Eagle Forum of Alabama

AMERICA

250th Family Challenge



★ NOVEMBER ★

Gratitude For Liberty

Liberty Is a Blessing

Rediscovering America One Month at a Time.

www.AlabamaEagle.org

November

Gratitude For Liberty

Liberty Is A Blessing

INTRODUCTION



More than 150 years before the Declaration of Independence, America's early settlers were giving thanks to God for His goodness, provision, and protection. From the very beginning, gratitude to Almighty God was woven into the fabric of our nation's heritage. Thankfulness is part of America's DNA!

Today, Thanksgiving is often celebrated as a time for family gatherings, delicious meals, football, and expressing gratitude for life's blessings. While these are wonderful traditions, the original spirit of Thanksgiving was something much deeper: a bold declaration of thankfulness to God, acknowledging His goodness, His provision, and His sovereignty over all things.

Our forefathers understood that liberty itself is a blessing, not something to be taken for granted. As we celebrate Thanksgiving and America's 250th birthday, let's rediscover this rich heritage and teach the next generation that true gratitude begins with recognizing the Source of our blessings.

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL: A NATION ON ITS KNEES



"It is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits."

This quote is from the Thanksgiving Proclamation issued by George Washington on October 3, 1789. In this document, Washington requested that Americans observe Thursday, November 26, 1789, as a national day of thanksgiving and prayer. He called upon Americans to thank God for His protection, the nation's independence, and the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

Devotional thought: America's first president recognized that liberty was a blessing worthy of thanksgiving to God. As we celebrate America's 250th birthday, we should remember that our freedoms were secured through tremendous sacrifice and must never be taken for granted.

Scripture connection: I Thes 5:18 (KJV) — “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

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FAMILY CHALLENGE

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE FIRST THANKSGIVING

The Pilgrims celebrated their famous first Thanksgiving in 1621, in Plymouth, Massachusetts—155 years before the signing of the Declaration of Independence!
The celebration took place in the fall of 1621, following the Pilgrims' first successful harvest in the New World. It lasted three days and brought together English colonists and members of the Wampanoag people.



1. It lasted three days! Unlike our modern one-day holiday, the 1621 harvest celebration included several days of feasting and activities.

2. There were more Native Americans than Pilgrims. Approximately 90 Wampanoag men joined about 50 English colonists.

3. Turkey wasn't necessarily the main dish. The historical accounts mention wildfowl and venison (deer meat), but don't specifically confirm turkey.

4. There was no pumpkin pie! Pumpkins were available, but the Pilgrims probably didn't have the butter, flour, and ovens needed to make our traditional pumpkin pies.

5. The Pilgrims had survived a terrible winter. Nearly half of the Mayflower's passengers died during their first winter in America. The harvest celebration followed a season of tremendous hardship.

6. Only four adult Pilgrim women survived to attend. These women, along with younger girls and others, helped prepare food for the celebration.

7. The Wampanoag brought five deer! Their leader, Ousamequin (Massasoit), attended with approximately 90 men, who contributed venison to the feast.

8. There were games and activities. The celebration included recreation and demonstrations of firearms, not just eating.

9. The Pilgrims thanked God for their blessings. Their Christian faith shaped their understanding of gratitude, and Edward Winslow credited God's goodness for their improved circumstances.

10. Thanksgiving didn't become a national holiday until 1863! President Abraham Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving proclamation during the Civil War, more than 240 years after the Pilgrims' celebration.

November

FAMILY CHALLENGE

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FAMILY ACTIVITIES

30 Days of Gratitude: Count Your Blessings, Share Your Thanks



Watch Your Blessings Grow

Cut strips of colorful construction paper. Every day, each family member writes one blessing on a strip and adds it to a paper chain.

Hang the chain somewhere everyone can see it grow throughout November.

On Thanksgiving Day, count the links and read some of the blessings aloud.

Bonus: Use red, white, and blue paper to celebrate America's 250th birthday and remind everyone to include blessings related to our nation's freedoms.



Gratitude Is Meant to Be Shared

Each week during November, challenge every family member to send one unexpected message of appreciation to someone they don't regularly talk to.

It could be a handwritten note, text, email, or phone call. Think about a former teacher, distant relative, old friend, pastor, coach, veteran, or someone who made a difference in your life.

The challenge: Don't just say "thank you." Tell the person specifically how they blessed your life or why you appreciate them. Imagine the encouragement your family could spread in just four weeks!

Family GAME

THANKSGIVING CHARADES



Long before television, video games, or cell phones, families entertained themselves with simple games, riddles, and storytelling. This Thanksgiving, gather your family for a lively game of charades with a colonial twist!

How to Play: Parent or leader, write the following prompts found at the bottom of the of the wordsearch page on slips of paper. Fold them and place them in a bowl. Take turns drawing a slip of paper and acting out the activity without speaking. Everyone else tries to guess what you're doing! Give each player one minute to act out their clue.

A Thanksgiving Twist: After each correct guess, ask the family to name a blessing connected to that activity. For example, churning butter reminds us to be thankful for food, and sailing on the Mayflower reminds us of the courage and sacrifices of America's early settlers.

Bonus Challenge: Play another round where each family member acts out something they're personally thankful for, and everyone tries to guess!

WORD Search

Kids' Puzzle

THANKS GIVING
FREEDOM LIBERTY
FAMILY BLESSINGS
FAITH PRAYER
PEACE HARVEST

U P F L I B E R T Y
H R R T I Z D O P F
A A E G H V Q K E A
R Y E F I A A U A M
V E D A G V N J C I
E R O I R A I K E L
S X M T X Q C N S Y
T I Y H U S I X G X
A B L E S S I N G S
I P W F Y G X Q A D

E T T H A N K S G I V I N G W
G R Z P A R V V L I B E R T Y
E P E T E I A F R E E D O M V
N S A S H R J B N C K C A R G
E A H T P A S E W D U U C V R
R C E F R O N E V N S I O Y A
O R R A O I N K V U S U Y T T
S I I I V C O S F E J K B P I
I F T T I T M T I U R U G A T
T I A H D B G Z I B L A Y R U
Y C G T E P Y W X S I N N B D
P E E P N Y T B B Q M L E C E
I D V C C O D U M H P Q I S E
B I N D E P E N D E N C E T S
S B L E S S I N G S Z Q W D Y

Teen Puzzle

GRATITUDE
THANKSGIVING
LIBERTY
PROVIDENCE
BLESSINGS
SACRIFICE
HERITAGE
PATRIOTISM
FAITH
FREEDOM
THANKFULNESS
PERSEVERANCE
INDEPENDENCE
RESPONSIBILITY
GENEROSITY

Prompts for Thanksgiving Charades: churning butter, picking pumpkins, chopping firewood, gathering eggs, baking bread, Planting corn, milking a cow, sailing on the Mayflower, giving thanks in prayer, carrying a heavy harvest basket, hunting a turkey, setting the Thanksgiving table, fetching water from a well, raking autumn leaves, eating a Thanksgiving feast


Gratitude For Liberty

Eagle Forum of Alabama

ABOUT US

Eagle Forum of Alabama is dedicated to promoting strong families, informed citizens, and the timeless principles that made America great. Through education, advocacy, and programs fostered by our Action Groups and Student Eagles, we are investing in the next generation of leaders.

If your family enjoyed this month's challenge, you're already part of something bigger. Together, we are raising the next generation to love truth, cherish freedom, and live with purpose.

WWW.ALABAMAEAGLE.ORG

Check out www.AlabamaEagle.org for:

- Weekly Alabama legislative updates
- Blog posts & news updates on issues impacting Alabama families
- Access educational resources like the America 250 Family Challenge
- Learn about Student Eagles and how teens can get involved
- Find upcoming EFA events and conferences
- Take action with alerts to make your voice heard
- Support our work to strengthen families & communities across Alabama
- Find links to our social media and Youtube channel

DONATE!

We're YOUR voice at the State House—and your partner in raising informed, confident citizens. We are deeply grateful for your financial support, which makes it possible for us to continue educating, equipping, and advocating for strong families across Alabama.