

## **Informational Handout**

### **WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS**

Thank you for expressing interest in hosting a Wednesday Night Dinner. Hosting a dinner is a fun and wonderful way to bring old and new friends together. Your efforts will be rewarded in love and laughter.

Dinner benefits are two-fold:

- They provide opportunities for hospitality and fellowship; and,
- They provide the opportunity to earn donations for the ministry of your choice. A few examples of ministries that have been assisted by past Wednesday Night Dinners are Food Share, Chancel Choir, Helena Indian Alliance, Intermountain Children's Home, and many, many more.

To host, you will need a group of at least 8-10 people to help with the dinner. The more assistants you have the simpler the setup, the quicker clean up and the easier it is to serve and greet your guests.

In a nut shell...responsibilities of the Dinner Host group include:

- Planning the menu
- Preparing the dinner
- Greeting guests and accepting donations
- Setup
- Cleanup

Based on feedback from past Wednesday Night Dinners, we offer the following tips to make your own experience a success:

- **Dinner Coordinator:** Call St. Paul's office (442-5643) on the Monday prior to your planned Wednesday Night Dinner to get an approximate 'head count' for the dinner. Plan to add about **30 ??** more to the total as many individuals forget to sign up or may call the office after Sunday to reserve a seat.
- **Cooks:** Menu ideas can be provided on request; we can verify what has previously been served. Please provide dressings for salads and butter for rolls/bread if served. Your team can do some if not all the cooking at home and bring hot dishes to church to be kept warm in the oven. Check the church fridge for items you might be able to use such as salad dressings. Any unmarked items can be used.

We have found that most meals provide sufficient variety to please most adults and children. Therefore, we will try offering "one size fits all" dinners with both vegetarian and non-vegetarian choices. Although it is not required that you meet everyone's dietary needs, many meals and recipes can be modified to omit animal products. For example, you can eliminate meat in a portion of pasta sauces or offer many options for lettuce and or vegetable salad.

- **Table setters:** Silverware, napkins, salt, pepper, two water carafes with ice and glasses for each table. If butter is served it can go on the table or on the serving areas. Or you can place these items at the beginning of your serving line.
- **Beverages:** NEW THIS YEAR! You need to provide you own coffee. Coffee and heated tea water should be prepared ahead of time. Make sure the coffeepots are empty before you brew new coffee to prevent an overflow. A gallon of milk for the children could be placed at the dessert counter with extra glasses. Juices or other sweetened beverages should not be provided, it is too much sugar for the children and most adults prefer water, tea or coffee. Unsweetened ice tea could be available during warmer months.
- **Greeter/cashier:** You will need a greeter at both doors, it seems to increase donations. We do not have a set fee at this time for meals. If anyone asks, a suggested donation of \$4.00-\$5.00 per adult and \$2.00-\$3.00 for young children seems reasonable. Some people do not pay, we assume their budget is tight and are thankful our Wednesday night dinners are available to them. Funds taken in for the dinner can be redistributed to your volunteers for the cost of food items (please provide receipts) or the full amount can be donated to the host groups ministry of choice.
- **Dishwashers/kitchen cleaners:** Participants are encouraged to remove and scrape their dishes; however there are always items that need to be cleared. Be sure to turn dishwasher off.
- **Laundry:** PLEASE take the linens you use home, wash them and return them to the church kitchen by Sunday at the latest.
- **Table decorations:** Although not necessary or expected, decorations are a nice touch if you have the opportunity to add them.
- **Promotion:** You are encouraged to promote the ministry that you are supporting in way(s) you feel comfortable, such as decorations, pamphlets, or presentations).
- **Microphone:** Fellowship Hall is not an acoustically friendly space. A microphone is available in the Fellowship Hall for any announcements. PLEASE let Lynn Van Nice know ahead of time if you plan on using it.

#### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A buffet line through the "West" doorway has been a successful way to alleviate congestion in the Fellowship Hall.
- Please do not leave leftovers in the fridge, extra food can be donated to God's Love or shared with your group or given to those at the dinner to take home. However, unopened items and or opened jars of condiments, salad dressings etc. can be left for future meals. Please mark the date they were opened for future reference.

- We have four large roasting pans available for use and they are in the storage area. They must be well greased to prevent problems in cleaning them. We cannot plug multiple items into the same outlet/circuit. The outlets are marked, if a roaster is plugged into number 8 for example, do not plug anything else into a different number 8 which could be on the opposite side of the kitchen, or a fuse will blow.
- Consider using paper products if you would like to eliminate running the dishwasher and save time during clean up.
- Garbage cans should be emptied and clean liners replaced. The dumpsters are located behind Susanna's Place.
- Please wipe up all spills including, stovetop and oven, counters and backsplashes, refrigerators, cabinet doors and floors.
- Wipe off table cloths and let them air dry. Check chairs for spills and wipe down high chairs. Return chairs and tables to their original positions and place all additional tables and chairs used in the storage area.
- Empty drain catchers and clean sinks. Do not pour grease down the sinks.
- Sweep Fellowship Hall and kitchen.

If you have any additional questions please feel free to contact Lynn Van Nice at 442-5643.

Again, thank you for hosting a Wednesday Night Dinner!