

## The Importance of Being Thankful

*"The clock is running. Make the most of today. Time waits for no man. Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it is called the present."*

*Alice Morse Earle, 1902*

According to a Harvard study, being thankful can help people feel more positive, relish good experiences, improve their health and build strong relationships with others. Gratitude is the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness. Here are five tips on how to stay grateful on a regular basis.

- Appreciate the little things in life
- Keep a gratitude journal

- Say "Thank You" especially to those closest to us
- Volunteer—your time is a valuable—share it with those in need
- Say "thank you" to yourself for all the things you have done, but take for granted.

So this Thanksgiving, ask yourself, "What am I thankful for?" And don't stop there, ask yourself that question every morning. Start your day with an attitude of gratitude. It will make all the difference.

## November 2021

### Filling Station Events & Happenings

2 Tue Food Distribution & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
4 Thu Food Distribution & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
9 Tue Food Distribution & Senior CSFP & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
11 Thu Food Distribution & Senior CSFP & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
12-13 Heritage Festival—Brock Mill Pond  
16 Tue Food Distribution & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
18 Thu Food Distribution & Senior CSFP  
23 Tue Food Distribution & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
25 Thu Closed--Thanksgiving  
30 Tue Food Distribution & LCC Computer Lab 9-1  
Christmas on Main—Saturday December 4th



While most are still experiencing the stress of COVID-19 and its Delta Variant, now comes the holiday season—the time between mid-November (Thanksgiving) and the start of the New Year. This season, while a time of joy for many, can be a time of high-stress and depression for others. There's the shopping, cooking, baking, cleaning, decorating, entertaining, and family gatherings. All that piled on top of "traditions" to which we are expected to adhere. Here are some practical tips to help minimize the stress and hopefully add joy to this season of thanking and giving.

- exchange. Go online to find free or low cost family activities.

6. **Plan ahead.** Make a list of what needs to be done and set target dates. Create shopping lists and menus. Line up help and assign tasks.
7. **Learn to say no.** There will be many opportunities to donate/participate. Choose wisely. Don't overcommit either your time or your money.
8. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't use the holidays as an excuse to overindulge as that will only add to your stress and guilt. Yes, you can treat yourself—but let it be just a few bites of that pie, not one quarter of it.
9. **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Find something that decreases your stress level—walking, listening to beautiful music, reading a book.
10. **Seek professional help if you need it.** If despite your best efforts, you continue to feel persistently bad or sad, anxious or hopeless or you are just unable to cope with a routine task—seek help from your doctor or a mental health professional.

## Take control of the holidays!

Don't let the holidays become something you dread. Instead, take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can descend during the holidays. Learn to recognize your holiday triggers, such as financial pressures or personal demands, so you can combat them before they lead to a meltdown. With a little planning and some positive thinking, you can find peace and joy during the holidays.



## Random Acts of Kindness

Thanksgiving is the perfect holiday to talk to children about the importance of giving back and to teach concepts like gratitude and empathy. In this article, we'll talk about performing random acts of kindness.

We can all do something small to make our community a better place and you can teach this message to your children simply by participating. You can begin by defining kindness for your family. For some, being kind is who you are and for others being kind is something you do. Being kind is exhibiting a number of positive qualities, including respect, gratitude and helpfulness. Here are some activities for younger children that you can use to get them thinking about kindness:

- Ask them who they think is a good example of kindness and have them explain why. Turn it into an activity by drawing with your child a picture showing why they are grateful for that person and send it to them.
- Read a book about kindness together. Ask your librarian for help in selecting an age-appropriate one.

For older children, talk about what kindness means in a broader sense. Some questions to ask to begin the discussion could be:

- How can one person be kind to a group of people at one time?
- How can an act of kindness have a positive impact on an entire neighborhood or school?
- What group of people do you think you are best able to help? Why?
- What is one way you can show kindness on a daily basis?

Discuss as a family some random acts

of kindness that you could do together. Make a list of people and groups and then think of one or more ways you could do something for them. And then do it! Afterward, talk about how it made you feel.

You should also discuss the idea of doing a random act of kindness without the beneficiary knowing the source of the act. It is not necessary to be thanked—it is enough to know that you acted out of kindness. The universe rewards our deeds, not our intentions or thoughts. And the reward may come from totally unexpected sources.

So this Thanksgiving we invite families to help make our communities a better place to live by performing random acts of kindness. Are you in?





## Grocery Shopping Tips

In the article on page 2 we mentioned about eating healthy during the holidays. Of course, eating healthy is something that we should do every day. Here are some tips from the [NC Cooperative Extension](#) for choosing healthy foods on a budget:

- Do your own shopping and preparing.
- Plan your meals and make the grocery list for that plan
- Purchase only what is on your list
- Stock up on routine items or favorites when they are on sale.
- Don't shop when you are hungry.
- Choose foods and ingredients that you prepare—not processed foods



- Buy store brands
- Buy cheaper cuts of meat to use in recipes. Consider eating less meat.
- Buy produce in season.

You can eat very well on a budget!

## Meal Planning for the Holidays

It is never too early to start planning meals for the holidays—in fact it will reduce your stress level if you plan and then execute your plan. The NC Cooperative Extension Service has a six-part blog on holiday meal planning. [Click here](#) to access it online.

Begin by checking your pantry for nonperishables that you will need during the holidays (flour, sugar, spices, etc.) then check your cooking utensils. Do you have what you need and are they in good condition. Now might be the time to buy a new cookie sheet to replace the one that is warped. You could also find these at thrift stores—but look early! Check your storage items (plastic freezer bags, foil, parchment paper, etc.) as well as plastic containers. Watch for holiday sales of these items.





*Mission: To assist with filling the unmet needs in the areas of Nutrition, Education and Connection serving the residents of Jones County.*

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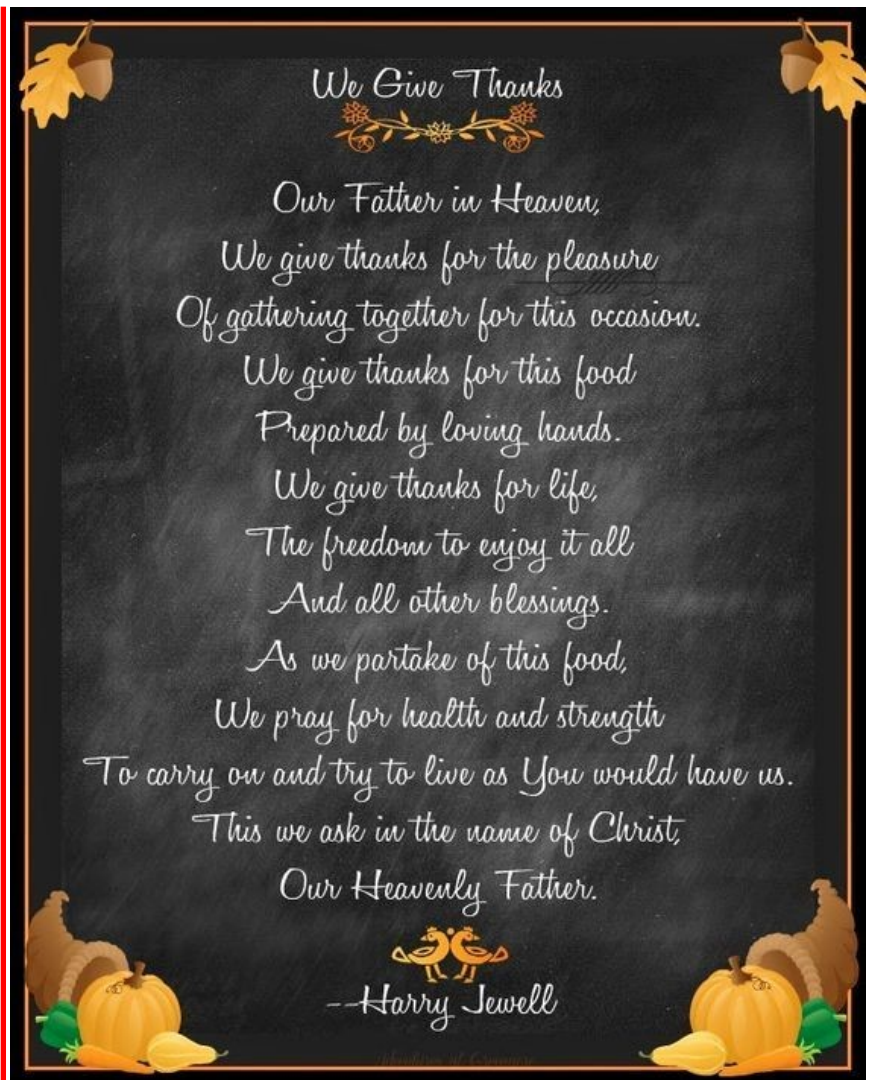
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### FUN AND CHEAP FAMILY HOLIDAY IDEAS

- Make your own napkin rings
- Make your own ornaments and decorations
- Decorate Christmas cookies or cupcakes
- Create a holiday greeting video
- Create a holiday scrapbook
- Make your own holiday greeting cards
- Have a family game night
- Drink hot chocolate and see Christmas Lights
- Have a family holiday movie night
- Do a scavenger hunt
- Make pinecone bird feeders
- Get and read holiday books from the library
- Buy and use an Advent Calendar