

It's Time to Do Thanksgiving a Little Differently

Thanksgiving is a time of family, food and fellowship. Whether you are cooking a homemade feast or eating out at your local Golden Corral, or even joining others at neighborhood soup kitchen, Thanksgiving has long been a time for Americans to remember the blessings of living in a land of freedom.

But in light of all of the recent natural disasters our nation has faced in Texas, Florida, California and Puerto Rico, this year might be the time to do things a little differently. So many of our friends and family living in areas affected by hurricanes and fires may not have a home to celebrate Thanksgiving in. Or some of them might not feel so thankful due to the loss of important people in their lives.

So, what could you do during this season to spread the Thanksgiving spirit? You might host Thanksgiving in your house this year. Yes, your mother's house in Houston was nicer, but right now, she might be feeling guilty that she isn't up to the task this year. It's a big effort, but it will be worth it to see your mom enjoying herself this year after so many hard months. You could make a family donation to a charity that is still doing disaster relief work. This wouldn't infringe on your holiday plans, but it could make a huge difference for others. Or you could change up Thanksgiving completely by volunteering in rebuilding efforts.

We at LiveBeyond are still providing reconstruction assistance to families in the Houston area in conjunction with Grace Crossing Community Church of Christ in Conroe, Texas. We have been honored to host teams from all over the U.S. who are willingly putting in work to help people get back to normal. And we are not alone in this effort. Other organizations and churches like the J.J. Watt Foundation, St. Luke's Methodist

Church and Impact Church of Christ are still spearheading efforts to rebuild communities.

So many organizations are still doing well in terms of funding and budgeting, but they lack the manpower to accomplish very much during this critical time. And what greater way to go out into all the world to spread the good news (Matt. 28:19-20)? People tend to have a better grasp of the sacrifices of Jesus when they see His followers willing to sacrifice for them personally.

We all know the saying that “it takes a village” to raise children. But in this time of desperation, it will take a nation of willing volunteers and donors to rebuild lives across the country.

Devin Vanderpool is the Director of Communications for LiveBeyond. To find out how you can partner with LiveBeyond or donate to their relief efforts visit .