

Dessert was for Sundays, it was the highlight of the “Mittagsessen,” Sunday lunch, the main meal. We, my four brothers and I, would sit around the dining room table and eagerly wait for the carton of ice cream or some other sweet, creamy, and delectable creation of my mother to be ushered in. There it would sit in the middle of the table in all its mouth-watering glory, ready to be dished up into fancy bowls. And that’s when the trouble began, and grumbling would quickly evolve into all “Nachtisch” (dessert, literally “after table”) hell breaking loose.

In the early days, Dad would do the dishing out, but it didn’t take long for us to realize that he could not be trusted and had absolutely no concept of fair and equitable portions. Besides having an oversized sweet tooth, he grew up a single child, consequently, he never learned proper table math, especially when it came to dessert. He’d always start with his bowl - suspicious, and proceed to overload his dish like a truck on an African highway – plain wrong. Whatever was left he carelessly and inaccurately divided between the rest of us, and clearly played politics with assigning the privilege of who got to lick the bowl or ice cream carton.

Mama must have had a talk with him because he very quickly lost his dessert-disher-outer job; she worked too hard to make Nachtisch a weekly fracas. At first, she took over, but due to her sons’ super-German abilities to spot mismeasurements to a tenth of a millimeter and judge the weight of a bowl of dessert down to a fraction of a gram, she came up with an alternate method. Knowing she couldn’t trust any of us with my Dad’s bowl, and because he’d sit there salivating with big puppy eyes, she would serve up his bowl. Then, on a rotating basis, each one of us precious boys would be in charge of filling six dessert bowls. Once the task was complete, we got to pick our bowl on a rotating system, the disher-upper being last, actually - Mama always took the last bowl. The privilege of the server was, you guessed it, licking the bowl or carton.

A lot of us have difficulties with Math, but boy we are naturally gifted/cursed when it comes to division. Where and whenever you see people divided, at each other’s throats, caring more about their weekly bowl

of dessert than their brother or sister, you immediately know that sin and the master divider, Satan himself, are at work. Jesus reminded us that **“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly”** John 10:10 (ESV). Satan’s first recorded act is driving a wedge between God and Adam and Eve (Genesis 3), and ever since the divisiveness of sin has plagued mankind. We don’t have to work hard at division, we are naturally and sinfully good at it. What we do have to work hard on are unity and harmony, so much so that Jesus prayed for his disciples to excel at unity, **“The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me”** John 17:22-23 (ESV).

There never was a fuss around our dining room table about getting our fair share of tripe or lentils, but a fraction of an ounce of ice cream was more than enough to yell, complain, get your feelings hurt, be miserable, be angry, and feel completely justified – ahh, the sour joy of division, the ugly freedom of not being your “brother’s keeper” as long as your bowl is full.

There would have been no need for Jesus to pray for unity and harmony among his disciples if they had been good at it, alas, like us they needed that prayer because they were very accomplished at the things that divide, greed, jockeying for position, jealousy, pettiness, pride, stubbornness, looking out for themselves, sinful anger, prejudice, ignorance, ... Maybe none of these are part of your sinner’s DNA, but they certainly afflict mine, going way back to sitting around the dining table with my little feet dangling because they couldn’t reach the ground yet. Thankfully Jesus prayed for you and me, but he did much more, he gave his life to reconcile the division we have caused, to transform our dividers’ hearts and minds.

Time to pause and take a look at divisions in your life and the part you have played or are playing in them. Start with you and God, next look around the table, then scan for everything and everyone you should be looking at, and make sure you bring generous helpings of repentance and apologies with you. Now you are ready for some enjoyable and peaceful Nachtisch! “Guten Appetitt.”

To God be all glory. Love you, Pastor Hans



Lord Hear Our Prayers

PRAYER REQUEST

The Cox Family, Suzie Frei, Bob Sykes, Antonio (surgery),
Derrill Coffman, Lisa Boer, Holman Family, Kroeker Family,
Bob Clayton, Philip Law, those dealing with addiction,
those who have lost family members

SALVATION

Nick, Greg, David, Luke, Skip, Demetrius McCray,
Farney, Peter, Jimmy, Dan, Josiah, Amanda, Jim

Military And Those Serving

Michael Berger, Austin Downing, Noah Martin,
John Michael Chavez, Chris Kelly, Austin Kroeker,
Brian Sula, Thomas Hoffman, Joel Thelen,
Clayton Brown, Jonathan Grinols, Joshua Grabowski,
Christopher Sula, Dylan Briggs

CARD & FLOWER MINISTRY

If you know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized, please let us
know by calling: **Lynnette Barrera** – (559)400-1862 and/or
e-mail **Judy Mahar** at ldpbcprayer@gmail.com with your
prayer requests.

Church Board Members:

Hans Frei - Pastor , Richard Mayes - Head Deacon ,
Sue Kluding, Gabi Cox, Chuck Arndt, Barb Deibler

September Announcements

Upcoming Events

- Men's Gathering - Tuesday @ 6:00 P.M.
- Wednesday Night Bible Study for all ages @ 7:00 P.M.
- Food Ministry - 1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday 9-11 AM
- Women's Ministry - Wednesday @ 10:00AM
- GriefShare - Wednesday @ 6:30 PM

Fellowship Refreshments were provided by:

"Dennis's Class"

Thank you

Next week "Beverly's Class & Youth Group is up!!



Giving

September 15, 2024

Offering:
\$2,157.00

Facilities:
\$30.00

Food:
\$30.00

Attendance:
66

Weekly Events

Sunday School/Small Groups:

9:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship Service:

10:30 AM

Sunday Evening Worship Service:

6:00 PM

Tuesday: Men's Gathering: 6:00 PM

1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday

Food Ministry:

9:00 AM -11:00 AM

Wednesday:

Women's Bible Study - 10:00 AM

GriefShare - 6:30 PM

Bible Study/Small Group - 7:00 PM

Thursday: Chicken Foot - 1:00 PM

Saturday: Youth Hang-Out 6-9 PM

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Sunday Services 10:30am & 6:00pm
LDPbaptistchurch.com



**Bible Reading Plan - 2024
September 23rd - September 29th**

DAY 1 - 2 Kings 21-22
(Psalms 112)

DAY 2 - 2 Kings 23-24
(Psalms 113)

DAY 3 - 2 Kings 25 -
Lam 1
(Psalms 114)

DAY 4 - Lam. 2-3
(Psalms 115)

DAY 5 - Lam. 4-5
(Psalms 116&117)

DAY 6 - Psalms 118
DAY 7 - Psalms 120

Welcome all of you who are guests with us today. Our desire is for you to relax and be blessed by worship, God's Word, and fellowship. We, the members, have committed ourselves to underwrite the church financially. We do not expect you to contribute to the offering, but you are free to participate. We would like to get to know you and for you to know us better.