your reconfirming our commitment to that founding spirit, the spirit of Virginia, the spirit of America,” he said. “This is where it all began - with a spark.”



By Dave Ress
Growth and Development Reporter