

First and Center

Pastor's Blog

November 25, 2019

*“Come Lord Jesus, our guest to be,
and bless these gifts bestowed by thee.”*

*“Thank you, God, for this food and
all whose hands have brought it to us.”*

“Good bread, good meat, good God, let's eat!”

Those are some of my family's usual graces said before meals. We are one of those families, praying before every meal, even at restaurants! And even though we were quiet about it when we ate out, the kids went through that phase when they were mortified we were praying in public.

Our Muslim and Jewish kin have set times and subjects for prayer all throughout the day. But, unless you are in a monastic community, the tradition of regular daily prayer has pretty much died among most Christians. The one little remainder for some folk is grace at meals. Three times a day, we have a little prompt to say thank you to remember all the work of many hands that have gone into even the simplest meal. Three times a day, a chance to connect with God, to center and settle. What a gift!

The reminder to prayer is a gift. When I visited Turkey and Jordan, I was actually envious of that five times a day call to prayer from the minarets of the mosques. I wished that we had something like that among Christians as well. Some places, there are church bells that ring the time, and the intention from the beginning was that these be reminders to pray. But now, they are mostly reminders of the time where they still exist.

I like saying grace because it does remind me to stop and connect with God. This Thanksgiving, I hope your meal, wherever it is, begins with grace. If it does not, take a moment yourself, silently, to say thank you. God's love is poured out all around us. Let's take some time to notice. Happy Thanksgiving.

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Transitional Minister

