

Ecumenical Eats: Food, Fellowship & Fun



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As part of the Ecumenical Zoom Worship service on Labor Day Weekend (September 6, 2020 @ 10am) we put together an Ecumenical Church Potluck Cookbook. Enjoy! Share! Eat!

APPETIZERS & MAINS



Creole Beef Casserole

Ann Simmons, Old Scotch Church

Serves 4, usually double for potlucks

- 1.5 lbs ground chuck
- 1/3 c chopped onion
- 1/2 c chopped celery
- 1 small can sliced mushrooms
- 3/8 c UNCOOKED Minute Rice
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can tomato soup
- 2-3 drops red Tabasco
- 2 strips bacon, cut in half

Instructions:

Brown and drain meat. Add other ingredients (including liquid from canned mushrooms and 1/2 can of water to rinse soup can). Pour into 2 quart round Pyrex casserole. Lay bacon on top. Bake uncovered at 350F for 50 minutes.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

It was the one my mom always took to potlucks or took to grieving families. We often had it for dinner also, and when we did, my mom called it "The Funeral Casserole".



BBQ Beef Sandwiches

Rhonda Eppelsheimer, Community of Christ Church

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 pound lean ground beef (90% lean)
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard
- 1 tablespoon vinegar

Salt and pepper to taste
Hamburger buns

Instructions:

In a skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Cook the beef, onion and green pepper over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add all remaining ingredients except buns. Simmer, uncovered, 15 minutes. Serve on buns.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

I was first introduced to this delicious recipe when our first congregation in Jamestown, ND, came to help us move into our home. Members came from far and wide, unpacked the moving truck, helped set up the furniture, and even unpacked and set up our kitchen. I knew this was a special and caring place. The congregation brought crock pots for lunch, BBQ Beef Sandwiches, a Midwest staple.



Crabmeat n' Shell Soup

Suze Engbretson, Community of ChristChurch

¼ cup chopped onion
¼ cup chopped green pepper
¼ cup diced celery
2 Tablespoons butter
2 – 13 ¾ oz cans (3 ½ cups) chicken broth
¼ cup small shell pasta (conchigliette is best)
1 – 7 ½ oz can (1 cup) diced tomatoes
Salt and pepper to taste
Finely chopped parsley as desired

Instructions:

In a large saucepan cook the onion, green pepper, and celery until tender, but not brown. Add all but crab. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer until pasta is tender. Do not overcook the pasta. Add crab and cook five minutes longer. Pasta requires about 30 minutes.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This is what my whole family has on Christmas Eve. It has been a family tradition for 20+ years. Served with some crusty bread and a nice salad it is delicious and easy! I usually double the recipe so that we have yummy leftovers.



White Bean Salsa (Vegetarian)

David Eppelsheimer, Community of Christ Church

2 cans northern white beans
one container of grape tomatoes
Red Onion
Yellow bell pepper
Balsamic vinegar
Dry Italian seasoning
Fresh basil
Garlic
Fresh shredded parmesan cheese (leave out if you want this to be vegan)
Salt
Pepper

Instructions:

Drain and rinse the white beans in cold water
Dice the grape tomatoes (1/2 cup)
Dice the yellow pepper (1/2 cup)
Dice the red onion (1/4 cup)
Finely chop one clove of garlic
Chop fresh basil (several leaves)

Add just enough olive oil to coat the beans
Mix all the chopped ingredients together with the beans
Add Italian seasoning, balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper to taste
Sprinkle a generous portion of parmesan over the top

Enjoy with chips or crackers!

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This was served often at church council potlucks in Grand Forks, North Dakota.



Orzo Salad (Vegetarian)

Jane Jackson, Community of Christ Church

1 Box Orzo
Lg Jar of green olives (buying them sliced saves time)
2 cans black olives (or 4-6 of smaller cans of sliced)
1/8 cup olive oil
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
Italian seasoning
Pepper

Instructions:

Cook orzo per box; mix vinegar, green olive juice, and seasoning to taste; crush or slice olives to 'bits'; mix all ingredients together and refrigerate overnight (if you're that well prepared...or simply mix frequently). Enjoy!

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This is a classic potluck dish for us, inspired by my recipe rule breaker mother-in-law. Its ingredients lend itself to long life at a warm potluck.



Guacamole (Vegan)

David Eppelsheimer, Community of ChristChurch

3 ripe avocados

Lime (1/2 to 1)

Roma tomatoes

Red onion

salt (optional)

Dice tomatoes - about 1/2 cup

Rough chop red onion - about 1/4 cup

Instructions:

Slice the avocados in half, remove the pits (save one)

Slice the avocados while still in the peel and then scoop out into a bowl

Mash the avocado pieces into a chunky paste

Squeeze the juice of the lime into the avocados

Fold in the onion and tomato

Salt to taste

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

Years ago, when I was accompanying a high school youth mission trip to Chicago, we helped out at a daycare facility for low income families. The teachers helped the children make their own snack... guacamole. It was so fun to watch the little ones prepare their own food and the result, even though so simple, was the best guacamole I had ever tasted. It is one of my favorites to share at potlucks, for guests, and for any time, really.

If you are not planning to eat the guacamole immediately, take the saved pit and place it in the guacamole to prevent browning.



Vegetables Arrabiata over Polenta (Vegetarian, Vegan, Gluten-free)

Steve DeSanctis, All Saints Episcopal Church, Hillsboro

(Serves at least 8)

Make it vegetarian by topping with 2 cups of shredded cheese - preferably a mix of Italian-style cheeses.

Leftover vegetable mixture is delicious served with pasta, potatoes or grains, and also mashed and made into a dip or sandwich spread.

POLENTA

2 cups cornmeal

8 cups liquid (water, vegetable broth or a combination)

1/4 cup extra-virgin oil

2 tsp. table salt (or 1 tsp. kosher salt)

VEGETABLE MIXTURE

1 large eggplant, diced

2 medium zucchini (or yellow squash or a combination), diced

8 oz. mushrooms, sliced

2 medium onions, diced

2 bell peppers (any color)

6 cloves garlic, peeled and sliced

1 6-oz. can whole, small pitted black olives (drain and reserve liquid)

2 28-oz. cans crushed tomatoes

1 6-oz. can tomato paste

1/2 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

1 T. paprika (not smoked)

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1 t. cracked black pepper

1 T. salt-free seasoning

Salt to taste

Instructions:

Make the polenta: In a Dutch oven (coated with non-stick spray) over high heat, bring liquid, salt and oil to a boil. Add cornmeal slowly, whisking until combined and stirring for 1 minute. Reduce heat to low and simmer, whisking regularly, until the polenta thickens, about 4-5 minutes. Cover and cook for 25 minutes, stirring frequently (use a spoon if too thick for the whisk) until thick. Remove from heat and set aside. Leave polenta in the Dutch oven.

Make the vegetables: In a large pot, heat 2 T. oil over medium-high heat; add onions and peppers and sauté until softened, about 4-5 minutes. Add eggplant,

zucchini, mushrooms and olives; stir to combine. Cook for an additional 4-5 minutes until vegetables are tender, but retain most of their shape. Remove to a large bowl and set aside. Wipe out pot and return to the stove.

Over medium heat, add remaining 2 T. of oil until shimmering. Add sliced garlic and sauté for 1 minute, taking care not to burn it. Add paprika, black pepper and salt-free seasoning and sauté for an additional 30 seconds. Add tomato paste, stir into seasonings, and cook for 90 seconds. Add reserved olive liquid, stir, and heat for an additional 60 seconds, stirring up any brown bits accumulated in the pot.

Add crushed tomatoes; simmer to a low boil, about 5-7 minutes. Add sautéed vegetables, stir to combine, and simmer on low heat for 20 minutes. Taste for seasonings, and add salt and additional seasonings to taste. Remove from heat and set aside.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Top polenta with vegetable mixture; bake for 20 minutes, or until heated through. If you're topping with cheese, do so after 10 minutes.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

Created at the request of a catering client who wanted a vegan, gluten-free dish to serve at a party, this is a hearty, savory (and a little spicy) casserole-type offering that appeals to everyone. Whenever I served it at home or for work, it was gobbled up faster than any other dish!



Chickpea Avocado Salad (Vegan, Gluten-free)

Tracy Litterer, Community of Christ Church

One 15.5 ounce can chickpeas, rinsed
½ teaspoon sea salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
⅛ teaspoon cayenne
1 clove large garlic, smashed and chopped into a paste
½ cup diced celery
1 green onion stalk, chopped
2 tablespoon dill pickles, diced
3 tablespoons Castelvetrano olives, diced
¼ cup roasted salted Marcona almonds, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon minced shallot

¼ cup roughly chopped parsley, fresh not dried
¼ cup roughly chopped dill, fresh not dried
2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
2 teaspoons whole grain mustard
¼ cup vegan mayo
1 medium avocado, ripe and cut into chunks

Instructions:

Open, drain and rinse canned chickpeas. Add to a medium-size mixing bowl. Then add salt, black pepper, nutritional yeast and cayenne. Using a fork, mash half of the chickpeas, leaving the other half whole.

Smash the garlic with the side of your kitchen knife. Sprinkle on some salt and continue to smash and chop until you are left with a paste. Transfer to bowl of chickpeas.

To the same bowl, add celery, green onions, pickles, olives, almonds, shallot, parsley, dill, red wine vinegar, mustard and vegan mayo. Combine and mix well.

Lastly, gently fold in the diced avocado. Give it a taste and season with salt and pepper to your liking. Serve in lettuce cups for a refreshing salad, as a sandwich filling or in a wrap, or as a crostini for a party (see below).

Notes: Try serving this salad as an hors d'oeuvres or appetizer for a party! Simply slice a good baguette into thin rounds (think 1 or 2 bites). Toast them just enough so that they are crisp but still chewy. Add on a small mound of the salad, a piece of sliced avocado, a few paper thin slices of tomatoes (Roma tomatoes work perfectly here!) and top with sea salt, pepper and fresh dill!

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

It's delicious! Lot's of people who have tried it have asked for the recipe - always a good sign of a dish to share! It's good in a sandwich, wrap or over lettuce.



Deviled Eggs (Vegetarian)

Sherrie Wade, Community of Christ Church

6 hard-cooked eggs
1/4 c. mayonnaise
1 t. mustard
1 tbl. chopped sweet or dill pickle and some pickle juice
salt, pepper
paprika

Instructions:

Gently slice peeled eggs in half lengthwise. Remove yolks to a medium bowl and place egg whites on a serving dish. Mash the yolks with a fork. Add mayonnaise, mustard, pickle, pickle juice, salt and pepper. Mix well. If dry, add more mayonnaise or pickle juice. Continue to add ingredients until the flavor is to your taste. Evenly scoop teaspoons of yolk mixture into the egg whites. Sprinkle with paprika. Chill until ready to serve.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

My mother and my husband's aunt always brought deviled eggs to family picnics, as eggs were plentiful and the dish was easy to make. It could be doubled as needed for a large crowd and everyone loved eating them.

DESSERTS



Johanne's Peach Cobbler (Vegetarian)

Melinda Ott, All Saints Episcopal Church

2 cups All-Purpose Flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, chilled
3/4 cups granulated white sugar, divided
1 cup heavy cream
6 cups fresh or frozen peaches, peeled and sliced
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 pinch ground nutmeg

1. Mix together flour, baking powder, salt, and butter and cut in or blend with a pastry blender until the consistency of coarse meal. Add 1/2 cup sugar and heavy cream. Stir until dry ingredients are blended in and let rest.

2. Preheat oven to 375F.

3. Toss peaches with a mix of 1/4 cup sugar, cornstarch, 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon, and nutmeg.

4. Place fruit in a 9x12 glass or ceramic pan, or casserole which holds at least 8 cups. Cover with globs (pinches) of dough and back for 35 minutes or until dough is a deep golden color. Cool slightly before serving.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This is a recipe my mother would make as soon as peaches were in season. When she died, my father gave me her recipe box. I had forgotten about this Peach Cobbler until I found the recipe in the box and it brings back warm memories of my mom.



Peanut Butter Pie (Vegetarian)

Beth Johnson, Hillsboro First Congregational United Church of Christ

8 oz cream cheese
3/4 cup of powdered sugar
2 T. Milk
1/2 cup creamy peanut butter
2 cups of cool whip
Chocolate graham pie crust

Instructions:

Grated chocolate Using electric mixer, whip cream cheese, powdered sugar and milk together. Add the peanut butter and blend. Add cool whip and fold in by hand. Put in crust and top with grated chocolate. Chill before serving.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

When I was young my grandmother taught me how to make this pie. I always made it for holiday family gatherings.



Pecan Brittle (Vegetarian)

Barbara Berkheimer, Hillsboro First Congregational United Church of Christ

1 cup butter,
1 tbsp. light corn syrup
1 cup sugar
3 tbsp. water
2 cups chopped pecans.

Instructions:

Combine butter, syrup, sugar & water in heavy saucepan. Cook on high heat, stirring rapidly, until it is the color of a brown paper bag. Remove from heat and add chopped pecans. Pour onto a greased cookie sheet and spread thin. Cool and break into pieces.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

It was a hit at Central Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, VA and it seems to be a hit here!



Grandma's Heath Bar Cake (Vegetarian)

Jill Cessna, Hillsboro Presbyterian Church

2 cups of brown sugar

2 cups of flour

1/2 cup margarine or butter (melted)

Mix until crumbly. Remove 1 cup from bowl and save

Add 1 egg

1 cup milk

1 tsp soda

3/4 cup broken nuts

Mix together until blended. Pour into 9" x 13" pan. Top with reserved crumbs and 6 coarsely crumbled Heath bars. Place in oven at 350 degrees for 25 minutes.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

It is a longtime favorite and already saved in my files.



Chocolate Scotcheros (Vegan, Gluten-free)

Tracy Litterer, Community of Christ Church

3/4 cup brown rice syrup

1/2 cup peanut butter (I use natural creamy peanut butter)

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/4 tsp salt

3 1/2 cups brown rice crisps

1 1/2 cups 70% dark chocolate

2 tbsp coconut oil

Instructions:

Line an 8×8 inch baking pan with parchment paper and set aside.

In a large bowl melt the brown rice syrup, peanut butter, vanilla extract and salt together in a small pot on medium heat or in the microwave. Mix together until well combined.

Mix the brown rice crisps into the syrup mixture until combined.

Pour the mixture into the pan and press down

To make the chocolate topping, melt the dark chocolate and coconut oil together in a double boiler or microwave until melted then pour and spread evenly over the bars.

Place in the fridge for an hour to set then cut into even squares.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This is a vegan recipe that is liked by vegan and non-vegans alike! I am ways wanting to serve something everyone can enjoy!



Mark Henderson, Community of ChristChurch

1 package Townhouse butter crackers OR Keebler butter crackers are fine too. Square or oval type.

1 package of bacon (or thick sliced bacon)

Brown sugar

Cayenne pepper

Instructions:

Heat the oven to 350°F. Place crackers end to end on a wire rack set into a rimmed cookie sheet.

Slice the bacon into thirds.

Place a sliver of the cut bacon lengthwise on each cracker, sprinkle a generous amount of brown sugar onto the bacon topped crackers.

Then lightly sprinkle with cayenne pepper (be careful!!! Gets HOT quick!!)

Bake until the sugar begins to melt & the bacon becomes crisp. Remove the pan from the oven and allow the crackers to cool on the rack before eating.

These go quick!!! Best to make a double or even three batches!!

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

Very tasty, easy, bacon, and good times from a restaurant in Denver "Ignite" that is sadly no longer in business. Also, you could imagine a bit of the complexity of faith in the mixture of sweet, hot, and bacon.



Texas Sheet Cake (Vegetarian)

Rhonda Eppelsheimer, Community of Christ Church

For the Cake:

- 1c water
- 1c butter (2 sticks)
- 3 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions for the Cake

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and grease a 18x13" pan.
2. Add water butter cocoa powder to a medium saucepan over medium heat. Bring mixture to a boil.
3. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl mix together the flour, sugar baking soda and salt.
4. In another small bowl mix together the sour cream, eggs and vanilla.
5. Add sour cream/egg mixture to the flour mixture and mix until combined.
6. Once the chocolate mixture in the saucepan is boiling, remove it from heat and pour it into the batter. Mix until combined and no lumps remain.
7. Pour mixture into prepared pan and smooth with a spatula to make sure it is dispersed in an even layer.
8. Bake in preheated oven for 15-20 minutes or until set (mine is usually done around 15 minutes).
9. When the cake is about half-way through cooking, prepare the frosting.

For the Frosting

6 Tablespoons milk

3 Tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

1/2 cup butter (1 stick)

3 3/4 cups powdered sugar

Instructions for the Frosting

1. Add milk, cocoa and butter to a saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil.
2. Once boiling, remove it from the heat and stir in powdered sugar. I like to beat the mixture with my hand-held mixer to get rid of any lumps.

Please share why you chose this recipe, and/or what this recipe means to you?

This was a family favorite growing up. When David and I got married, I loved it so much I asked my mom to bake it for the big family gathering. Good memories of time with family is a key ingredient in this recipe!