



The Theme of Thanksgiving

Good morning,

Once upon a time, every Thanksgiving Day had a theme.

Throughout the 1800s, much of Canada – especially the province then known as Lower Canada – would issue a special proclamation for each Thanksgiving. This proclamation would do two things. First, it would fix the appointed date for that year's Thanksgiving. (It wasn't until the early 20th century that October became the holiday's permanent home.) Second, it would suggest what Canadians could give thanks for that year based on current events or the nation's specific needs.

For example, in 1799, the official reason for giving thanks was, "In signal victory over our enemy and for the manifold and inestimable blessings which our Kingdoms and Provinces have received and daily continue to receive."¹

In 1814, the people were to give thanks for "the end of sanguinary contest in Europe and to give the Dominions blessings of Peace." The following year, it was to pray for an "end of the war with the United States of America and restoration of the blessings of Peace."¹

Not every year was about war, of course. In 1833, the day was to give thanks for the "cessation of cholera." A year later, for the "end of quarantine of ships at Grosse Isle." (This was in reference to the thousands of Irish emigrants who were quarantined on the island because they were thought to have been infected with typhus.) In 1872, the nation expressed thanks for "the restoration to health of the Prince of Wales."¹

As time passed, each Thanksgiving tended to hold to a similar theme each year. "To continue God's mercies," was common during the 1830s–1860s. The "blessings of an abundant harvest" held sway from 1879 through the end of the First World War. In the 1920s, Thanksgiving was a joint holiday with Armistice Day, the precursor of our current Remembrance Day. And finally, from 1931 to 1957, the official reason for Thanksgiving was always, "For general thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings with which the people of Canada have been favoured."¹

The final proclamation of 1957 permanently fixed the date of Thanksgiving to the second Monday in October. Since this time, it's been up to each individual to determine what they are thankful for.

I think this is the correct way to go about it, but at the same time, I like the idea of a "Thanksgiving theme." So, this got me thinking. If Canadians were to select a theme for this year, what would it be?

For example, in keeping with tradition, some Canadians may want to choose the theme of giving thanks for the service and example of our departed monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. Or for the coronation of our new monarch, King Charles III. (Canada did something similar in 1902 upon King Edward VII's ascension

to the throne after the death of another long-reigning queen, Victoria.)

Others may choose to give thanks for the continued decline in COVID cases in our country. (Mirroring the end of cholera, like our ancestors celebrated in 1833.) Or perhaps giving thanks for the peace we enjoy in our country, at a time when other countries are engulfed in conflict. (Mirroring the restoration of peace that our ancestors gave thanks for in 1815.)

I don't speak for Canada, of course, so I can't issue proclamations on our nation's behalf. As a financial advisor, however, I can issue a Thanksgiving proclamation on behalf of myself and my entire team.

As you know, the last few years have been difficult. We've had to endure a historic pandemic, a recession, and more market volatility than you can shake a stick at. But one thing has remained constant during that time: The relationship all of us at the Mercier Wealth Management Group share with you and our other clients.

With that in mind, this year, the theme of our Thanksgiving is "the amazing people we get to help and work with every day." To put it simply, we're thankful for you! We are so lucky to work with clients of your character. We are humbled to be entrusted with your financial goals and honored to help in any way we can.

The truth is, there are lots of people in this world I would not want to work with. But when I look through our list of clients, I'm staggered. I have the privilege of serving some of the smartest, kindest, most decent human beings anyone has ever met.

People like you are why we do what we do. You're the reason I never hit the snooze button. The reason I'm happy to burn the midnight oil. There aren't words to express how thankful I am for your business and your trust.

That is my theme for this Thanksgiving.

Whatever your personal reasons for the day, I hope it's a great one. May it be spent doing what you love with the people you love. And from all of us here at National Bank Financial, I wish you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,



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¹ "Proclamation and Observance of General Thanksgiving Days and reasons therefore," Canadian Heritage, <https://web.archive.org/web/20130628210214/http://www.pch.gc.ca/pgm/ceem-cced/jfa-ha/graces-eng.cfm>



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