Pastor's Corner

November 2016 – Rev. Jay Bissett

Of course, since November is here we think about Thanksgiving. It means different things to each of us.

Planning. Shopping. Preparation. Traveling. Eating. Groaning. Eating. Watching football. Shopping.

Thanksgiving has become not a day apart, but a week of celebration, consumption, and regret. Thanksgiving for many has become a noun rather than a verb. It has become synonymous with turkey and dressing, cranberry and pumpkin pie. Oh, and let's not forget about football and Black Friday! Rather than a day set aside for contemplation, it has become a week of over-eating, over-spending, stressing over dealing with relatives, and struggling to get into clothes that fit us last week.

What began as a day set aside to thank God for the many blessings has become instead a day of mindless consumption. Can you imagine the confusion (and perhaps anger) that one of our Christian brothers or sisters in the developing world might have upon observing our Thanksgiving?

For Christians, real Thanksgiving is a form of prayer. Thanksgiving is acknowledging God's goodness and grace in our lives. Without the goodness of God's Creation, we would have nothing. Without God's Grace, we would be struggling with self-righteousness rather than understanding that it is God's love that makes us acceptable, and makes others acceptable also.

As Christians, we also recognize that true Thanksgiving involves responsibility. God did not provide us with the bounty we have so that we might selfishly waste and squander it. God has entrusted the goods and gifts that we have so that we might invest and share them that others might know God. How do we do that? Budget a part of your Thanksgiving spending to be given away to an organization that helps others. Invite a lonely or hungry neighbor to share in your meal. Break old family dysfunctions or grudges by forgiving relatives as we have been forgiven by God.

This November, let's break with tradition and truly have a thank-full Thanksgiving.