A decorative border of watercolor flowers and butterflies surrounds the text. The flowers include purple, orange, yellow, and red blooms, along with green foliage. Two monarch butterflies are visible, one in the top left and one in the bottom right.

Waiting ON THE Lord

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2023



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Schedule

Friday, March 31

- 6:30 – 7:00 Check-in
- 7:00 – 8:20 **Session One**
- 8:20 – 8:30 Group Photo (Auditorium)
- 8:30 – 9:30 Dessert Fellowship (Grand Lobby)

Saturday, April 1

- 8:30 – 9:30..... Continental Breakfast Fellowship (Grand Lobby)
- 9:30 – 10:40 **Session Two**
- 10:40 – 11:00 Break
- 11:00 – 12:00**Session Three**
- 12:00 – 12:05 *Walk to Boyd Hall*
- 12:05 – 1:00Catered Lunch (Boyd Hall) Shuttle available
- 1:00 – 1:10 *Walk to Workshops*
- 1:10 – 2:30**Workshops**
 - Rm 104 *Music Suite*..... **Developing Helpful Devotional Habits**
Led by Mrs. Colleen Bundy
 - Rm 202 *Teen Choir Room***Establishing Spiritually-Effective Family Traditions** | Led by Mrs. Virginia Arnold
 - Rms 110-113 *Middle Level* **Developing Diverse Friendships**
Led by Miss Ashley Rush
 - *Rms 115-116 Middle Level* ...**Loving Others Through Hospitality**
Led by Mrs. Jeanne Keck
 - *Rm 203 Fireplace Room*.... **Compartir Tu Fe (Sharing Your Faith)**
Led by Mrs. Pam Freeman
- 2:30 – 2:45 Break
- 2:45 – 4:00**Session Four**

Note: The main sessions will meet in the auditorium.

Biography

Amy Fagan serves alongside her husband in Windham, NH, at Heritage Baptist Church, the church the Lord led her husband to plant in 2001. She and Matt met while at Bob Jones University. Amy grew up in Indiana but came south to BJU to study education. She earned a BS in composite science education and an MEd in secondary education. Prior to marrying Matt in 1998, she worked in the Dean of Women's office first as a dorm counselor and then as a dorm supervisor. After they were married, she taught for BJU Distance Learning for three years before having Josiah and transitioning to New Hampshire. The Fagans attended Mount Calvary Baptist Church during their time in Greenville.



She and Matt have three children. Josiah is getting a master's in theology at BJU while working in Student Life, Caleb is a sophomore studying at BJU, and Katheryn is completing her senior year of high school. When Katheryn graduates, Amy will move on to a new chapter after homeschooling three children for 17 years. She has mixed emotions about that! On December 31, 2022, the Fagans welcomed a sweet daughter-in-law into the family when Josiah married Abbie Burgess.

Session One:
Waiting on the Lord

Psalm 27:14

Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your
heart take courage; wait for the Lord.

Defining the terms.

1. *Wait* – to look forward to, to hope in someone, to expect, to wait before acting.
2. *Be Strong* – to be or become strong or powerful beyond the average, to grow, to prevail.
3. *Heart* – one’s inner self; inclination, disposition, focus of a person’s thoughts (mind).
4. *Take Courage* – to be strong; strengthen, let grow strong, make firm; prove to be strong.
5. *LORD* – “**Yahweh**” – Self Existent One. I Am. Hebrew word for the self-revealed name of the God of the Old Testament.

Discovering the context.

1. David's confidence was in the Lord. (1-3)
2. David's desire was for God's presence. (4-6)
3. David's plea for God's presence. (7-12)
4. David's confidence reiterated. (13-14)

A heart that waits on the Lord hopes in God and becomes strong because it knows God and submits to God no matter the circumstance.

Session Two:
Magnifying the God on
Whom We Wait

The Character of God.

1. God's Faithfulness. Deuteronomy 7:9; Lamentations 3:22-23;
1 John 1:9
2. God's Goodness. Lamentations 3:25; Psalm 31:19; John 10:11;
Romans 2:4
3. God's Power. Jeremiah 32:17, 27; 1 Chronicles 29:11-12;
Luke 1:37; Numbers 11:23
4. God's Immutability. Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 13:8; James 1:17

5. God's Sovereignty. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12; Daniel 4:35;
Psalm 115:3

6. God's Love. Lamentations 3:22; 1 John 4:8, 10, 19; 1 Peter 5:7;
Ephesians 2:4-5

The Conduct of God.

1. The mighty acts of God as seen in creation. Psalm 19:1;
Romans 1:20

2. The mighty acts of God as seen in His Word.

*Knowing God doesn't take away our problems
but does put them into perspective. We gain
confidence in the face of adversity when we
know God personally.*

Session Three:
**Getting to the Heart of
Waiting on the Lord**

*The disposition of a heart that is waiting.
What does it look like?*

The disposition of a waiting heart: The heart of belief.

1. Humility – 1 Peter 5:5-7; Philipppians 2
2. Submission – 1 Peter 3:5-6; Ephesians 5:21-24; Hebrews 11;
Hebrews 13:17
3. Peace – Isaiah 26:3-4; Romans 15:13
4. Patience (steadfast endurance) – Psalm 40:1; Hebrews 10:36;
Ecclesiastes 7:8
5. Joy – Isaiah 25:9; Philipppians 4:4-9; Romans 15:13
6. Hope (trust) – Proverbs 3:5-6; Jeremiah 17:5-8

The disposition of a fainting heart: The heart of unbelief.

The root sin of unbelief shows itself in the fruit of:

1. Fear, anxiety, and worry.
2. Controlling behavior (taking things into our own hands).
3. Anger, bitterness, and cynicism.

What God Ordains is Always Good

*What God ordains is always good: His will is just and holy.
As He directs my life for me, I follow meek and lowly.
My God indeed in ev'ry need knows well how He will shield me;
to Him, then, I will yield me.*

*What God ordains is always good: He never will deceive me;
He leads me in His righteous way and never will He leave me.
I take content what He has sent; His hand that sends me sadness
will turn my tears to gladness.*

*What God ordains is always good: though I the cup am drinking
which savors now of bitterness, I take it without shrinking.
For after grief God grants relief, my heart with comfort filling
and all my sorrow stilling.*

*What God ordains is always good: this truth remains unshaken.
Though sorrow, need, or death be mine, I shall not be forsaken.
I fear no harm, for with His arm He will embrace and shield me;
so to my God I yield me.
(Samuel Rodigast, 1649-1708)*

Session Four:
Developing a Heart that
Waits on the Lord

To develop a heart that waits for the Lord, you must spend time knowing God. Psalm 63:1-4

1. Read His Word.
2. Memorize His Word.
3. Meditate on His Word.

To develop a heart that waits for the Lord, you must spend time seeing God through His works.

1. Seeing God through His creation – Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1-6.
2. Seeing God through His Providential dealings.
 - Read through the Bible.
 - Read missionary biographies.
 - Read hymns.
 - Reflect on what God has done in my life and how He has shown His faithfulness, goodness, love, immutability, etc.

To develop a heart that waits for the Lord, you must spend time praying to God.

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication

To develop a heart that waits for the Lord, you must choose to trust God (Hebrews 11).

The heart that waits on the Lord hopes in God and becomes strong because it knows God and submits to God no matter the circumstance.

Workshops

Developing Helpful Devotional Habits Workshop

Led by Colleen Bundy

Drawing Near to God

We are all busy, all pressed for time. But we want to, and *need* to, draw near to God by prioritizing and maximizing our time with Him.

Introduction

Testimony from Michelle Jones

Our Motivation

Why do we have devotions?

1. Communion with God
 - Communion: the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts and feelings. Synonyms include fellowship, harmony, unity.
 - *Not* a check off on our to-do list
 - Our example is Moses—a friend of God

Exodus 20:21 *The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was* (ESV).

2. Transformation

2 Corinthians 3:18 *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.*

Indeed, it is by beholding the glory of Christ that believers are gradually transformed into His image, and then brought into an eternal enjoyment of it, because they shall be 'forever like him,' for they 'shall see Him as He is.' On this depends our present comforts and future blessedness. ~John Owen

Drawing near to God's Words

1. Reading God's Word

- Reading all of it—getting the big story
- Reading every day with a plan

2. Studying God's Word

- Not to know more things, but to know God
- Most important question: What does this passage tell me about God?
- Recommended books: *Women of the Word* by Jen Wilkin and *A Place of Quiet Rest* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Testimony from Rachel Dahlhausen:

Jen Wilkin's 6 P's:

- Purpose
- Perspective
- Patience
- Process
- Prayer
- People

3. Meditating on God's Word

- Remembering
- Resounding
- Dwelling on

4. Memorizing God's Word

- A treasure hidden in our hearts
- Used for our own edification
- Used to share with others

Linda Minnick:

“Ready on Your Lips - Systematic Scripture Memory for Women”

<https://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org/pages/sermons/detail/sermon/8085>

Drawing near with our words

1. Praying

Prayer is not monologue, but dialogue; God's voice is its most essential part. Listening to God's voice is the secret of the assurance that He will listen to mine. ~Andrew Murray

- Keep our goal in mind: communion with God.
- Keep our heart engaged. *“In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart.”*
~John Bunyan
- Stay in a continual posture of prayer.

2. Singing: used throughout Scripture
 - For praise
 - For remembering God's faithful acts
 - For speaking truth about God

Next to the Holy Spirit, the single greatest help in my personal devotional life has been to read the Scripture with paper and pen in hand, so I can record insights from the Word. As I write down what God is saying to my heart through His Word, the words are lifted off the page and become full of meaning and life to me. ~Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

3. Journaling

- Write down a verse from your reading that ministered to you.
- Write down a lesson or truth from the passage you read.
- Write down a truth about God revealed through your reading.
- Write out a prayer based on the impact of your reading.
- Keep a gratitude or blessing journal to recognize God's gifts and actions.

Testimony from Gail Yost: Through the years

Our greatest challenges:

- Time
- Busy-ness
- Distractions
- Dull hearts, tired hearts, sinful hearts

Conclusion

On the path of faithfulness, this is how we walk: one foot in front of the other, one day at a time.

O my blessed God! Let me climb up near to Him, and love, and long, and plead, and wrestle and stretch after Him. David Brainerd

Psalm 27:8 *When You said, "Seek My face," my heart said to You, "Your face, O LORD, I shall seek."*

W-O-R-D BIBLE STUDY:

W = WORD: What does it say? Write out the passage.

O = OBSERVATION: What does it mean? Record what you learn.

R = REALITY: How is this truth real in my life? Record thoughts.

D = DO: What do I ask God to help me do? Write out your prayer.

W = WORD: What does it say? Write out the passage.

As you work through a passage, you can write out parts of the passage or each verse individually as you answer the questions.

O = OBSERVATION: What does it mean? Record thoughts.

Ask the “5 W’s and an H”: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

- WHO is speaking? Who is this about? To whom is it written?
- WHAT is the subject, event, or teaching?
- WHEN did, do, or will events occur to a person or people?
- WHERE did or will this happen? Where was it said?
- WHY is this being taught? Why at this time? Why this person?
- HOW will it happen, will it be done, is it illustrated? How do events effect the writer’s perspective?

Are there:

- Repeated words or phrases?
- Lists (topical, instructional)?
- Literary styles? (Historical, prophetic, poetic, teaching, etc.)
- Divisions / paragraphs / flow of thoughts?
- Contrasts and comparisons?
- Cause and effect?
- Conditions?
- Reasons or intentions?
- Conclusions?

How does this passage show:

- The character and work of God? the Son? the Holy Spirit?
- The character and need of man?
- The author's goal for his readers?
- The relationship with other passages on the same theme?
- The central theme?

R = REALITY: How is this truth real in my life?

Write one or two sentences to summarize the truth you can apply to your life today (a specific truth, a sin to confess, an action to take, a promise to believe, a praise to give, etc.)

D = DO: What do I ask God to help me do?

Write a prayer to God about what you have studied. It could include adoration of Him, confession of sin, thanksgiving for spiritual truths, requesting of needs, etc.

Additional Thoughts:

1. Start by asking God to help you understand His Word (Psalm 63:1-2).
2. Consider studying sections of Scripture (a book, chapter, paragraph) first and then narrow it down to study verse by verse. Perhaps print out the section you want to study so you can mark, highlight, and make additional notes as you wish. Then transfer any of your final thoughts to the pages of your Bible.
3. Reading the book or passage repeatedly will help you notice the overall theme and outline.
4. Consider keeping a journal of your study to record what you learn.
5. As you study verse by verse, seek to write out the verse each day. Sometimes you might spend several days on the same verse. Writing the verse is just one more way for you to let it sink into your thinking.

6. Not every question will be answered for every passage, but this gives plenty of questions to ask to help you “dig into” God’s Word.
7. Using Bible study tools such as Bible dictionaries, concordances, atlases, and commentaries can be helpful as well. See “What Commentary Should I Be Using?” by Steve Lawson for suggestions.
8. These questions are certainly “nothing new” but are presented in this compact form so you can tuck it in your Bible and use it.
9. Remember, information alone is not enough. Be sensitive to the teaching of God’s Word, be transformed by it and then share it!

Questions compiled by Wanda Taylor

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HARD TO PRAY?

Why is it hard to pray?

1. Because prayer is giving out rather than taking in.
2. Because there is generally no immediate return: we must exercise faith in the unseen world.
3. Because we mistake the primary purpose for prayer: fellowship with God.
4. Because of sin: go to the mercy seat!
5. Because of spiritual opposition: our disinclination to pray is spiritual opposition!
6. Because of discouragement over our “fitfulness.”

How to deal with the difficulty of prayer.

1. We are commanded and directed to do it! Pray out of obedience!
2. Realize that God sometimes delays but is not reluctant to give us our request.

Revelation 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him....

Key: “Let” Jesus come in! He is the one who moves us to pray by knocking—open the door!

3. Make good preparation.
4. Pray first about the obvious:
Examples: What did I just read? Respond to it!
Pray about my day today.
5. Make a beginning!
6. Know your dependence on the Lord. Pray “in” the Holy Spirit.
7. Have patience! “Wait on the Lord.” Believing prayer is willing to wait.

Summary of Pastor Minnick’s sermon, “Dealing with Prayer’s Difficulties in 2023,” January 4, 2023. Used with permission.

DEVOTIONAL RESOURCES

Books

A Method for Prayer..... Matthew Henry
(Edited and revised by J. Ligon Duncan III)

This book is a wonderful tool to help you pray through Scripture as you pray for yourself and others.

A Place of Quiet Rest..... Nancy Leigh DeMoss

A Praying Life..... Paul E. Miller

A Woman's Guide to the Psalms Lydia Brownback

Daily Meditations for Prayer Fleming H. Revell

Disciplines of a Godly Woman Barbara Hughes

Elizabeth Prentiss: More Love to Thee..... Sharon James

Face to Face..... Kenneth Boa

For the Love of God, Vol.1, 2 D.A. Carson

His Word in My Heart Janet Pope

An extremely practical and inspirational book helping us know how to keep memorizing and meditating on God's Word by making use of moments we may not have realized we have.

John Newton's Olney Hymns

Knowing Christ..... Mark Jones

Knowing God J.I. Packer

Life in Jesus.....Octavius Winslow

My Utmost for His Highest

Pastor Minnick's Five-Year Reading Plan (On the church website)

Piercing Heaven: Prayers of the Puritans compiled and edited by Robert Elmer

Praying the Bible..... Donald Whitney

Profiting from the Word A. W. Pink

Proverbs..... Charles Bridges
(Banner of Truth, new edition)

Psalm 119: An Exposition Charles Bridges
(readaclassic.com, paperback)

Excellent devotional which could be paired with memorizing Psalm 119. You could read and meditate on this Psalm twice in one year.

New Morning Mercies Paul Tripp

Read the Bible for Life George Guthrie
Helpful for how to read the different genres of Scripture.

Shopping for Time..... Carolyn Mahaney and daughters
Not just about the devotional life. Found to be motivating for young wives and mothers.

Simplify Your Spiritual Life..... Donald Whitney

The Glory of Christ..... John Owen

The Letters of Samuel Rutherford

The One Year Christian History..... E. Michael Rusten

The Pursuit of God..... A. W. Tozer

Treasuring Christ When Your Hands are Full..... Furman
Helpful for young moms; not just about devotional life; encourages moms to learn to treasure and worship Christ in every moment of parenting, even when there aren't a lot of moments for a "quiet time."

40 Hymns of the Christian Life..... Leland Ryken

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life Donald S. Whitney

Streams in the Desert

Daily Light.....Ambassador-Emerald International

Women of the Word.....Jen Wilkin

Commentaries and Studies

Bible Knowledge Commentaries

Knowing the Bible

Series of Bible studies on individual books of the Bible published by Crossway

Seeing Jesus in the OT..... Nancy Guthrie

Very good Bible study series, but they do involve some significant reading; require a pretty good time commitment.

The New ManMartyn Lloyd-Jones

Commentary on Romans 6.

The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge

(Exhaustive cross-reference library)

What Do I Know About My GodMardi Collier

A wonderful Bible study to help you grow in knowing God. It works well in combination with a reading-through-the-Bible schedule.

Apps

Dwell (for listening and reading with various plans)

Prayermate (for keeping track of prayer requests)

The Bible Memory App

Online

www.biblegateway.com

www.Biblehub.com

www.biblestudytools.com

www.blueletterbible.org

www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/top-5-commentaries

www.olivetree.com

www.olivetree.com/blog/how-to-do-an-inductive-bible-study/

www.openbible.info

www.powerbible.com

www.ronhood.org/smhandout.php

www.spurgeon.org

www.youversion.com

Ready on Your Lips: Systematic Scripture Memory for Women (Linda Minnick) <https://www.mountcalvarybaptist.org/pages/sermons/detail/sermon/8085>

Loving Others through Hospitality Workshop

Led by Jeanne Keck

Being hospitable to the family of God is an outward expression of loving one another. In 1 Timothy 5:10 it is one of the good works that characterizes a godly woman. “Gracious hospitality is a test of brotherly love.” In the Greek, the word *hospitality* has the meaning of being “friendly to strangers.” So we must extend ourselves outside our comfort zone and seek out who the Lord would have us encourage. We are to share what God has given us—without grudging or grumbling at our expense or trouble. Freely we have received, so we ought to freely give or share.

God is at the very beginning of being hospitable—does He not welcome everyone to come?

Paul taught in Romans 15:7, “*Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God*” (ESV). Matthew Henry says, “Receive one another; for sometimes the prejudices of the weak Christian make him shy of the strong, as much as the pride of the strong Christian makes him shy of the weak, neither of which ought to be. Let there be a mutual embracing among Christians. Those who have received Christ by faith must receive all Christians by brotherly love; though poor in the world, though persecuted and despised...as Christ also received us to the glory of God.”

Engaging in hospitality is Scriptural: The Greek word means “receiving and entertaining guests generously and kindly.”

1 Peter 4:8a, 9 *Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another.... Be hospitable to one another without complaint.*

Philippians 2:3, 4 *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than*

yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Romans 12:13 *Contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.*

1 Peter 4:9 *Show hospitality to one another without grumbling (ESV).*

Hebrews 13:1, 2 *Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares (ESV).*

C. H. Spurgeon says, "Hospitality is service, not performance. Fellowship has the priority, each meal need not be an ego trip or grand production that wears to a frazzle."

Tips to get started: ***Just do it!***

Remember that it is all about welcoming your guests. It's not about you, your menu, or your home.

What is it that makes you feel welcome at someone's home? Can you practice those things?

Pray about whom the Lord would have you to invite over to your home. Could you invite visiting missionaries, someone new in your SS class, people you sit near in church and see all the time but don't have a clue about? Maybe someone with children the same age as yours? If you're married, check with your spouse, but have an open heart towards people God puts in your path.

Keep a list of easy menu ideas that you are confident making. Keep it simple.

Have a plan for different options: Sunday lunch, Sunday night after the evening service, brunch, weeknight meal, or afternoon coffee or tea.

Try to make a habit of having your house ready for company so that you can sometimes invite a visitor over spontaneously after church on Sunday for lunch. When you make your Sunday menu, think of how you could stretch it to add enough for a guest or two. Don't let a little messiness stop you from inviting people over. Some of your best visits will be spontaneous ones. If you are in the middle of a renovation in some area of your home, your guests might feel more at home than you think. Most people have something they are working at re-doing. Are you a real person? Then don't try to be a magazine person.

Again...remember that it is not about you, but others. Welcoming people you don't know (strangers) or friends into your home to be a blessing to them or an encouragement in some way is the whole idea. Matthew Henry said, "God has often bestowed honors and favors upon his hospitable servants."

Candles and some fresh flowers are very welcoming, but not necessary. So are a pretty tablecloth and nice dishes but consider your guests; perhaps they don't have such things. Sometimes paper plates and sandwiches are just perfect. Consider when you have been to someone's home—how did they make you feel welcome?

Having people over and letting them see you in your home environment is a great way to build relationships. We see one another each week all dressed up on Sunday. Or maybe we see someone on Facebook or Instagram who appears to have it all together—don't let that intimidate you or stop you from obeying the command to be hospitable and just love people.

Be yourself! You are not Julia Child. You want your guests to be comfortable and relaxed. Dishes don't have to match. Don't let pride in things get in the way of the purpose of hospitality.

If you obey God's command to be hospitable, you will:

- Enjoy fellowship that builds you up as well as your guests.

- Learn about others and their difficulties which will help you love and pray for them.
- Find others you have a lot in common with and can encourage more often.
- Reap God’s blessing in eternity. After all, Jesus said, “As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me” Matthew 25:40 (ESV).
- Experience joy by being a blessing to others.
- Be an example to your children of what hospitality and loving others looks like.

Hebrews 6:10, *For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward his name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints.*

HOME ENTERTAINING

by Mrs. Barbara Tipton



I. PERFECT ENTERTAINING

- A. There is no such thing as **perfect entertaining**, so don't expect to attain it. The more perfect you want to be, the more nervous you'll be, and you'll end up worse than ever.
- B. Entertaining is using your own personality, possessions, and proficiencies to bring about an environment in which your guests are comfortable and relaxed.

*Never feel ashamed or disgruntled with what the Lord has provided for you. Whatever He has provided will be fine, and you should use it to His glory. If we don't use the things that the Lord has already given us, we can't expect Him to bless us with more. It may not be His will to **ever** bless us with more, so we may as well use what He has already provided and get on with the business of hospitality.*

Your possessions are fine just like they are. If the plates don't all match, fine. Mix them up even more with a few cheap ones from a discount store. Mix napkins too—even if you have enough of one color. It really doesn't look strange to others, even if it does to you. One might have a blue country print plate with a blue print napkin, and another might have a yellow plate with a white napkin. Fine, no problem—it will look just great, especially if you have at least two places set with each plate and napkin design.

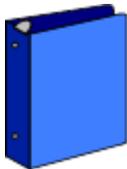
- C. Clean your home as you would normally do. Do not set out dainty little things that guests' children might harm, and don't put out things just to show off. It makes people uncomfortable, and your husband might say, "Honey, where did this come from? I never saw it before." Or how about "Honey, where did these dishes come from?" Let your house be neat



but not so immaculate that people are self-conscious and hesitate to invite you to their home because it isn't quite so clean or so nicely decorated.

D. Keep track of whom you entertain, when you entertained them, and what was served. Include any problems or food dislikes or favorites they mention so you can consider them the next time. Following are three steps you can take toward organizing your social responsibilities:

- 1) Maintain a calendar showing whom you entertained when.
- 2) Maintain a notebook which is alphabetical by last name.



Have a page for each person or family you entertain, and on it note what you served and when, any problems, food dislikes or favorites, allergies, etc. You may also want to note that "Mrs. Filbert and Mrs. Butter do not socialize really well together," and the next time you can invite someone else to socialize with Mrs. Filbert or Mrs. Butter.

- 3) A third notebook would be your collection of recipes and menus. In this notebook keep those tried-and-true menus that you can use over and over, since you know what you have served to whom. As the years pass, you can easily add to this notebook. You will find ways to prepare the items ahead of time and have your kitchen mostly cleaned up and neat before you serve the food.

Include in this notebook a section for problems and hints that you have learned over the years. A copy of this notebook will make a great gift for your daughter or future daughter-in-law, or a bridal shower gift for a friend.

- E. Resolve yourself to the fact that something, somewhere, isn't going to be just like you think it should be. Just make a mental note (and a written note later in your notebook...) to improve in that area the next time and go on from there. Do not be overly apologetic; in fact, if possible, do not even mention the problem unless it is one that everyone notices. In that case, just smile about it and say that you're sorry you forgot (or never even thought) about doing whatever it is and then forget it. Everything else is positive, so don't dwell on the one or two small negatives.

Illustration: One time I had announced that I had two kinds of pie for dessert. I found out how many wanted each kind and found out how many wanted the freshly-whipped cream on theirs. I had the cream in a cold bowl in the refrigerator, and the mixer set up to beat it in just a few short minutes while my helper cleared the table for dessert. Well, the mixer malfunctioned—it went into super-extra high gear (something it was not designed to do). It not only splattered wet lumps of nearly-butter on the wall of the kitchen, but while I was reacting to the situation, trying to avoid a catastrophe, the mixer quickly made the tastiest creamy butter you ever tasted—all this in almost no time at all! All I could do was serve the pie without the whipped cream and offer the folks butter if they wanted it. We all enjoyed the laugh, and the butter I hadn't noticed in my hair made additional friendly, relaxing laughter. (Now I use the canned whipped cream or whip it ahead of time. Oh, and I have a new mixer too.)



- F. You have a very small home, and you don't even have a dining table—you use a game table or the kitchen counter for your meals. Surely, surely, this is enough reason not to show hospitality. Wrong. Concentrate on your home being reasonably clean, and don't worry about what you own or don't own.

My husband and I have been guests in a very wide variety of homes, and none have been a problem for us. We are pleased to see that someone wanted us to visit enough to extend themselves with an invitation. We have eaten with plates on our laps and glasses on the floor, we have eaten on “TV-tables,” and we have eaten in a trailer so tiny that you could fall straight back from the table and hit the bed. (The hostess will recognize herself when she reads this 😊.) This newly-married couple had us in after an artist series many years ago, and they served us pudding for a snack. It was one of the warmest times of fellowship we remember, because they wanted to have us in their home for the sake of Christian fellowship—not to show off their fine belongings or their elaborately-decorated home. Anyway, pudding is one of our favorite snacks!

- G. Most of us anticipate an uncomfortable lull in the conversation, whether it be at the table or in the living room when we have someone in for evening tea and coffee. While you are working ahead of time on things, even cleaning the house a few days before, be thinking of the guests and what you don't know about them. Suggestions: Ask about their children, their home, their home state if they're not local. If they are from the local area and you're newer there, ask questions about the area's growth and change over the years. How did the couple meet? When were they saved? If you are not sure of their salvation, ask where they have been attending church—this will, in a gracious manner, open the way for your own testimony. If you don't know for sure that your guests are Christians, be sure to pray for them ahead of time. Pray that you will be able to make them feel welcome and aware of your concern for them. Pray that they will be open to the testimony that you will give through your hospitality and through your conversation.

H. Children: Confirm ahead of time the ages of children who will be coming to your home. Have some appropriate toys, games, or other occupation for them so their parents will be free to fellowship with other adults. If the children are not independent enough to go and play in a safe place, then just include them as part of your evening's



entertainment. Watching them and talking with them can show your care for unsaved visitors as well as your watch care over fellow Christians. When you know the ages of the children, please put things out of reach that would cause your adult guests anxiety. If they are constantly distracted by little Joey's continuous attack on your crystal vase, they won't feel comfortable, and you have not fully extended yourself to them. I know that many people, including me, never put things up out of their own children's reach—they just taught the children that those were not to be touched, and they enforced it. Fine, but everyone doesn't choose to train their children in just that way, so cooperate with them by putting things up—make them feel comfortable, keep them as friends, and be remembered as someone that cared enough to give them a night out without constantly having to correct their child and endure the embarrassment that goes with it.

II. **Panic-less Entertaining**

A. Planning ahead will give you peace of mind and a relaxed countenance, and that will help your guests to feel at home.

B. Plan your time so you do not have a last-minute rush that prevents you from greeting your guests personally. Sometimes it just can't be helped that your husband or roommate has to greet some of the guests; but generally speaking, you should be there to greet them. If you still have work to do in the kitchen, just be sure everyone is introduced, conversation started among the guests, and then excuse yourself.



C. If you are planning a large party, you may want to ask a teenage girl who is capable of organized thinking and who is familiar with kitchen work to be your helper for the evening. This will help to free you up for last minute oversights or the greeting of guests. Prior to your party, have her over for a "briefing" of your kitchen layout and a discussion of what you plan to do.

D. Plan a menu that largely can be prepared ahead of time and kept warm on a warming tray or in the oven without drying out. Don't plan to use a recipe that you have never used before unless your guests are all very good friends on whom you want to experiment with the new recipe. Once you have a few good menus worked out, and you have experimented with them on family and close friends, use those menus over and over.

E. If you **do not have a dishwasher**, try to have everything from breakfast and lunch already washed up before you even start your company food preparations. Wash up the preparation



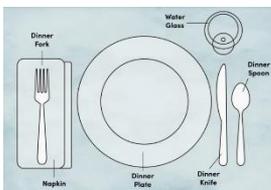
utensils, etc., as you go whenever possible. Don't just wash them—dry them and put them away. In other words, avoid clutter at the last minute as much as possible. Often a guest will insist on helping you clean up, and it is awkward if they

have to wash and dry the breakfast and lunch dishes before starting the supper dishes ☹️.

If you **do have a dishwasher**, don't just stick everything in it to hide the mess. Put the utensils, mixing bowls, etc., in the dishwasher. Let it wash and dry your dishes (possibly a partial load) while you are finishing up the table setting, etc., then put the dishes away too so the dishwasher is ready to take the guests' dishes. Often a guest will insist on helping you clean up, and it is difficult if the dishwasher is already half full and can't hold the supper dishes.

These practices will become easier and faster as you practice them, so don't become discouraged. Also, of course, never let a meal get cold before serving just because you want to clean up **completely** before eating the meal—whatever you can get done is fine, but don't let the meal be spoiled over it.

- F. A helper that you can put on your "I need" list for your birthday, anniversary, Christmas, or perhaps even Mothers' Day would be a large warming tray to keep some foods warm while other foods finish cooking or while you wait for a late guest. Don't be afraid to stretch the original purpose of an appliance or tool to accommodate your needs. For instance, a crockpot isn't just a crockpot—it will cook a meal, it will keep vegetables, etc., warm if you don't have a warming tray, and it will even warm rolls (or keep them warm if just baked) if you don't have a microwave in which to warm them.
- G. The table can be set as far ahead as you want. While you are getting out the dishes for the table, get out serving bowls and utensils too. If you are having a **very large** gathering (i.e. reception for ordination, etc.), you may want to go as far as to put a slip of paper in each serving bowl or platter indicating what it is to be used for. It may sound ridiculous,



but you can do this even a week ahead of time—especially if you are going to be rushed or if you will be having a helper that might not know what you wanted in which dish. It also assures that you have an appropriate serving dish for each item in time to borrow one from a friend if necessary.

- H. If it is a sit-down meal, decide ahead of time which person will sit where at the table. Make name cards or place markers; or, at the very least, tell your husband or roommate who will sit where so they can handle that for you if necessary.
- I. Do everything you can ahead of time. For instance, an hour before the meal you can put your rolls into their cloth-lined basket or bowl, cover them with plastic wrap or another cloth, and let them sit. As folks are descending on the table, you can pop them in the oven for a minute and carry them in with you to the table.

Illustration: As I write this, it is 4:00 in the afternoon. At 5:30, I am to serve a sit-down meal for five guests in addition to my husband and me. I have the table set, the iced tea is chilling, the potatoes are scrubbed, and when I finish this sentence, I am putting them on the grill outside to bake. There, I did it. In the same trip out to the kitchen, I put the vegetables in the pan, put them on the stove, and turned the burner down as low as possible. They'll thaw a little, and when I turn them up at about 5:00, they'll cook quickly. When they're done, I'll put them in a covered bowl and put them on the hot tray. (I'll probably even wash and put away the pan I cooked them in.) The rolls (made this morning) are in a cloth-lined basket with plastic wrap and a cloth napkin on top. All I have to do is remove the plastic and replace the napkin. I may warm them. The butter, salt, and pepper are on the table, and the sour cream is already in a dish in the refrigerator. All we need is for my husband to grill the chicken (it was on sale at Ingles today), and we're ready to eat. I try to rarely, or better yet, never, do a meal that requires last-minute preparations. It makes me a sweaty,

nervous, exhausted hostess, and that makes my guests feel like they have imposed on me.

See the “timetable” instructions at the end for detailed help in planning things ahead of time.



III. PRICE-CONSCIOUS

- A. Almost every woman needs to be, or at least should be, conscious of the amount of money that entertaining takes from her household/food budget, but don't let a small budget force you to entertain in a shoddy manner. Remember that it is not necessarily **what** you serve, but **how** you present it.
- B. Plan your menu from the weekly sale sheets from the grocery stores or, better yet, from your freezer—use up things that have been there awhile and are in danger of never being used. The best meat at the cheapest price is fine. Is broccoli on sale two bunches for the price of one? Fine, broccoli is the vegetable of the night—buy it and freeze one for the next company. Are potatoes way up in price this week? Okay, use noodles or rice. Is minute rice too expensive? Buy the regular, inexpensive, long-cook rice—just plan a little extra time for its cooking. You can make good dinner rolls, but you don't want to make such a mess in the kitchen just a few hours before company arrives? Fine, make them early in the morning, store them in plastic bags or containers, and warm them at the last minute. You can go ahead and wash the bowl they raised in and the pans you baked them in, and still have time to sweep up the flour from the floor!

C. Don't be afraid to adjust, and yes, even completely revamp, your menu when you get to the store and find that you can prepare a different meal a whole lot cheaper because of an unadvertised special. There have been times when I have felt that the Lord had these specials available at such a time to help me exercise the Christian grace of hospitality and to enable me to open my home to even more people for approximately the same expenditure.



D. It is nice if you can do a few special things ahead of time that will make the meal special without costing extra:

1) For instance, if you purchase a butter mold (pineapples; flowers, whatever you like), it is a one-time purchase of probably \$5 or so (see buying guide). You can use them for years if you take care of them. Having your butter in molded shapes really adds elegance to an otherwise common meal. An added benefit is that you can make them ahead of time and store them in the freezer in a plastic container—just reach in and take out what you need for your company.

2) How about garnishes on top of that bowl of soup, or a “square egg” (\$4 mold—see buying guide) on top of individual tossed salads or on a relish tray? Grapefruit season? Great—a half grapefruit, with or without a cherry in the middle, makes a lovely appetizer at each place. An orange can be handled the same way, and the fragrance is enhancing to your dining area. Since I have used the word *fragrance*, let me add a personal observation (in fact, it is more of a hobbyhorse of mine) about fragrances and entertaining: Please refrain from burning potpourri or using fragranced sprays when you are having guests. Many people are very sensitive to chemical fragrances to the point of an unbearable headache or something even



worse. The spray air-fresheners settle on the food, and some people can actually taste the “pine scent” or the “floral arrangement scent” in the food. Keep in mind that the fragrance of the air-freshener mixes with everyone’s perfumes and with the smell of the food, and it no longer smells like it did in the store. Refrain also from a last-minute dousing with your favorite perfume. *Remember the proper rule of thumb for fragrances—if you can smell your own perfume, you have used too much.* Your perfume, when mixed with the perfume on several other women and the after-shave lotion on their husbands can, and does, make many people ill. So whether you are a guest or a hostess, go lightly with chemical fragrances.



- 3) How about those cloth napkins you got for a wedding gift but hardly ever use? Why not fold them in a fancy way? In fact, you can fold some paper towels and napkins following directions for cloth napkins (see buying guide and samples provided at end of this section). Napkin folding is a great conversation starter, so don’t think it is purely for appearance. Some guests will want to know how to fold the napkin like you did, and they won’t leave until you show them. Others might have some folds to share too. If you don’t have cloth napkins, watch for sales. Many of my napkins were on sale for 25 cents each, and they do just fine. I have also made some to complement seasonal entertaining. If you make them, be sure to make them square so you can fold them nicely. Also, make more than you need. If one is damaged, you’ll have a replacement. Sew a few extras for the bread basket or for under a centerpiece.
- 4) What should we have for dessert? What about having easy, quick cupcakes for dessert? Why not personalize them by writing names on them and using them as place cards? Again, your imagination will take over once you let

it. Little things make a guest think “She really took time to think about me and prepare for me.”

- 5) If your imagination will allow, think ahead of time about a theme for your dinner or party. Is Valentine’s Day the next holiday? Is one of your guests having a birthday soon? You can decorate your table simply and inexpensively with whatever will help your theme. In the fall, rinse off and iron some colored leaves, and put them around a candle or hurricane centerpiece. A birthday? Let a birthday cake be both the centerpiece and the dessert. A plain white tablecloth in the springtime can be decorated with inexpensive pastel ribbons running lengthwise or across the table—or both ways if you like the effect. Again, let your sanctified imagination roam.



- E. Would you like to have guests in for an evening of table games, but the expense of a snack is too much on this week’s budget? How about popcorn and iced tea? How about pudding made from scratch or from that box you’ve had in the cupboard for six weeks and not used? What about having several couples over and having one bring pretzels and one bring cupcakes to go along with your popcorn and iced tea? Also, a covered dish supper among several couples can be a lot of fun! If your guests are close friends, they will feel even more at home if you let them bring something, so don’t feel like it’s imposing. The goal is fellowship, and sharing in the preparation costs is a blessing, not a curse. If you know someone is in dire straits and should not be asked to bring something, ask them to bring ice, or perhaps iced tea. It’s the act, not the cost, of bringing something that helps one to feel like they are part of the occasion. Another possibility would be to tell them that you have everything you need, but you could use help in preparation of something. Could she prepare the cake mix you have and take that “burden” off

your schedule? Or maybe she could come earlier than the others and help with table setting, etc. Don't let her think that her "contribution" is any less important than anyone else's—that's hospitality—making her comfortable.

- F. Have you ever decided that you'd like to have someone over after church, but you find that you really better not ask because you don't have a light Sunday night meal for them? How about two cans of soup from your pantry? You could serve the soup with grilled cheese sandwiches or just browned-in-the-oven garlic bread. Always have a pound cake or some easily-thawed dessert reserved in your freezer for an impromptu dessert.
- G. Now, after all this discussion of food, you need to keep in mind that *food* is not required if you are entertaining during a time that is not a normal mealtime. You can have folks over for a meal, for only dessert, or for an evening of getting to know each other over a cup of tea/coffee. Most Christian people are looking for good fellowship, not a splashy, show-offish meal served by a hostess with polished manners.

TIMING YOUR PREPARATIONS

Many publications advocate a detailed time schedule for entertaining, starting with about two weeks before the occasion and continuing right up through the occasion. This is great, but I found that it just gave me longer to have the jitters. Sure, buy what you can ahead of time—it will help the weekly budget when you buy on sale and store or freeze where possible; but don't make such a tight schedule for yourself that you are upset off and on for two weeks ahead of time because something is out of whack in your precious schedule.





Basically, about two to three weeks ahead of time:

1. Choose the exact date and time you will entertain. Decide on who your guests will be so you can invite them in advance of any other engagements that may come up. Be sure that you have someplace to seat the number of people you are inviting, and it is a good idea to take into consideration the number of children as compared to the number of adults.



2. Determine what your menu will be. For the two weeks before your dinner or party, watch the sales. When there is a good sale on something you can use for sure, go buy it and cross it off your list. Keep an eye on your list and on the sales. When you see something on sale that would do fine as a substitute for something on your list, change your list! (Keep in mind that you want your food to be attractive, not just filling. If you have skinless chicken breasts, white potatoes, and turnips, your plate is going to be colorless, so do consider this too.)

3. Also, up to two weeks (or more) ahead of time, you can decide on your centerpiece, if any, or any decorations you will need (for a shower, etc.). If it is something you are making but not something that will get old, go ahead and make it and set it on the table. You'll notice a small change or two you'll want to make over the next few days, and there is plenty of time without hassle.

4. Ask your friend(s) now for any help you need or for anything you need to borrow. At this time, if you are sure of who is coming, you can even make place cards if you want. If you aren't using place cards, take your menu, turn it over, and on the back sketch your table and where you will have each person sit. Please take into consideration any guests who are left-handed, so they are not knocking elbows with a right-handed person. Consider also someone who might be unusually shy or who tends to be left out at times. Try to draw them in as much as possible when planning the seating arrangement.

5. Order anything you may not be able to do yourself, like a cake for a shower or birthday party.



About a week ahead of time:

1. Check any linens you will be using. Wash, find stains, re-wash to remove stains (right?), and iron them. If you are doing folded napkins, many of the folds can be done ahead of time. Store napkins in a plastic bag if you're doing it very far ahead.

2. Polish any silver you may be using, but the use of silver is not required—I am mentioning it only because a few fortunate persons do have silver instead of stainless steel! Don't feel like guests will expect silver and starched linens.



Two days ahead of time:

1. Take a morning and do your normal cleaning routine. Look around the rooms, especially in the corners, and find cobwebs, etc., that should be removed. Look under furniture for toys or whatever you might find visible and remove them. Other than that, your normal cleaning is fine. Your guests won't notice anyway—that's not what they're there for.

2. You should at this time make any extra ice you'll be needing and store it in plastic bags in the freezer.



The day before your entertaining:

1. Go to the store and buy any perishable foods. While at the store, go over your list one more time, being sure you aren't overlooking anything. If you forgot to make ice, you'd better buy it now.

2. If you are making a perishable centerpiece, do it today. Stop by your friend's house to pick up anything you may be borrowing. If it is a really big occasion, you may borrow from more than one person; if you do, please mark them or make a list so you can return them quickly and correctly.

3. It is a nice idea to make phone/e-mail/text contact with your guests tonight just to remind them that you are looking forward to seeing them tomorrow night at whatever time. This can really prevent some embarrassing problems.



One night at church, my husband casually invited a young husband to bring his family to dinner on such and such a night. We were ready and waiting, but no doorbell. I finally called after they were a half hour late, and they were shocked—they thought my husband was just kidding! As I remember, we kept the food warm until they arrived, even though some things dried out a little. I don't know if they had eaten before they came or not—but she'll see herself when she reads this.

Finally for the day before:

1. Do your laundry, and make sure you and your whole family have something appropriate and clean to wear.

2. Everything is done now, except the meal, and hopefully you were able to do some of that yesterday (maybe a frozen dessert?).

3. This would be a great time to make the lasagna you're going to serve so it will need only to be baked tomorrow. You'll have the mess all cleaned up! You can even bake it today if you want (instead of having the house all hot tomorrow night), and just warm it in the microwave if you're not using the microwave for something else on your menu. Remember, if you can't do much of the work ahead of time, you aren't planning your menu right. Almost every cookbook has recipes that you can make ahead. In the age of the microwave, there's not much you can't you heat up nicely if you cover it to keep it from drying out.

4. Check the restroom that will be used by guests. If it is the only restroom in the house, then wait until tomorrow to do this. If it is the guest bathroom, do the following and put it off limits to family for the next 24 hours. Freshen the bathroom by washing the entire toilet, inside and out. In addition to your normal cleaning routine, put out a fresh roll of toilet tissue—put the partial roll which you removed in the closet to use later. Put out a decent bar of soap or refill the soap dispenser if you use liquid soap. Be sure there is a guest towel or two available. Empty the trash can and wash it if necessary. *Suggestion: Keep a soap dish filled with a special bar of soap and put it out just for guests. When the guests leave, put it away, and don't get it out until you are expecting guests again. Have special guest towels that you launder right after company leaves and don't use for anything else. They'll serve you well for many years if you take care of them.* Your restroom is a reflection of your attention to cleanliness.



The day of your entertaining:

1. Now, first thing in the morning, no, second thing—have your devotions first. When the Lord has put your heart to rest, tackle the day of entertaining. Get a piece of paper, and list on it everything you are going to do or cook and when you should do it. ***Your paper might look something like this; but experiment to see how long it takes you to do things, then just back up that number of minutes from when you need it to go on the table or to the warming tray.***

Dinner is at 6:00 sharp!

Menu: Lasagna, corn & green beans mixed,
tossed salad, herbed rolls,
frozen dessert

Noon:

1. Set the table, all but glasses. Leave them in the kitchen to be iced and filled before placing them on the table.

2. If you are having a sit-down meal, please find a game table, a desk, anything at all, put a cover over it if necessary, and use it as a hostess table. Serving dishes can be put on it between “passings,” and pitchers of beverage can also be at hand.

1:00-4:30

1. Make any iced tea, juice, etc. that needs to be prepared.
2. Wash, dry, and put away any dishes that are soiled.
3. Take a nap in here somewhere—hopefully when the kids do. If they don’t usually take naps, today they must at least stay quietly in bed for an hour. It’ll never hurt them, and it will help you.

4. If you are having unsaved company, or people you don’t know well or at all, use a few minutes now to pray for them.



4:30

1. Put the lasagna (made yesterday) in the oven at 350° for one hour.

It will be done a half hour ahead of time, but that’s great—you’ll have time to leave it in longer if needed, and when covered with foil, it will keep a long time on the warming tray.

2. Fold any napkins you need to fold and put them in place on the table.

3. If you are serving a salad, mix it now, cover it tightly, and refrigerate it. Put salad dishes nearby so you can quickly fill them and put them on the table. If you have room in your refrigerator, you can go ahead and fill and cover individual dishes, ready to go on the table. Any relish dishes, jelly/jam bowls, etc. can be prepared and stored the same way.

4. Take the garbage and trash out.

5:30 is not too early to put out the salad dishes, unless it is extremely warm and stuffy in the eating area.

5:30 Put the frozen (canned?) vegetables in their pan(s) and turn them on to cook. *If you can do them in the microwave, so much the better, but either way practice ahead of time to see how long it will take. If it takes 15 minutes, start to finish, write:*

5:45

1. Turn on heat under vegetables.

2. Put ice in glasses. If you are having only one beverage (water?) during the meal, go ahead and put it in the glasses too, and put them on the table. If you are having more than one beverage, you will need to wait until guests arrive and ask them which beverage they prefer. Serving more than one beverage takes extra time, so allow for this.

5:55 (or later if things aren't moving as fast as expected) Put the bowl or basket of rolls in microwave to heat through. If you need to warm rolls in a conventional oven, put the rolls in a brown paper bag, close top of the bag, run water over both sides of bag, and put it in the oven. When the bag dries out, the rolls are warm.

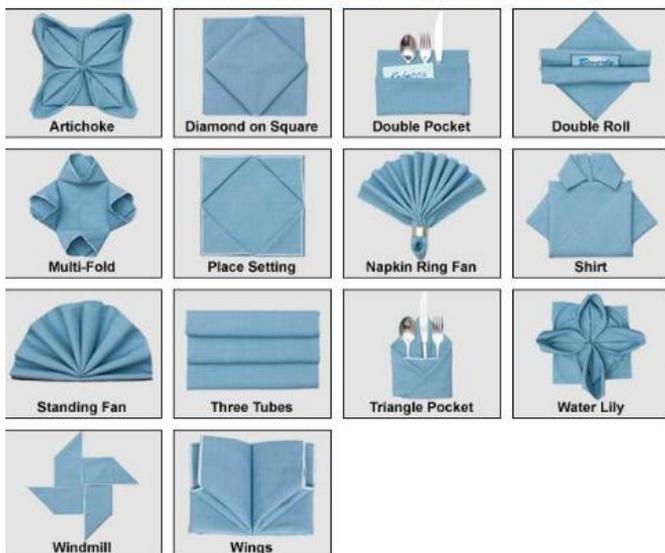
5:59999 Take half a second and wipe your forehead, straighten your dress, put on a lovely smile, and invite your guests to come in and sit down or to partake of the buffet and return to their seats. If you are having a buffet meal where everyone will not be seated at the table, explain to them what direction to walk as they pick up their food, etc. Be sure you have arranged your buffet, counter, or table properly. Dishes, etc., first, then the food. It's accepted these days to arrange the rest of the food in just about any attractive order you desire. Just be sure you don't have the gravy before the mashed potatoes! Have the beverages last or, after guests are seated with the food, go around and "take orders" for the beverages.

During the meal, be sure to offer refills to everyone, and keep an eye on glasses becoming less than half full. Have a pitcher of each beverage nearby so you can serve them.

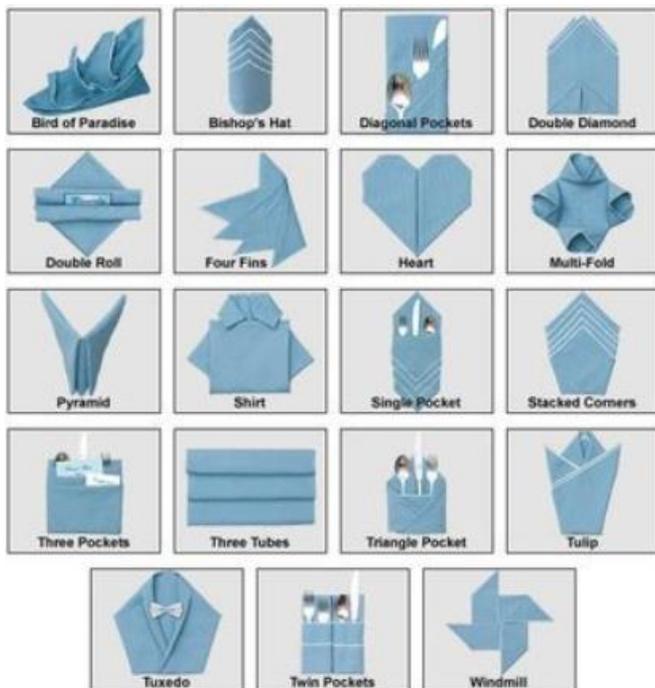
NAPKIN FOLDING IDEAS, GARNISHING IDEAS, & READING RESOURCES

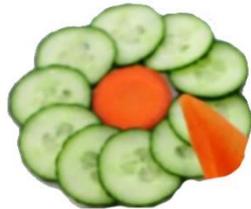
Napkin folding and garnishing instructions abound online. Pictured on the next page are just a sampling of some of the things you can do that look nice, but they are also quite simple.

Grog's Index of Flat Start Napkin Folding



www.animatednapkins.com







Square Eggs, butter molds, and other novelties

You can find a variety of these items online.

READING RESOURCES

HOSPITALITY:

Inrig, Gary, *Quality Friendship*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1981.

Uses the friendship of David and Jonathan to teach principles of developing the right kind of friendships and reaching out to others.

Lefever, Marlene D., *Creative Hospitality*, Bethany House Publishers; Minneapolis, MN.

Pittman, Grace, *Hospitality with Confidence*, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, MN, 1986.

Schaeffer, Edith, *The Hidden Art of Homemaking*, Tyndale, Wheaton, IL, 1971. The art of hospitality.

Wilson, Mimi and Mary Beth Lagerborg, *Table Talk*, Focus on the Family Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO, 1994.

Gives very practical help in making family mealtime a wonderful sharing time and includes great suggestions for entertaining as well.

HOME MANAGEMENT:

Culp, Stephanie, *How to Conquer Clutter*, Writer's Digest Books, 1990.

Lakein, Alan, *How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life*.
Organization, planning, use of time.

Schofield, Denice, *Confessions of an Organized Housewife*, Writer's Digest, Cincinnati, 1984.

Schofield, Denice, *Confessions of a Happily Organized Family*,
Writer's Digest, Cincinnati, 1984.

Weber, Mimi, and Mary Beth Lagerboy, *Once-A-Month Cooking*,
Focus on the Family Publications.

GENERAL:

Adams, Jay, *Christian Living in the Home*, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, NJ, 1972 (available through BJU Press).

Jones, Beneth and Bobbie Yearick, *With Heart and Hand*, Bob Jones University Press, Greenville, SC, 1992.

Developing Diverse Friendships Workshop

Led by Ashley Rush

Scriptural Foundation for Diverse Friendships

- 1) We were created for community (Genesis 1:26, 2:18)

- 2) Eternal life begins with a relationship (John 15:13, John 17:3, 1 John 5:20)

“When all our deepest needs are met in Jesus, we no longer enter friendship starving for affection. Rather, we come to friendship with a spring of water overflowing from our hearts.” (Friendish, Kelly Needham)

- 3) God uses people as a primary means of encouragement and growth (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10, Romans 15:24, 32, 2 Corinthians 7:5-6, 8:16, Hebrews 3:12-14, 10:25, 1 Thessalonians 1:2)

“We should always regard communion with other believers as an eminent means of grace. It is a refreshing break in our journey along the narrow way to exchange experience with our fellow travelers. It helps us and it helps them, and so is a mutual gain. It is the nearest approach that we can make on earth to the joy of heaven.” (J.C. Ryle on Luke 1:39-45)

- 4) Christ prays for our unity—assuming the reality of a diverse community (John 17:20-26, Romans 15:5-7, Ephesians 4:1-3)

- 5) Scripture exhorts us to have sharpening, mentoring friendships (Proverbs 17:17, Philippians 4:9, 2 Timothy 2:2, Titus 2:3-4)

- 6) The Gospel and Christ’s example call us to think beyond “natural” connections (Luke 19:1-10, Mark 12:43-44, Mark 10:13-16, Romans 12:3-21, 14: 1, 10, 19, 1 Corinthians 12:4-31, Ephesians 4:1-6)

“Building friendships with people who are like us is easy because it doesn’t cost us much to love them. But while it is not wrong to have compatible friends, it is not an indicator of anything special. Rather, it is the people with whom our personalities and preferences clash the most that force us to exhibit the truest form of love—a sacrificial love. To befriend people who aren’t like us requires that we set aside our own desires and tendencies to extend friendship to them. This is what Jesus calls us to: extending friendship not just to people we click with but to those who rub us the wrong way.”
(Friendish, Kelly Needham)

Examples of Diverse Friendships in the Bible

- 1) David & Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-4, 20:14-16, 41, 23:15-18)
- 2) Naomi & Ruth (Ruth 1:8-18, 2:2, 4:15)
- 3) Elisabeth & Mary (Luke 1:39-45, 56)
- 4) Paul & Barnabas (Acts 9:26-27, 13:2-5, 7, 13)
- 5) Paul & Silas (Acts 16:16-34, 1 Peter 5:12)
- 6) Paul & Timothy (1 Timothy 1:2, 4:12, 2 Timothy 1:4-7, 4:13)
- 7) Paul & Titus (2 Corinthians 7:6-7, 8:16, 23, Titus 1:4)

Common aspects of these diverse Biblical friendships:

- 1) Scriptural Encouragement
(Ruth 1:16, 1 Samuel 23:16, Luke 1:45, Acts 16:25, 1 Timothy 4:12-16)

Barrier: lack of intentionality, courage, or patience

“[Biblical encouragement] is not hollow platitudes telling someone how great they are. Encouragement is giving courage and strength to a weary heart by reminding them of what is true and calling them to whatever obedience lies ahead.” (Friendish, Kelly Needham)

2) Shared emotion

(1 Samuel 20:41, Ruth 1:9, 14, John 16:22, Romans 12:15, 15:32, 2 Corinthians 8:2, 2 Timothy 1:4)

Barrier: Barrier: unwillingness to be transparent and vulnerable

*“If we are to grow in faith, fight unbelief, and cultivate godly emotions associated with our faith, then we need each other. Although it is important to be alone with God, it is also vitally important to pursue honest, authentic Christian relationships, which can mutually build faith. If we are alone, we are in danger of being slowly dragged down and eventually away with ungodly feelings and unbelieving thoughts. It is in the context of Christian community that we can be encouraged and exhorted and have our faith and emotions properly stirred afresh and strengthened.” (Brian Borgman, *Feelings and Faith*)*

3) Meeting practical needs

(Ruth 2:2, 1 Samuel 18:4, Proverbs 11:25, Romans 12:13, 2 Timothy 4:13, Hebrews 6:10)

Barrier: not knowing about needs, personal limitations

- 4) Unifying aspect: faith in God
(Ruth 1:16, 1 Samuel 18:1, Luke 1:42-43, 2 Corinthians 8:16,
Galatians 3:26-28, Philippians 2:1-5, 1 Timothy 1:2)

Barrier: tendency to focus on the differences

“Our best friends are those whose company most makes us afraid to sin. These friends are rare and to be valued like solid gold.” Bonar spoke of M’Cheyne as a “saintly friend whose presence made God more real and therefore sin more foul.” (Thought of God, Maurice Roberts)

- 5) Humility
(1 Samuel 18:4, Luke 1:43, Acts 13:2, 7, 13, Philippians 2:3-5,
Colossians 3:12-13)

Barrier: envy, pride

“While we cannot but own that we are more favored by God than we deserve, let us by no means envy that others are more highly favored than we are.” (Matthew Henry)



Practical Applications

*I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, **bearing** with one another in love, **eager** to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*
Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESV)

“Will you energetically extend yourself for the rest of us?”
(Pastor Minnick, 1-1-2023)

Humble Attitudes:

- Seek to have Biblical perspective on marriage and singleness as opposed to world’s romantic view.
- Realize that marriage and singleness are not social distinctions but temporary callings from God.
- Value the younger and older for their unique contributions to the church.
- Value others regardless of background or personality.
- Don’t assume you know what anyone is thinking.
- Be willing to step out of your comfort zone.

Eager Actions:

- Learn names.
- Include everyone.
- Teach your daughters that marriage is not the ultimate goal in life.
- Recognize normalcy without validating sinful feelings.
- Participate in mentoring ministry at church.
- Be involved in other ministries at church: women’s Bible study, nursery, NBS, Frontline, children’s church, hosting teen fellowship, showers, weddings, etc.

- Save a seat for those that don't have a spouse or sit in a different section.
- Visit the people that can't come to church (shut-ins, caretakers, etc.).
- Bring leftovers or goodies to the college students or invite them to your home.
- Take a meal or send a gift card. (Single ladies and working wives appreciate this too!)
- Offer to provide meals or rides for those with long-term illness.
- Share your garden harvest or apple picking with those who can't participate in something like that.
- Skip your coffee and send a Starbucks gift card.
- Invite all ages and stages of life into your home.
- Minister to families going out of town (for ministry, funerals, etc.). Pack snack bag, watch kids so they can pack, make a meal, etc.
- Utilize services like Door Dash, Walmart+ or Amazon Prime.
- Just show up at a house or work with flowers, coffee, chocolate, jellybeans, etc.
- Offer to babysit so a mom can have extra devotional time or a couple can go on a date.
- Follow up on prayer requests.
- Check in on family members of those on the prayer sheet (spouses, children, caretakers, etc.).
- Remember important dates & set alarms for specific prayer requests.
- Send notes and text messages.
- Pray for opportunities.

“When God saved us, He made us members of His household, and He gave us as gifts to one another. Each brother and sister is a portion of my gospel inheritance from God, and I am a portion of their inheritance as well. We are significant players in each other’s gospel narrative, and it is in relationship with one another that we experience the fullness of God in Christ. Hence, the more I comprehend the full scope of the gospel, the more I value the church for which Christ died, the more I value the role that I play in the lives of my fellow-Christians, and the more I appreciate the role that they must be allowed to play in mine.” (Milton Vincent, Gospel Primer)

Resources:

Friendish Kelly Needham

“Model, Motivate, Mentor”sermon by Matt Williams

Relationships: A Mess Worth MakingTimothy Lane & Paul David Tripp

“Sisters in Christ” Cindy Melius, August 30, 2009 Sunday School

“The Power of a Biblical Mentor”sermon by Mike Harding

The Six Conversations: Pathways to Connecting in an Age of Isolation and Incivility.....Heather Holleman

www.desiringgod.org/articles/friends-your-age-are-not-enough

www.desiringgod.org/messages/strengthen-each-others-hands-in-god

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