

family 'round the table



Decorations: green streamers, green napkins, pictures of pilgrims if available

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 16

THEME: THANKS– GIVING!

The first Thanksgiving menu was much different than the one that we have come to know as our Thanksgiving dinner. The food for the FIRST was a mix of what the English settlers knew about and/or brought with them, plus what the Native Americans brought to the feast. There were no forks at the time... a few knives and spoons and a few the plates that were used might have been wooden and needed to be shared. There was fish, wild fowl, some vegetables, but probably not sweet desserts! SO, tonight – forget the silverware – just put a knife or two in the middle of the table...and some spoons...and use those fingers! Make sure there are lots of napkins and wash those hands before dinner!

MENU

Corn Bread, Fish Sticks, Tater Tots, Dried Fruit, Nuts, Cheese Cubes

The English loved their cheese! Even though the Pilgrims didn't have sweets, buy each person's favorite candy bar for dessert (they will be truly THANKFUL) or check out to see if your store has pumpkin ice cream! While the Pilgrims probably did not have pumpkin pie, they may have had pumpkin pudding or a pudding of some kind!

Blessing:

(To the tune of "Frere Jacques")
*We are Thankful, We are Thankful
For Our families, For Our families
On Thanksgiving Day
You will hear us say,
Thank you God, Thank you God.*



PLAYING TOGETHER

Activity One: Thanksgiving Charades

Materials: none needed

Directions:

1. Invite each person think of something that they are thankful for and to get ready to act it out using no words, just actions.
2. Take turns acting out and invite the family to guess what it is. The person who guesses first goes next.
3. Play until each person has a turn.

Activity Two: Thanksgiving Cards

Materials: card sized envelopes, construction paper or white drawing paper, markers, stamps, stamp pad

Directions:

1. Give each person a piece of paper and demonstrate how to fold it in half to form a card.
2. Provide assistance to any young children who need help with folding.
3. Using stickers, stampers, markers and blank pieces of paper, decorate the front of the card.
4. Write a Thanksgiving message inside the card. Young children may need to dictate their message.
5. Sign the cards from your family and give to relatives or to send to church members who may not be able to attend a Thanksgiving celebration.



STUDYING GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

· Locate and read Psalm 16 in the Old Testament, or read the following version of Psalm 16 from "The Message" by Eugene H. Peterson:

*Keep me safe, O God,
I've run for dear life to you.
I say to God, "Be my Lord!"
Without you, nothing makes sense
And these God-chosen lives all around –
what splendid friends they make!
Don't just go shopping for a god.
Gods are not for sale.
I swear I'll never treat god-names
like brand-names.
My choice is you, GOD, first and only.
And now I find I'm your choice!
You set me up with a house and yard.
And then you made me your heir!
The wise counsel GOD gives when I'm awake
is confirmed by my sleeping heart.
Day and night I'll stick with GOD,
I've got a good thing going and I'm not letting go.
I'm happy from the inside out,
and from the outside in, I'm firmly formed.
You've canceled my ticket to hell –
that's not my destination!
Now you've got my feet on the life path,
all radiant from the shining of your face.
Ever since you took my hand,
I'm on the right way.*

- When the scripture reading is finished, share that this psalm is a prayer of trust written by David. Always being aware of God's presence, and always trusting God for safety is what David felt and did. This Psalm might have been a prayer that the Pilgrims would have used. They trusted God for safety and prayed for the presence of God to be with them at all times.

Reflection Questions for the Family

1. What are other gods that you think that people might choose?
2. The psalmist says "protect me". What are some of the things from which you need protection?
3. The Bible talks about being happy "from the inside out". What makes you happy from the inside out?
4. If you wrote a psalm to God, would you say?



PRAYING TOGETHER

- Place a lighted candle and open Bible in the middle of the table to create a worship center.

- Sing, speak or listen to “Let All Things Now Living” (Tune – Ash Grove)

*Let all things now living
To God our Creator triumphantly raise;
A song of thanksgiving
Who fashioned and made us, Protected and stayed us,
By guiding us on to the end of our days.
God's banners are o'er us, Pure light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night;
Till shadows have vanished, all fearfulness banished,
As forward we travel from light into Light.*

- Invite family members to share something for which they are thankful.
- When everyone has had a turn, invite family members to stand in a circle and hold hands. Pray a circular prayer of thanks in the following manner:

The first person will say “We thank you God for _____

The second person will say, “We thank you God for (what the first person said) AND for (adding their own)

The third person will say “We thank you God for (what the first person said_ AND for (what the second person said) AND for _____.

- Keep the prayer going around the circle as many times as you want ending with an AMEN from everyone.