Opinion
Guest Voices



The sun rises behind the Lincoln Memorial, left, Washington Monument and U.S. Capitol, in Washington, Wednesday, Nov. 4, 2026, across the Potomac River from Arlington, Va. (RNS/AP/Allison Robbert)



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The good news for those elected on Tuesday is that the election is finally over and they won. The bad news is that they now face the challenges of governing.

They prayed they might win; we pray they do a good job.

Across the country, Democrats surfed a blue tsunami to victory in the midterm elections, but Donald Trump is still the president. Without a veto-proof majority in both houses of Congress, the Democrats will have to deal with a chief executive they despise.

They will certainly spend a lot of time investigating Trump administration officials and policies. Using their subpoena power, they will demand explanations and transparency from government officials. Although this needs to be done, it will only scratch the surface of what must be accomplished to get the country back on track.

I certainly support exposing corruption and incompetence, but this will not solve the existential problems facing our country and the world.

Republicans, on the other hand, although they still have the presidency and the Supreme Court, were soundly rejected in the election. They no longer control all the branches of government. The president will be able to veto anything he does not like. He can also attempt to rule by executive order to the extent the courts will let him.

He also will be able to pardon anyone in his administration to protect them from prosecution. However, if he does pardon people, they can no longer take the Fifth Amendment to avoid testifying, since with a pardon, one is no longer in danger of self-incrimination. This means they will have to answer questions from congressional committees.

During the first two years of his second term, the president rarely had to compromise with Democrats, and they were not interested in compromising with him because they wanted to blame everything that went wrong on Republicans.

Now, with a divided government, both parties will have to deal with each other and compromise; otherwise, we will have gridlock. With all the problems the country faces, we cannot afford that.

Internationally, we have a war in Iran that needs to be ended on the best terms we can get. At a minimum, that means returning to the international inspection of Iran's nuclear facilities and free passage through the Strait of Hormuz. In other words, a return to the status quo before Trump threw a monkey wrench into the Persian Gulf.

Nor can we continue with a confused policy on Ukraine. This is one area of possible bipartisan agreement in Congress, where most members see Russia and Vladimir Putin as the aggressor.

Our new leaders must also face numerous and complicated domestic problems: inflation (especially high energy prices), AI, an aging population and rising medical costs.

Higher oil and gas prices show the foolishness of opposing green energy. Red Texas and blue California have demonstrated that wind and solar energy are not only good for the environment and national security, but also good for the pocketbook. Going full speed ahead on green energy should have bipartisan support.

Congress also needs to regulate AI and social media. People are afraid of AI and sick of having their children addicted to apps.

Overshadowing everything we want the government to do is the exploding federal debt and higher interest rates. Democrats have almost always supported government spending, but in the past, Republicans were deficit hawks. Republican love for tax cuts has made them ignore the federal debt. Both sides will soon have to

face reality as interest rates continue to climb.

I am a pessimist by nature because I believe in original sin and human fallibility. But as a Christian, I also believe in conversion.

The Democrats will be tempted to play politics and not compromise in the hope of winning the presidency in two years. Republicans will try to stay the course and hope voters will forget the Trump-caused disasters.

Politics-as-usual will not serve the American people today. We cannot delay any longer on dealing with important issues facing our country. Elections are not the end; they are simply the beginning. Now we have to work together for the common good.

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