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Donald Trump is sworn in as the 47th U.S. president in the Capitol Rotunda in Washington Jan. 20, 2025. (OSV News/Saul Loeb, pool via Reuters)



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January 22, 2025

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Though viewership of the inauguration of President Donald Trump [was down](#) from the previous two administrations, the quadrennial event was replete with viral moments and lowlights, and users on social media were quick to react.

Among the first moments to capture social media users occurred when a staffer jokingly asked former President George W. Bush if he was "going to behave" before he processed into the U.S. Capitol Rotunda.

President Barack Obama was quick to chime in. "Nope!" he said in a joking but also resigned tone.

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Eagle eye viewers later found Obama and Bush whispering to one another once they arrived at their seats in the Capitol Rotunda, kicking off rampant speculation on social media. Jackie Gonzalez, famous on social media for her ability to lipread [went viral](#) for her take on what was allegedly said.

"How can we stop what's happening?" Obama allegedly asks a smirking Bush. As of Wednesday morning, nearly 300,000 people had liked the post.

The inauguration's next viral moment came just a few short moments later, when, during the Oath of Office, Trump neglected to place his hand on the two stacked Bibles being held by his wife, Melania, making him the first president to withhold his hand from the holy book since [President Lyndon Johnson](#)'s abrupt ascension to the presidency after the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Social media users caught on instantly.

← Post



**Jack Jenkins**  
@jackjenkins.me

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So...Trump didn't put his hand on the Bible when taking the oath of office?

(Not required, I don't believe, but notable!)



**Brian Kaylor** @briankaylor.bsky.social · 2d

Was glad to see Trump didn't use a heretical "God Bless the USA" Bible, instead going for same 2 he used 8 years ago. Of note, though, he didn't actually take the office on any Bibles; Melania held them but he never put his hand there.



January 20, 2025 at 11:23 AM 🌐 Everybody can reply

8 reposts 3 quotes 27 likes

Screenshot of Jack Jenkins, national reporter for Religion News Service, noting on Bluesky that Donald Trump did not place his hand on the Bible while swearing the Oath of Office (NCR screenshot)

Jack Jenkins, national reporter for Religion News Service, immediately [noted](#) the omission, citing it as "not required ... but notable!"

Posting a picture of Trump's swearing in, author and activist Brandan Robertson [opined on](#) the symbolic nature of the faux pas: "This man has no allegiance to God or to our Constitution, as demonstrated by this ..."

Still, many others joked that Trump avoided placing his hand on the Bible because that might "[set it on fire](#)" or cause him to be "[struck by lightning](#)."

That was not the only taunt the 47th president received on social media. Commenters on every platform took notice of the exceptionally wide brim of Melania Trump's hat, and its uncanny ability to prevent the president from kissing her.

The awkward chapeau was immortalized in [innumerable hilarious memes](#).

The memes threatened to overshadow Trump's inaugural address, [itself a rather gloomy and ominous speech](#), if not for the horrifying and blatant act of antisemitism that occurred moments later as Elon Musk addressed the crowd in the Capital One Arena.

While thanking supporters and emphasizing the importance of the 2025 election, Musk made what appeared to be two enthusiastic and earnest Nazi salutes. The salute, [cheered by extremist groups](#), was allegedly [scrubbed](#) from many rebroadcasts. Some social media users contested that it was a "Roman salute" or simply misunderstood enthusiasm in the heat of the moment. Others blamed the expression on Musk's neurodivergence, a comment that itself prompted [backlash](#).

Most were not convinced.

NCR contributor [Steve Millies](#) posted on [Bluesky](#): "From 'Stand back & stand by' to Musk's salute you can try hard to explain it all as poor word choice or 'awkward gesture.' But the Nazis feel seen which means your generous gymnastics are a distinction without a difference. When you're choking on so much persistent smoke there is a fire somewhere."

"This is wild," posted [Chris Damian on Instagram](#). His post compared language from Hitler in 1936, to Trump's inaugural address and Musk's Nazi salute. "I kinda think this isn't on purpose. Which actually makes it scarier in a lot of ways."

Democratic politicians were quick to call out the gesture as well.

"Its not a gaffe. It's back to back, clear as day Nazi salutes. And how does this not make sense? Did we not just watch the campaign Trump ran? Have we all not seen

the antisemitism in MAGA?" wrote Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut on [Bluesky](#).

In the midst of the firestorm caused by the apparent fascist gesture, the latest and perhaps most profound viral moment occurred when Episcopalian Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde, [speaking directly to Trump](#), delivered a [courageous sermon](#) defending the rights of LGBTQ Americans, migrants and children at the National Prayer Service.



Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde delivers the sermon at a national prayer service Jan. 21, 2025, at the Washington National Cathedral with U.S. President Donald Trump, first lady Melania, U.S. Vice President JD Vance and second lady Usha Vance in attendance. (OSV News/Reuters/Kevin Lamarque)

Budde's testimony made waves with Catholics online.

"The Right Rev. Mariann Budde, Episcopal bishop of Washington, D.C., asks President Trump to have mercy on those 'who are scared now,' including LGBTQ people and migrants, at the Washington National Cathedral, [said Jesuit Fr. James](#)

[Martin.](#)

"Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde and Pope Francis have the same pastorally-minded sensibilities!" reflected Catholic theologian Rich Raho.

Trump was not pleased.

"The so-called Bishop who spoke at the National Prayer Service on Tuesday morning was a Radical Left hard line Trump hater," he said in a late-night post on Truth Social, referring to the bishop's sermon, which included a plea for mercy, as "nasty in tone."



U.S. President Donald Trump signs documents in the Oval Office at the White House on Inauguration Day in Washington Jan. 20, 2025. He signed a series of executive orders including on immigration, birthright citizenship and climate. Trump also signed an executive order granting about 1,500 pardons for those charged in connection with the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol. (OSV News/Reuters/Carlos Barria)

Trump then demanded an apology for his hurt feelings.

There were many more moments — Trump has signed dozens of executive orders touching nearly every aspect of public life such as [migration](#), [gender identity](#) and the [environment](#) — and reaction from social media users continues to pour in.

Perhaps RNS' Jenkins [summed it up best](#) on Inauguration Day — just three hours into the Trump presidency: "I am already tired."

Us too, Jack.

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