

Give Others Something GIVE OTHERS SOMETHING

TO GIVE THANKS FOR

Thanksgiving is a time of great joy and good food as families come together to talk, eat, and spend time with each other. Tables are loaded with turkey and ham, green beans and cranberries, mashed potatoes, and scrumptious desserts. We get to see cousins, siblings, and friends that we may not have seen in a year or more. New members of the family may be welcomed for the first time. It is difficult not to feel fortunate when we are surrounded by an abundance of food and people we love. It is often around this time of year that we also consider those who are not as fortunate, and we may feel moved to volunteer in a soup kitchen or donate to a clothing drive. We may also encourage others to do the same.

Besides generous amounts of turkey, one of the opportunities that Thanksgiving provides is the chance to talk to your family about things that are important to you. Once the meal has been cooked and eaten, and the dishes cleaned, as the family lingers over coffee and dessert, one topic that you might consider broaching is your charitable values and priorities. It may seem silly, but one of the most valuable legacies that you can leave your family is the desire to reach out from their daily lives and offer help to those in need. By openly discussing your own volunteer work or donations, you are helping your family to consider making such efforts themselves.

Similarly, one of the most valuable things that we can do for ministries and work that we cherish is to convince others to support it as well, either financially, or through contributions of time and effort. We can do this best by leading by example and encouraging

others to join us. Speaking to friends and family about our favorite ministries is a good place to start and a good way to practice talking to others, particularly during a time of year when people are especially mindful of helping those in need. This, in turn, helps to ensure that the ministry you most value will be sustained in the future.

As you define your charitable priorities, you may also consider how to continue to articulate those priorities, and how you can help to sustain those ministries, even after your death. One option to consider is leaving a bequest in a will or making a planned gift. In this way, your support can continue for years beyond your life, and the gift again serves as a reminder of your values. Both wills and planned gifts are fairly easy to create and help is available to guide you through the process.

For example, you could leave a bequest in your will for an endowed fund that pays for repairs to the church, thereby helping to ensure that others will be able to worship in your parish for years to come. Or you could create a charitable gift annuity and designate that the funds are disbursed to an organ fund. With your help, and with the support of your friends and family, the potential for your parish's ministry is limitless! So as you leave the table to grab a second helping, take a moment to consider how to expand the abundance beyond the dining room table and into your parish.

For more information on preparing a will or making a planned gift, please contact the Episcopal Church Foundation at 800-697-2858, or visit our website at www.EpiscopalFoundation.org.