

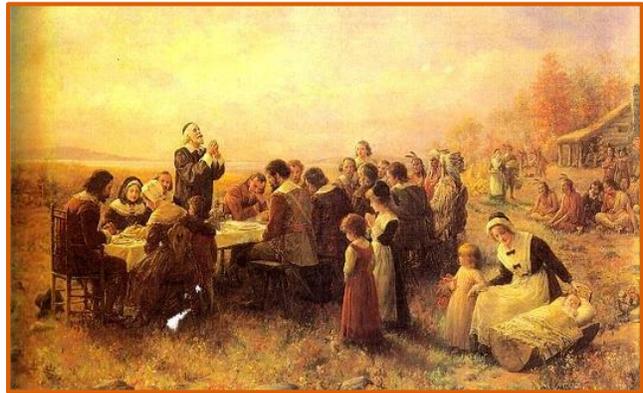
Choosing to Give Thanks

This is Thanksgiving Week, and if you are anywhere in America on the fourth Thursday of November, there's a good chance you'll eat a big meal before the day is over.

That is certainly true for the patients and residents of Life Care and Century Park. It will be a day of feasting – and fine fellowship, too, as the day and its meaning are commemorated.

The modern Thanksgiving holiday tradition is traced to a 1621 event at Plymouth, Massachusetts. That feast and thanksgiving were prompted by a good harvest. The feast lasted three days, and was attended by 90 Native Americans and 53 Pilgrims. The New England colonists were accustomed to regularly celebrating “thanksgivings” – days of prayer thanking God for His blessings, such as military victory or end of a drought.

The feast was cooked by the four adult Pilgrim women who survived their first winter in the New World, along with young daughters and male and female servants.



The Indians had helped the Pilgrims survive that first, harsh winter. Squanto, a Patuxet Native American who resided with the Wampanoag tribe, taught the Pilgrims how to catch eel and grow corn.

He had learned English during his enslavement in England. The Wampanoag leader, Massasoit, had given food to the colonists during the winter when supplies brought from England were insufficient.

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln proclaimed a national day of “Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens,” to be celebrated on the last Thursday in November. Down through the years, that day has become a special time for families and friends to come together, to feast on the fruits of the harvest, to relax, and to worship, privately or publicly.

Acts that are spontaneous and creative in the beginning often become formal and ritualistic. And that may be true of Thanksgiving in America. But it can also be true of thanksgiving in our personal lives.

A quick way to determine whether your thanksgiving to God is creative and conscious, or rote and repetitious, is to examine when and where you give thanks to God. Is it only in church? Only during formal prayers? Only before you eat a meal? Or, are there instances when you stop and give thanks to God at unplanned times?

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The psalmist said (in Psalm 119:62): "At midnight, I will rise to give thanks to You." Maybe we don't rise at midnight to give thanks, but we should find ourselves giving thanks to God all during the day as events unfold.

We in Life Care and Century Park have many blessings for which to be thankful – in both our corporate and personal lives. Let's acknowledge them and praise our Lord for them.

The fourth Thursday in November is a great day to give thanks to God – just as are the other 364 days of the year!

Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5:20 NKJV).

– Beecher Hunter