



When Cedric Cromwell sits down with his family for a meal on Thanksgiving each year, the day holds a unique kind of significance.

Cromwell is the chairman and president of the tribal council of the Mashpee Wampanoag, the same Native American tribe that first made contact with the Pilgrims who arrived in Massachusetts in 1620. While the Wampanoag welcomed the Pilgrims and helped them ensure a successful first harvest, they were nearly wiped out by warfare and disease that arrived with the settlers.

For Cromwell, Thanksgiving is an opportunity to give thanks, but also to highlight the way that his people suffered at the hands of the settlers.

"We are Americans as well, and so even today, I sit down at Thanksgiving with family," he said. "I do have that Thanksgiving meal on that day with family but it gives me an opportunity to speak to the kids and the family about the truth of the day, and why that day is important to give thanks."

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