



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Become a part of God's Family at First

May 6, 2010

Dear Friends,

Sunday is Mother's Day and I am doing a sermon about my Grandmother's Table. The reason is that we are also serving communion on Sunday. Why would we serve communion on Mother's Day? One obvious reason is that my surgery was right before the first Sunday of the month. But for me, there is an obvious connection.

As a family, really multiple families, we always had great times around tables. There were the special events such as birthdays, when we would gather around a family table, our immediate family's, my grandparents' on either side, or even an extended family gathering where the person would be honored with special foods, good conversation, laughter, and celebration. What a gift, that for one day, you were an "honored" guest at your family table.

There were those times when we would have supper and for some reason we would all start laughing. It could be about the day, something stupid that had happened, or even a bad joke. I just remember laughing as we ate together.

There were the times when we just ate together and enjoyed each other's company at my Garrison grandparents' table. Grandmother Garrison would cook something we all liked and even though the table was square, all six of us were able to sit at the table, around the table together. I have that table in my kitchen area.

Then there were the times when we would go to my Brimner grandparents'. Going there was 2 hours away (before freeways) and took some effort. You know what kids think of a 2-hour drive. We went often and stayed, even when it was not a holiday. What I remember most about that house was the table in the dining room. It took up most of the room, always extended, so it could fill up at a moment's notice.

The family happened around this table. In the middle of the table was a small garden with little glass animals. All the small children loved to look for the animals and they were too far out of reach to be a danger. The table was where we would play board games or cards, sometimes just kids and sometimes even with an uncle or aunt. Grandmother would squeeze 13 around this table – all adults. We kids would covet being invited to sit at the adult table instead of the card tables in the very next room. It meant status to sit at the grownups' table. There was always plenty of food for everyone. The table said holiday, it said joy, it said love.

It was around this that the family gathered when first my grandfather and then my grandmother died. We gathered as a family to drink coffee, eat the ever present mound of food, and tell stories. It was a place to share memories, as we gifted one another with their love and concern for us.

Rev. Peggy L. T. Garrison
Pastor

Marcia Weygant
Director of Music

Vicki Wheeler
Church Secretary

Teri Trent
Lay Leader

That table is in my dining room. You do not know how blessed I feel to have it. For it was around that table that I learned a lot about God. It was not a place where people preached, but a place where love happened.

When I think of Jesus gathering with his disciples, I can picture a stark room with a long table and 13 men around it. What I really picture is my grandmother's table. It is the table where loved ones gather to reconnect and be fed. It is the place where we learn that we are an adult in others' eyes and are asked to take on more responsibility. It is a place where our sins are forgiven and continued relationships are affirmed.

My grandmother's table reminds me of God's love. Isn't that what the communion table is supposed to do? At the communion table we remember the sacrifices made – not in a far off distant way, but in an immediate tangible way. We are reminded of the value that each of us have in God's sight.

I give thanks for my grandmother's table for the way in which it taught me about God. May this Mother's Day be a time that reminds you how the "mothers" in your life teach you about God. May you give thanks for all of them. May you give thanks for God's love as reflected on the love of your mothers.

Have a good walk with God this week. Remember others who walk with you.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Peggy".

Peggy L. T. Garrison