

## A Time to Think or Thank?

Thanksgiving. A time of Giving Thanks, and Thinking about my life.

I became a published, award-winning author, in 2014. I thought I could jump in, full-time, when I retired from the Post Office in 2017, and become a famous writer! I wasn't a famous published author. I'm not a famous writer, yet. I'm Grateful, I'm the proverbial optimist. Like Will Newman says, "They aren't judging you, they're judging your hard work..." I still Think I will be a famous writer.

I give thanks that I can write. It's why I like writing sermons. I'm a certified Lay Speaker, (aka, a sub for pastors that are out sick, or on vaca.) I stand up in front of congregations, tell them how I found my faith, and what it means to me to have my faith. I sing for them. I am thankful that I can. Many can't even consider getting up in front of a group and speaking, much less singing. I stand there, and sing. I've sung for thousands, all alone. If there is someone to accompany me, that's great, if not, I'll sing anyway. Same goes for my speaking. If asked, I do.

I sang for an hour, with no accompaniment, at funeral calling hours for a friend of mine. Her only request was that I sing. The family kept greeting the line, people talked freely, it didn't disturb me. I sang songs I knew she loved. She was a treasure to me, the least I could do was sing and speak.

Writing for funerals is hard. You bring in personal experiences with that person. You translate feelings into words, so everyone can identify. I bring up special memories with my friend. Writing has helped me earn the trust, and attention of my listeners. My thoughts and stories hang in the air, as everyone ponders their relationship with the deceased. It's a special kind of writing that I treasure.

I branched into voiceover from singing and speaking in public. I wrote the text for slideshow videos I produced, for small businesses, to put onto Facebook. Videos must be less than one minute, and pack a punch to the intended. Sales for these small businesses picked up substantially. I was having a lot of fun. Two daughters, of a retired minister mother, contacted me to do a slideshow production introducing her new book. I wrote the text from the information they gave me, and they were thrilled with the resulting video. They showcased it at her book signing. I'd found my niche.

Thanksgiving, and Giving Thanks, have taken on new meaning for me. I write commercial scripts for radio and tv ads. I still sing, and do voiceovers. I lead church services with the sermons I write. People hear my words, and they sink into their hearts and minds. It works. I'm still not famous, yet. But I think there's that opportunity for me, tomorrow.

Great reasons to be Grateful as a writer, this Thanksgiving.