

# The Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World

November 15, 2020



This morning, a group of Seekers who were part of the book study of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, read the traditional Thanksgiving Address of the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations or Iroquois) people. Kimmerer notes that these “Words that Come Before All Else” are spoken at the beginning of the school day, as well as at other ceremonial and governmental gatherings.

A pdf of the full text of this Greeting to the Natural World may be found at [https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01\\_02\\_Thanksgiving\\_Address.pdf](https://americanindian.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf) as well as in a small volume which includes text in English by John Stokes and David Kanawahienton

Benedict and in Mohawk by Dan Rokwaho Thompson with illustrations by John Kahionhes Fadden. This booklet is available at many places, including the Wilderness Awareness School at Duvall, Washington <https://www.wildernessawareness.org/store/adult/thanksgiving-address-booklet/>, which notes

*“These traditional Native American words of thanksgiving come from the people of the Six Nations: the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora, also known as the Iroquois or Haudenosaunee, who live in upstate New York, Wisconsin and Canada. Spoken as a spiritual address to the powers of the natural world, these words are used to open gatherings in order to bring the minds of the people together as one and align the gathered minds with nature. The roots of these words reach back thousands of years to the very origins of the Haudenosaunee as a people. The book presents the text in English and the original Mohawk.”* Lead author – John Stokes

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