

It is an honor to deliver a Community Comment to you on Thanksgiving. A few days ago the Times-Standard asked readers to write in and say, "What are you thankful for this year?" It started me to thinking that often I think of the things are wrong with the world rather than the things that are right.

So, here is what I'm thankful for: I am thankful to live in a free and prosperous land where, if you work hard your labors are still rewarded. Yes, in spite of the many complaints about wage stagnation, and many of us have experienced it, pay is better here than in most places. Let's face it, if wages were decent in Latin America or other parts of the world, people would not be streaming here by the millions.

I am thankful for the rule of law. We have a lot of problems in our country, with ~~comparatively~~ high crime rates compared to say, most of the countries in Western Europe. Nevertheless, I am thankful to live where the police are for the most part, honest, and the judicial system is mostly just.

I am thankful for religious freedom, and yes, for our Religious Heritage of giving Thanks to God. As you know, the event that Americans commonly call the "First Thanksgiving" was celebrated to give thanks to God for guiding them safely to the New World. Perhaps the first thanksgiving feasts were conducted here by Spaniards in the 16th century. Thanksgiving services were routine in what was to become the Commonwealth of Virginia as early as 1607, with the first permanent settlement of Jamestown, Virginia holding a thanksgiving in 1610. ^{More famous} The Pilgrims and Native Americans gave thanks together at Plymouth in 1621. ^

I am thankful for friends in a world where ~~so~~ many people are alone and friendless. I am thankful for family in a day when families seem so torn by economic exigencies, mobility, and inability to forgive old hurts and wounds.

I am thankful for a roof overhead when ^{some} ~~many~~ are unable to find housing or shelter. I understand there are some 2,000 homeless people ~~who are homeless~~ in Humboldt County.

I am thankful for food on the table when there is still a good deal of death and dying in our world due to hunger, malnutrition and unclean water.

I am thankful for modern medicine, and the many wonderful physicians and doctors and medical people in our community. ~~In spite of its accelerating costs, it still can be used to increase our quality and quantity of life.~~

Finally, I am thankful for a community of open minded and big-hearted people. Last week I attended the Thanksgiving Sing at the First Presbyterian church of Eureka. Eleven choirs, each from a different faith community presented a piece of music through which they gave thanks to God for the gift of life: Some sang in Latin, some Hebrew, some in Swahili, and most in English. Some were big choirs, others small, some were old, some were young. To say a good time was had by all would be a understatement: it was enchanting and uplifting, and for that, I am thankful.

This has been Dan Price for Community Comment