



## Family Take-it-Home

for Sunday, Nov. 18, 2018

### Remembering the Wider Gifts and Graces of Life

On Thanksgiving or start today to: share family memories, set the table together and share a moment of gratitude and thanks in your family at meal time.

And perhaps instead of asking "How was your day? What did you do?"

**Try asking these questions at meal time or bed time:**

**WHAT WAS YOUR HIGH moment today? WHAT WAS YOUR LOW?**

**WHAT MISTAKE DID YOU MAKE TODAY? WHERE DID YOU SEE LOVE or HOPE, GRACE or JOY today?**

(Questions by Kim Sweeney, Courageous Faith Consulting)

### A Family Ritual (from Tapestry of Faith Creating home curriculum)

Your family may or may not have a ritual of saying grace together before meals. If this ritual is new to you, try holding hands and taking a deep breath together before saying the words. There is no one right way to do it or one set of words to say. Or, you might like to sing a blessing rather than just saying it.

Here are two such blessing from the book Sunday And Everyday edited by Patricia Frevert this one by by Jan Evans-Tiller (*try singing it to the tune of Edelweiss – Sound of Music song*)

Bless our food, Bless our friends,  
Come, Spirit, be with us.  
May our hearts, fill with peace,  
Let your presence surround us.  
Spirit of Love may you bloom and grow,  
Bloom and grow forever.  
Bless our food,  
Bless our friends,  
Bless our lives forever.



### A Table Grace by Reverend Gary Kowalski

*say or sing to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb"*

Loving spirit be our guest.  
Dine with us, share our bread  
That our table might be blessed  
And our souls be fed.



[Oh, We Give Thanks](http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/taking-it-home-bless-this-meal) (*sung to the tune of the Tallis Canon MP3 file at [smallscreen.uua.org/videos/taking-it-home-bless-this-meal](http://smallscreen.uua.org/videos/taking-it-home-bless-this-meal)*).

Oh, we give thanks for fruit and grain,  
For earth and air and sun and rain,  
For those with feathers, fur or feet  
Who make it so that we may eat.

**READ a STORY [The Best Meal](#)**  
**or find this at the library:**

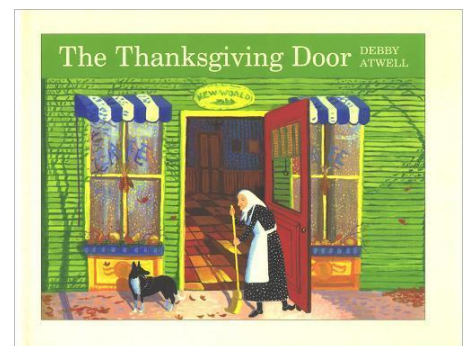
### Emerson Grace adapted from a grace of Ralph Waldo Emerson by Reverend Phil Lund.

Sung to the tune of "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

For each new morning with its light,  
For rest and shelter of the night,  
For health and food, for love and friends,  
For everything your goodness sends,  
Thank you!

### Earth Grace adapted by Pat Kahn from a Girl Scout grace, from a song, "Johnny Appleseed," by Kim Gannon and Walter Kent

Oh, the Earth is good to me, and so I thank the Earth  
for giving me, the things I need, the sun and the rain and the apple seed, the earth is good to me.



### Quick Grace by Percival Chubb "We lift our hearts in thanks today for all the gifts of life."

**STORY: THE BEST MEAL** Inspired by a story in *Tales for the Seventh Day: A Collection of Sabbath Stories* by Nina Jaffe (New York: Scholastic Press, 2000). <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session11/60158.shtml>

Once there was a great chef who was famous throughout the land. She was so good she taught other people how to cook and their food was almost as tasty as hers. Just for fun, she would throw fancy dinner parties once a month. Everyone wanted to be invited to these dinners. For these dinners, she would instruct the student chefs to cook new and extravagant dishes. The dinner guests, in awe of the chef's skills, would spend the dinner savoring each bite. All you would hear would be quiet little "ooohs" and "aaahs."

Because she wanted to always feature new goodies to eat at all her parties, she would travel far and wide all over the land to experience new food. Everywhere she went, the town would honor her. The best cooks would create dishes unique to their region. The great chef tasted them all and requested the recipes of the dishes she liked best. As you can imagine, she ate a lot of food and knew a great deal about how to prepare the best meals.

One evening, while traveling home, the chef stopped at a small country house to ask for directions to a hotel. The family insisted that she spend the night with them. Happily, she was in time for dinner. The mother took a casserole out of the oven. Brother tossed a salad with different vegetables. Sister sliced the bread.

"Let me help," said the chef, so she set the table for the four of them.

When everyone was seated at the table, the family held hands. The chef felt the young sister's hand slip into hers and the chef, in turn, reached out for the brother's hand.

The mother said, "To have food upon the table" and the children replied, "Is a blessing!"

The mother said, "The sunset and the possibility of another sunrise tomorrow..."

"Is a blessing!" the children replied.

"The love of family, the warmth of friendship, and the grace of the Spirit..."

"Is a blessing!" the children and chef replied together.

Then they laughed, happy that the chef had joined in their grace. They ate and during the meal everyone told stories about their day. The chef could not believe how delicious the food was. She didn't want dinner to end. All things must end, however, and off to bed the children went.

"May I have the recipes?" the chef asked the mother, who was flattered that the chef had so enjoyed their simple meal.

In the morning, the chef rode on towards home. When she got home, she went straight to the kitchen, gave the young chefs the recipes, and told them to start preparation for a dinner party tomorrow night.

Tomorrow came, the guests arrived, and the casserole, salad, and bread were served. The chef took a bite and chewed. Something was wrong. Something was missing. This was not like the meal she had at the farmhouse. She ordered the students to explain what they had done differently, but they promised they had only followed the recipes.

So she sent someone to go to the farmhouse to bring the mother to her house. The mother came and the chef asked her what missing ingredient had she left out of the recipe. **"What's missing cannot fit into a recipe," she replied. "Did you and your guests make the meal together? Did you hold fast to each other while giving thanks? Did you share your stories during the meal?"** "No," the chef replied. None of that had happened.

**Then the chef realized that sharing a meal together – what we call "breaking bread together" – was about more than just eating good food. It was about working together, sharing lives, and sharing laughs. It was about being thankful for the food not because it was fancy or the best, but because being together to enjoy the food would nourish you, your family, and your friends.**

After that, the chef decided to give small, intimate dinner parties. She and her guests would work together with the student chefs and they would all sit together, give thanks, and enjoy the very best of meals.

*Material curated by Mary Borland, Director of Religious Exploration and Congregational Engagement*