

Hosting an International Student for Thanksgiving

Dear Grace family, thank you so much for being willing to host international students for Thanksgiving! Your hospitality and participation are essential to the ministry of RUF International at Northwestern.

Why host an international student?

First of all, because it's really fun! These students (and sometimes their families) volunteer to come to your home. They want to be there, so they tend to be engaging and curious about American culture.

Second, you never know what sort of connection you might make or what sort of spiritual conversation you might have. Even if an enduring relationship doesn't emerge, you will have extended the love of Christ in a meaningful way by opening your home to someone who is likely very far from their own. God has a special place in His heart for foreigners, and hosting is a way to honor Christ by serving the nations.

What to expect, and tips for hosting

- **Transportation.** Many students have their own transportation, but not all do, so be sure to coordinate those details once you are matched.
- **Contributing to the meal.** Some students may offer to bring something. Allowing them to contribute may help them feel more comfortable.
- **Dietary restrictions.** Ask about these ahead of time and do your best to accommodate them.
- **Pets.** Some students come from cultures that view pets differently than we do, so please be sensitive to that if you have one.
- **Various religious backgrounds.** Don't expect students to be Christians or to understand why we celebrate Thanksgiving.

Most importantly, have fun and simply include your guest in whatever you would normally do on Thanksgiving. If it's your practice to read Scripture together, read Scripture. If you normally watch football, watch football. Treat them as part of the family, and be sure to explain why you do certain things, such as praying before the meal or sharing what you're thankful for.

You may find that the nature of Thanksgiving opens the door to a spiritual conversation, so be ready to talk about your faith. If that happens, be bold but gentle and respectful. Otherwise, ask about their culture and family, and share about yours.

Our goal is to pair every family that signs up with a student, but our ability to do so will depend on how many students sign up.

QUESTIONS?

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Scan to sign up

