

## Thanks-Living 2023

It is not uncommon to compile wish lists at Christmas, & draw up a list of resolutions for New Years. But there is another list we often overlook - a Thanksgiving Day list of all for which we are thankful.

Several housewives wrote that they were especially thankful:

*For automatic dishwashers because they make it possible for us to get out of the kitchen before the family comes back in for their after-dinner snacks.*

*For husbands who attack small repair jobs around the house because they usually make them big enough to call in the professionals.*

*For children who put away their things & clean up after themselves. They're such a joy you hate to see them go home to their own parents.*

*For teenagers because they give parents an opportunity to learn a second language.*

*For Smoke alarms because they let you know when the turkey's done.*

### Thanksgiving in America

The first (unnamed) Thanksgiving in America... The Pilgrims landed in America in 1620 late in the year. Their first winter here was devastating. Food and shelter were minimal and almost everyone got sick. In fact, it was so bad that at times 2 or 3 would die in one day! Through that first winter nearly half of the population had died... But the next summer things improved. One day that fall (1621), four settlers were sent to hunt for food for a harvest celebration. The natives heard gunshots and alerted their leader who thought the English might be preparing for war. He visited the English settlement with 90 of his men to see if the war rumor was true. Soon after their visit, the Native Americans realized that the English were only hunting for the **harvest celebration**. Their leader sent some of his own men to hunt deer for **the feast** and for three days, the English and native men, women, and children ate together. They had a similar celebration the following year (1622). Then the Thanksgiving Proclamation was made by Governor Bradford in **1623**, which instructed the people to gather together for a sermon and "to give thanks to Almighty God for all his blessings."

In **1789**, George Washington made a public proclamation which recommended and assigned a Thursday late in November for public Thanksgiving and Prayer, "to acknowledge with grateful hearts the many favors of Almighty God."

From that moment the holiday was celebrated sporadically and the dates would vary from year to year. Eventually, a magazine editor named Sarah Josepha Hale helped organize a

movement to make Thanksgiving a national holiday. Finally, in **1863**, President Abraham Lincoln set aside the last Thursday of November as a day of national “Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father.” Lincoln declared another Thanksgiving Day the following year, as did his successor, Andrew Johnson. Other presidents followed the new tradition annually with the date varying slightly from year to year. Then, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill on November 26, **1941, which finally established the fourth Thursday of November as our national Thanksgiving Day.**

Today, it’s a mixture of genuine thanksgiving and some not-so-thankful, but festive gatherings. Typically, it’s a time for Family, Feasting and Football. As Christians, we should always be sure to keep this holiday as a day of giving thanks to God. And we should have not just a day for thanksgiving, but a lifestyle of “thanks-living!”

There are so many things to be thankful for, but here’s just one to remember as we are gathered together today.

**Be thankful for other believers...** Philippians 1:3-5 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now

Be grateful and express your thanks, it’s good for you.

**Thankfulness brings peace...** Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Thankfulness is always appropriate...** 1 Thessalonians 5:18 ...give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 5:20

... always giving thanks to God the Father for everything...

Make an effort today to recognize the blessings you’ve come to take for granted. Focus on what you have rather than on what you don’t have, and see if it doesn’t improve your attitude. Here are a few suggestions:

*Be thankful that you don’t already have everything you want. If you did, what would there be to look forward to?*

*Be thankful when you don’t know something, this gives you the opportunity to learn.*

*Be thankful for the difficult times. During those times you grow.*

*Be thankful for each new challenge, because it will build strength and character.*

*Be thankful for your mistakes. They will teach you valuable lessons.*

*Be thankful when you're tired and weary, because it means you've made a difference.*

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***If we pause to think, we'll have cause to thank.***

*Of all the choices we make in life, few affect us more powerfully than our choice between gratitude and grumbling. An honest look at our lives will reveal which choice we have made. If it's grumbling, we probably see few blessings. If it's gratitude, we not only find innumerable blessings—they seem to find us!*

*With a little practice, anyone can master the art of thankfulness.*

What are some things you are thankful for?