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Obama to use Lincoln's inaugural Bible at swearing-in

by Adelle M. Banks by Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS) President-elect Barack Obama has chosen the Bible used at President Lincoln's first inauguration for his own swearing-in on Jan. 20, inaugural planners announced.

It will be the first time a president has used the historic Bible at an inauguration since it was first used by Lincoln himself in 1861.

"President-elect Obama is deeply honored that the Library of Congress had made the Lincoln Bible available for use during his swearing-in," said Emmett Beliveau, executive director of the Presidential Inaugural Committee.

"The president-elect is committed to holding an inauguration that celebrates America's unity, and the use of this historic Bible will provide a powerful connection to our common past and common heritage."

The Bible, which is accented with gilded edges and bound in burgundy velvet, is part of the collection of the Library of Congress, along with the Lincolns' family Bible.

It was originally purchased by Clerk of the Supreme Court William Thomas Carroll. The Lincolns' family Bible was not available at the time of the ceremony because it was packed with belongings that were en route to the White House from Springfield, Ill.

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