

It is all about tables

Can you imagine your life without a table?

Can you imagine your own life-story without meeting people at a table?

What do you remember?

We are not only eating at tables. We talk, celebrate, discuss, rest...

We are entertaining guest by giving them a meal.

When we stand up from the table, we are no longer hungry.

Good things happen at tables, communities are growing at tables.

A table is a piece of furniture we do not want to miss in our house.

At the same time, a table is a symbol, which tells us more than the fact that it is a piece of furniture.

We receive bread and wine at the Lord`s table.

There are so-called “round tables” where people are seeking political solutions and peace. We share our lives and stories at tables...

You prepare a table before me...we find these words of prayer in Psalm 23

Let us meditate some table stories of the Bible today....table stories of our lives at the same time...

Hymn

Breathe on me breath of God V 1

Table No. 1

Joseph, a farmer who owned a lot of land, has had a hard week. Lots of work, trouble with his neighbor, he would have loved to harvest, but there was rain every single day. He was a bit angry.

Then he thought: At the least, I would love to have a good weekend. Let`s have a party. I will invite my friends. He started to prepare the party immediately. He sent out his workers to invite the friends.

Then he said: I need a big table.

There has to be space enough for my friend Levi and his wife Mary.

(Set up the first table-leg)

And two other chairs for Ruben and his wife Anna. They are newly-married. They have to sit side by side.

(Set up the second table-leg)

And some more space for Simon and his wife Elisabeth

(Set up the third table-leg)

And now...as he wanted to set up the fourth table-leg and add the tabletop, one worker returned. I am so sorry, he said, but Levi will not come. He has bought a piece of land, which is so huge, that it takes him a whole day to ride around it on his horse. That is what he has to do today. Well, Joseph thought, I also had a horse like this some years ago...He set aside the Table-leg and was very disappointed.

(Set aside third table-leg)

And Ruben isn't able to come as well. He is newly-married. He prefers to be alone with his wife. Well, the golden cage, Joseph thought. Hope they will not lose the key... He set aside the second Table-leg and was very disappointed.

(Set aside second table-leg)

And Simon...But Joseph said: It's okay, I know. He has bought a yoke of oxen and he is so proud that he is nearly unable to walk.

(Set aside first table-leg)

So what? Joseph was so disappointed.

But then he said: No! Not my problem. If you don't want to come: your problem! He called his worker and whispered into his ear. The worker looked very surprised. Joseph pushed him out of the house: "Hurry up. And do what I have told you!" Then he started to rebuild the table.

(Set up the first table-leg)

This is for the vagabonds and beggars

(Set up the second table-leg)

And here is space for the cripples

(Set up the third table-leg)

And here for all of those who live outside in the area of the poor

(Set up the fourth table-leg)

And that is for the homeless. His eyes were shining with joy. He laughed. They will never forget this party

(Set up the table-top)

I will do that once a month from now on. And you can see that he will enjoy a really funny weekend.

Hymn

Breathe on me breath of God V 2

Table No. 2

Some years later Joseph had a bad time.

He was in a tough discussion with his younger son. It was all about money. In the end, he shared his money and gave half of it to both of his sons. The younger one took the money and left. No news for years.

Joseph was so sad.

If he only came back. No matter how. I would prepare a party as never before. I still have the big table, around which we celebrate our monthly events with my friends from the country roads. It only needs to be set.

One day he saw somebody sneaking up on him. First, he thought it was one of his monthly guests. But then he realized that it was his son. Joseph jumped out of the house, tears in his eyes. He embraced him: No, no excuses. I don't want to hear a word like "sorry". You are here. Nothing else matters.

Let us set the table. So he did. And called the musicians. And brought chairs, and candles...

(Set up three chairs)

After two hours Joseph suddenly thought: Why are there free chairs?

He looked around and realized that his older son wasn't there. He found him in the garden, extremely angry. You never prepare a party for me! But now, as soon as this loser is back, there is a big celebration. And me? What about me?

Come in, Joseph said, your brother is alive. Isn't that the most important news?

If you don't share the party, someone is missing at the table. Don't we all belong together?

When we share communion at the Lord's table, there are also free chairs...people whom we miss...people who are not able to come or who don't want to come...

There is a piece of paper in your bulletin. There are pencils under the chairs and here at the windows. Write the name of one person or more onto the paper...someone whom you miss and whom you would love to have next to you when you receive bread and wine...

When we stand in a semi-circle around the table later on, there will be some empty chairs between us...you can put your cards with the names on one of the chairs...as Joseph said: Don't we belong together? At the Lord's table anyway...

(Write names on the cards)

Hymn

Breathe on me breath of God V 3

Table No. 3

Will the older son share the joy and the party?

He is invited. And together with him all of us who have difficulties to reconcile with each other. And together with him all of us who have difficulties to allow themselves to be happy.

The younger son was invited. And together with him all of us who lost control over their lives. And together with him all of us who need someone like this father. Who embraces us saying: My son, my daughter. Not more.

And together with him all of us who need someone who patiently waits for us coming home.

Christ's communion table is meant for laughing, because bread and wine are shared for free and everyone receives enough. Because Christ invites me, saying: It is so good, that you are here today. You can leave all your burdens here. Look around, you are not alone. And don't forget those, who are not here today. They are also guests at my table...

Imagine, what a community around Christ's table:

Lost sons and daughters. Father and mother, no longer full of sorrow. Ill and healthy people, lame and blind people, hungry people and those who are longing for life. Desperate ones and those full of power.

Imagine them sharing what they bring, embracing each other, wiping away each other's tears...and in-between always refilling their plates, fixing dates to meet again...just because God invites all of them, all of us.

At the end of the party, the table will be cleaned und prepared again. God is standing in front of the door to see, if there are more people on their way back home.

Because: when someone is coming home again, there has to be a table with a lot of chairs, which are not meant to remain empty.

There will be enough bread, and wine...

That is what we call the kingdom of God...

Hymn

Breathe on me breath of God V 4

Laying the table with the...

Table-Cloth

When we are the guests of Jesus, we believe: God is on our side.
We need him as we need our daily bread.
When God is on our side, his love will guide us through our life

Bread

When we are the guests of Jesus, we celebrate his community with great and small,
with the righteous ones and those who act unjustly.
When God is on our side, his justice will guide us through our life

Cup

When we are the guests of Jesus, we remember the last communion, which Jesus
shared with his disciples. The bread...my body, broken for you. The cup...my
blood, given for you.
When God is on our side, his word will guide us through our life

Candles

We are the guests of Jesus. We are celebrating that God is on our side. Will we also
be on God`s side?

Hymn

Become to us the loving bread

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