Feathers of Gratitude

BY NATHAN

As part of a fun craft project, my son recently made a giant turkey out of paper and taped it to the wall. It has big eyes and a little wattle. Each day, my son cuts out a new feather and writes something he’s thankful for on it and attaches it to the bird.

Some of the items he has been thankful for this week include coats, bubbles, a cave, masks, his aunt and grandmother, the ABC’s, and art pictures. One feather has a scribble on it and I cannot, for the life of me, decipher what it means. My guess, though, is that it’s something really good.

What I love about this craft is how easily my son is able to name things for which he is thankful. More often than not, the things for which he is thankful are the things I would never even think one would give thanks for. How often are we grateful for bubbles or the ABCs? To be honest, probably not as much as we should be. I am learning from my son these days that expressing gratitude is a wonderful practice.

It has been shown that the simple act of writing down that which you are thankful for can have incredible benefits. It can decrease stress, improve physical and mental health, allow for
Feathers of Gratitude (cont'd)

better sleep, and create more joy in one's life. The more gratitude you express, the more joyful and thankful of a person you become.

I know that this semester, and the entire year, have been difficult, stressful, anxiety-inducing, and unlike anything most of us ever thought we would experience. When things have been as tough as they have been, it seems a lot easier to express frustration rather than gratitude. Some days, it seems as if getting the day over with is more important than being grateful for moments in the day.

Yet, when I slow down and really think about all the work that went into making this semester happen, all the planning and preparation, the flexibility and adjustments made, all those meetings and classes, how our campus community successfully contained this virus, and the work of every student, faculty, and staff, I am overcome such awe and deep gratitude.

Truly, I am so thankful for this community. Yes, the University of Lynchburg is a great institution, but what is greater is that this institution is made up of incredible people who care for each other. And for that, I give great thanks.

As we wind down this semester, I pray and hope that each of you will find moments of rest, rejuvenation, and, more importantly, gratitude. Perhaps, as you wear your mask and coat while humming the ABCs as you walk in a cave full of bubbles, you’ll be like that turkey on my wall, bursting with colorful feathers of gratitude.
Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Our sympathies are extended to:

- The family, friends, students, and colleagues of Dr. Nancy E. Cowden (Biology), who died on November 14. [Link](#) to obituary. See box at right for service streaming information.
- The family, friends, students, and colleagues of Dr. Joseph Spagnolo (Education), who died on November 12. [Link](#) to obituary.

For a list of regularly scheduled fellowship group meetings, go to the Spiritual Life webpage and click on “Spiritual Organizations on Campus.”

Like us on Facebook - [https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC](https://www.facebook.com/LynchburgSLC)

Helpful Links on LinkTree at - [SpiritualLifeCenter](#)

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Dates to Remember

Friday, November 20
Memorial Service for Dr. Nancy E. Cowden
Livestreamed at 10 a.m.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
TBA in January 2021

GOOD LUCK IN YOUR EXAMS

SPIRITUAL LIFE SERVICES
are live-streamed via our YouTube Channel