



**AN ENDURING SENSE OF PLACE:
A PROCLAMATION OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION 2021 VIRTUAL CONVENTION**

The year was 1904. Just over one hundred members of Farmers Union assembled in Mineola, Texas, in our first ever national convention. Since then, over the last 117 years, we have gathered in 33 different states, from Palatka, Florida, to Spokane, Washington, from Springfield, Massachusetts to San Diego, California. History continues today.

The extraordinary events of the last year have erected barriers to our time-honored gathering in traditional convention. In spite of these challenges, hurdles such as today's pandemic expose our strength and character as a truly grassroots organization. In this convention, we gather not in one physical location, but in our collective sense of place – our common farms and ranches; not travelling hundreds or thousands of miles in person, but sharing our thoughts, hopes, and ideas through heart, soul, and intellect using our time-tested, long-standing, and naturally occurring Internet: our grassroots heritage. This is Farmers Union – this is why we endure.

Charles Barrett, National Farmers Union president [1906-1928] once said, “We make better neighbors when we get together.” The circumstances of the past year knocked our original plan endways, but as an organization, community, and convention, we discovered a number of ways to go around these temporary barriers. Let it be documented that the National Farmers Union Convention of 2021 was a truly grassroots gathering, deeply rooted in each and every farm and ranch of the membership. Indeed, even without a physical gathering, National Farmers Union continues to provide opportunities for us to celebrate our shared “Sense of Place.”