

DAYSRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

October 2020

CELEBRATING THANKSGIVING

We are publishing the DayBook a bit earlier than usual, this year, in order to present it to the congregation in the week leading up to Thanksgiving. So here it is.

Marilyn has gathered together information about Canadian, USA, and German Thanksgiving traditions. Heinrich, in his monthly column, has shared with us a snapshot of South African thanks giving customs.

For most of us, in Canada, Thanksgiving celebrations will be very different. No large (or small) extended family gatherings. No shared Thanksgiving feast. No hugs.



Instead, visits via Skype or Zoom or face time or another internet resource—maybe just by telephone.

Some may be tempted to not follow the guidelines of our public health officials. That's understandably tempting but certainly not a wise course of action given that we can see quite plainly the result of that kind of behaviour in other provinces such as Ontario and Quebec and in the experience of the US President. We don't want to accept the gift of COVID-19 from others OR gift them with it.

So we need to create new (or maybe re-create old) thanksgiving traditions for ourselves.

I have mentioned using computer technology to connect with those we love (and maybe with folks who just need to be loved, whether or not they are family members).

Here is another suggestion. If you have a concordance look up the word "thanks" and first of all just browse the listing. In my Young's Analytic Concordance there are two columns of verses containing "thank," "thankful," and "thanksgiving" - the equivalent of 2-3 normal pages in a standard book.

Or use your computer's web browser to search for <"thanks" in the Bible> and read some of the materials that come up. Then talk about what you are learning with others - and maybe help kids get into it by doing some relevant crafts.

John Carr



Quote of the Month

Give
thanks
with a
grateful
heart



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CANADIAN THANKSGIVING TRADITIONS

In 1578 English explorer Martin Frobisher and his crew, gathered in the Northwest Territories to give thanks and celebrate communion. They dined on salt beef, biscuits, and mushy peas, an occasion of thanksgiving for their safe arrival in Canada.

Much later, on November 16, 1606, settlers in New France, led by Samuel de Champlain, held huge feasts of thanksgiving between local Mi'kmaq and the French. The Order of Good Cheer (l'Ordre de Bon Temps) offered festive meals every few weeks to provide better nutrition to combat scurvy.

In the 1750s, the United Empire Loyalists, who left the United States to settle in Nova Scotia and Ontario, introduced their thanksgiving tradition of a festive meal of turkey and pumpkins.



The current practice of observing Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October began in 1908. The Canadian Parliament made it official effective December 31, 1957. That date was chosen to mark the completion of the harvest season. It was characterized as “a day of general thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed.”

While the tradition of giving thanks to commemorate special events has centuries of tradition in Canada, a few practices from other traditions have been borrowed and blended into the present October holiday, providing another long weekend, an opportunity to have family gatherings with favourite foods, and an occasion for offering thanks.

Marilyn Carr,
adapted from information posted
on Canada’s History Network by Alison Nagy

FROM OUR MINISTER: A culture of thanks in South Africa

The editors of the DayBook asked me to write about thanksgiving customs in South Africa.

In South Africa, there hasn't been any institutionalized Thanksgiving custom that surrounds a holiday. This obviously doesn't mean that South Africans aren't thankful, it is merely that it happens spontaneously. Many years ago, when Communion was celebrated in the local congregation, parishioners would take an ox-wagon and horses to travel from the farm to their closest home congregation to first celebrate the Lord's Supper. Then the outing would be followed up with a service of thanks afterwards. This tradition is long gone since the advent of cars and more technology.

Another expression of thanks that also occurs, is a form of thanks for a good harvest along with prayers of trust in the Lord to bless the agricultural community with a new season. This would happen roughly at the beginning of October. Remember though, that it is Spring in the southern hemisphere. The harvest had already come in towards the end of summer, roughly April to May. In an arid country this could often be iffy. Thanksgiving would still be on the farming community's mind, regardless of the size of the harvest. Between May and beginning of September there is a winter that can be "severely cold" at times, although that never, and very seldom, goes much lower than minus 9 or 12 degrees Celsius. Remember, there isn't any central heating, only electrical heaters that warm up smaller spaces with doors closed to keep the heat in.

There are farming communities scattered across the country of South Africa that make a big thing of the October thanksgiving, which

is an agricultural celebration of dependence on the Lord's goodness and mercy. I have often had the pleasure to lead a short service at the beginning of such festivities.



Heinrich

THANKSGIVING IN THE USA

Historical reenactments of Thanksgiving celebrations in the United States often focus on the arrival and survival of the Pilgrims coming to New England in 1620. The impetus for this sea voyage began years before the Mayflower: At the end of the 16th century, the rise of Puritanism in England was strongly in opposition to the state church. The Puritans viewed it as too weak and too Catholic for their liking. The conflict grew and eventually the Puritans left to find a more tolerant home.

They settled in Leiden in The Netherlands and experienced greater freedom for their religious practices. While residing in The Netherlands they realized that, especially for their children, their English language and customs would not survive. So they left Leiden and travelled to Southampton where they remained waiting for a ship to take them to North America..

After many delays while waiting to travel in tandem with another ship, they finally sailed solo from Plymouth, England on September 6, 1620 on the Mayflower. There were 102 passengers and a crew of 30.

During the eventful voyage, they encountered Atlantic storms, sea sickness and deaths. On November 11, 1620, after 65 days at sea, they landed near the tip of Cape Cod with 53 passengers and half the crew. They explored Cape Cod, and by December 1620 headed north to establish a settlement at Plymouth. The Thanksgiving holiday dates back to 1621 when the Puritans, determined to practice their dissenting religious views without interference, gave thanks for freedom in their new home.

In 1789, George Washington declared the last Thursday of November as the date for the Thanksgiving holiday. However, in 1941, a United States Congressional declaration officially designated the fourth Thursday as the official date. Today, Thanksgiving is a federal holiday in the USA and the center piece of the celebration is a festive dinner of turkey, stuffing, squash, green beans, cranberries, and pumpkin pie.

Sources: The Hutchison Encyclopedia
The Google History Network

GERMANY'S THANKSGIVING & AUTUMN EVENTS

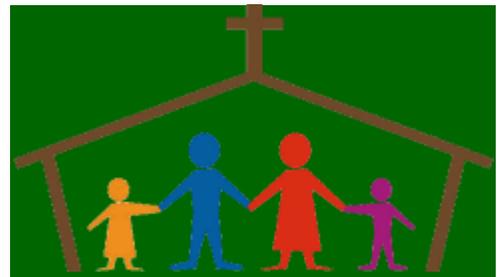
A harvest celebration and days of thanksgiving in Europe date back to the pre-Christian era. It was a time for farmers to give thanks for the good fortune of an abundant harvest. To decorate the festivities, workers would fill a curved goat's horn with fruit and grain. This symbol was called a Cornucopia or "horn of plenty." Later, settlers brought this tradition to North America where it is recognized as a symbol of the autumn season.

Today, the German tradition of Erntedank (Thanksgiving) is mainly a religious holiday. While there are some slight differences in the exact date of Erntedank, church services and parades are usually held the first Sunday of November. While giving thanks for the good fortunes of the past year, fun and food are also part of the celebration as reminders of the agricultural bounty that continues to provide everyday nourishment.

Germany also celebrates the autumn folk festival known as Oktoberfest. It first occurred in 1810 to celebrate the marriage of King Louis I and Princess Therese and continues annually with beer, music, and traditional dances. While not specifically a time of thanksgiving, it is a national event which draws crowds from around the world to Munich and runs from mid-September to the first Sunday in October.

Marilyn Carr

adapted from Wikipedia and About German Goods



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DayBook Deadlines

3rd Sunday of September, October
and June

2nd Sunday of November, December,
January, February, March, April,
and May

SESSION

Moderator: Heinrich Grosskopf

Session Clerk: Gina Kottke

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Jim Jeatt

Other Elders

Hostensia Bineba (on leave)	Sam Malayang
Bill Davis	Samuel Mforteh
Jane de Caen	Jan Ray Moncada
Darlene Eerkes	Nick Nation
Peter Eerkes	Laura Patterson- Fortin
Carina Grosskopf	Heather Tansem
Ransford Kusi- Menkah	Mary Waugh

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The Rev. Dr. Heinrich Grosskopf

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Church School Coordinator: Lynn
Vaughan

Youth Coordinator: Fionna McCrostie

Worship Arts Coordinator

Gordon McCrostie, B.Mus., M.T.S.

Pianist: Binaifer (Binu) Kapadia, B.Mus.

Alternate Pianist

Darolyn McCrostie, B.Mus., P.D.A.D.
(Education)

Administrative Assistant: Linda

Custodian: Jim