

Happy Thanksgiving!

Another Thanksgiving weekend is upon us, and so far it's been wonderful for us. Thanksgiving dinner was deliciously cooked by my husband and our guests who were kind enough to bring yummy dishes to share. We played some games afterwards and watched the movie "21" -not very Thanksgiving-y, but a good movie nonetheless. The night before Thanksgiving, my husband and I watched some Thanksgiving episodes of Friends – I think I had forgotten how funny that show was. It's strange because now when we watch Friends episodes, we are older than the Friends, whereas when the show was still running new in prime time, the friends were older than us... oh well, yet another example of how time flies. Over the turkey last night, we also did our tradition where we go around the table and say what we're thankful for – and my ever-generic answer was the same as some of my friends, "I am most thankful for my family and friends." It may be a generic response, but it's very true, and I am very blessed to have such a wonderful family (my husband and kids and our relatives who live far away – we hope everyone had a wonderful day) and such great friends.

So now, Black Friday is upon us, and I was able to convince my husband to not go shopping. Every year, he wants to get up at the crack of dawn, if not before, and go wait in the lines to see the best sales stores have to offer. But I'm never very enthused, mostly because we have 4 children under the age of 9. I keep telling him to put it on his "when our kids aren't so little" list, although I have one that's lengthy enough for the both of us. It'd be nice if one year we could get a babysitter for Black Friday so we wouldn't have to wake all the kids up, but until that happens, I'm not willing to lose the sleep myself or have the kids lose it either. So today for Black Friday, I've already had my first turkey-and-leftover sandwich, and we're going to take the kids to see Bolt (our two oldest girls are excited to hear the voicework

of Miley Cyrus) at the movie theater with a friend and her grandkids. We haven't been to a movie in forever. I just hope our 2-year-old can behave. After the movie, we'll walk across the street for dinner, and then we'll go see if Santa's reindeer have arrived on the square before we get our spots to watch the parade. Every year on the day after Thanksgiving, our town has a parade celebrating Santa's arrival. They bring real reindeer to the square, and everyone lines the streets in anticipation of seeing Santa Claus come to town. His sleigh is pulled by huge beautiful horses, and last year, Santa called out hello to us and knew us by name! When Santa reaches the town square, a few lucky children get to push the big button that turns on the Christmas lights on the square, and everyone cheers as they sip their complimentary cups of hot chocolate. It's like something out of a cheesy holiday movie, and I relish every minute of it. I don't know who is more excited today - me or the kids! I love small town life! And right now, as I'm writing this, I just saw Santa's sleigh (covered of course) get pulled down our street with a golf cart! I excitedly yelled out, but thank goodness the kids didn't come down here in time to see it - I think it'd be better for them to see it for the first time in the parade. It was exciting for me to see though!

I'm not sure what the rest of the weekend holds, but I do know that I get twice as much time with my husband and kids as a normal weekend, and for that I'm also very thankful. I hope everyone else had a wonderful holiday!

Feast day- two days early



Well, it looks like I was somehow able to get a day of work in this week. Apparently the teacher was gone yesterday too, and they didn't use the same sub which left the door open for yours truly. I am writing this post with a headache, so don't be too surprised if it turns out shorter than normal.

I was able to pick up this day early yesterday afternoon meaning that had I worked yesterday I may not have secured a job for today. Who knows? Only one opening slipped past my radar for yesterday (locked when I tried to select it) so I imagine today would have been no better with the selection still being only one district. The job? Mentally impaired kids at the school furthest from me at about 13 miles. I hoped to run into one of my church students here who graced my cabin at summer camp a year ago, and even found myself in the classroom across the hall from his, but as it turned out our paths never crossed.

So what is this sort of classroom like? Think kids who can barely talk even though some are ten or eleven years old, two of which are wheelchair bound and can't even feed themselves. There were seven kids, three aides, and one teacher. Yes, a ratio of less than two students per teacher; it takes that much energy to work with these kids. Now these kids were very low-functioning, but that doesn't mean non-functioning, so there is room for teaching them. Mostly this is very basic math and simple writing (not all can write though), and a lot of coloring, cutting, and pasting. Naturally the theme for the reading and writing lesson was- drum roll please- Thanksgiving. I read them a book parodying *The Night Before Christmas*, replacing Christmas with Thanksgiving. Then the kids did a sequencing activity on the book. The ones who were able to write not only sequenced things from the book, they also had to write about it, a challenge for me to get them to do this.

Mostly the aides ran the class. This was pretty much my only lesson. I acted as an aide myself for much of the day which

is standard practice as the aides know the routine and what to expect out of their students. In the afternoon the day ended with an actual Thanksgiving feast. There was corn, mashed potatoes, stuffing, pumpkin pie, and turkey- erm, cookies. No actual turkey- several kids don't eat meat anyway- but cookies decorated to look like turkeys. I actually didn't eat much of anything, and since this was less than two hours after lunch not much was given to the kids, but for them it was supposed to be a learning experience. A lot of what these kids do is life skills, including cooking. Last year I subbed in a class like this where the kids folded laundry (gym loaner uniforms). I did force myself to eat a small slice of pumpkin pie. There was only one slice left and I didn't want to start any arguments □ . I also took a cookie home since they were homemade and I didn't want to offend. You got me, I have a sweet tooth anyway so I didn't mind. One thing that the meal was missing was the thanksgiving part. I didn't expect prayer, this being the 21st century in a public school, but the aides didn't ask what the kids were thankful for. Maybe that's too high a level for them, I don't know.

Well, it looks like my post isn't short after all, though I do still have my headache even after taking an allergy pill and a 600mg Tylenol. Come to think of it, I seem to remember that you don't take Tylenol for headaches. Waste of a pill- now where's my Aleve?