

**WELCOME TO
MY KITCHEN
Seasoned With
God's Love**

**LYNDA'S
KITCHEN
...HOT & FRESH...
SEASONED WITH LOVE**

season everything with love

**Another
Devotional Cookbook
for the Palate and the Soul**

WELCOME TO MY KITCHEN

“Seasoned with God’s Love!”

Volume 2

***By Lynda Mueller
Hood River, Oregon***



***Another Devotional Cookbook
for the Palate and the Soul***

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WELCOME TO MY KITCHEN

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DEDICATION

Once again this devotional Cookbook is dedicated with deep and abiding love to all of the precious and beautiful children God has brought through the doors of our Guatemala orphanage, “God’s Grace Children’s Home”, and into the nurturing and healing hands of His faithful and loving ministers (our staff). Each child is invaluable, priceless and unique in our Lord’s loving eyes, and thus, we who are a part of Child Beyond International’s children’s rescue mission, see each one through His eyes. May every abused, abandoned and neglected orphaned child in our care be lifted to new life in Christ; Beyond hopelessness to hope; Beyond despair to joy; Beyond brokenness to wholeness, and a brand new life filled with promise and purpose! Amen!

RESCUE A CHILD



100% of the proceeds of this book goes directly to the daily care of all our children at “God’s Grace Children’s Home”. For more details about how you can help lift up children to new life, see the final pages.

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

James 1:27

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**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**

INTRODUCTION

Whether this is your first time in my kitchen or you have been cooking with me the past few years, I want to welcome you! It is my joy to offer my second devotional cookbook with all proceeds going to care for God's precious orphaned children with **Child Beyond International**.

We started off 2021 in the hopes that the COVID-19 pandemic would be behind us. As 2022 is fast approaching we now know that it looks like this nasty virus will be around for some time. So I have continued to write and to cook.

As you prepare some of my recipes and you read the devotions, I pray that you will experience the love and grace that our Heavenly Father has for you. He loves you with an everlasting love. Come as you are and taste of His goodness. And I hope you enjoy the many recipes too!

In His grace, Lynda

“Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him.” Psalm 34:8

100% of the proceeds of this book goes directly to the care of the children in our children's home at Child Beyond International in Guatemala.



“Out of His fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.” John 1:16

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Thanksgiving Enchiladas!**

Every year I try to find new and innovative (non-boring) ways of using up Thanksgiving leftovers. This week I am devoting all of my recipes to “Leftovers”.

I found this article from AARP (Living on a Budget) and it was very interesting, but even more, it really encourages us to use our leftovers!

“Inflation has hit the Thanksgiving turkey, and most of the trimmings, too.

The average cost of Thanksgiving dinner is up 14 percent this year, to \$53.31, which is \$6.41 more than it cost in 2020, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). The AFBF's data sets the table for 10, and includes leftovers. The average cost per person is less than \$6.

Leading the price hikes this year: a 16-pound turkey, which costs an average of \$23.99, or \$1.50 per pound, a 24 percent increase from last year. The AFBF, whose survey was conducted Oct. 26 through Nov. 8, notes that you may be able to get turkey cheaper now, pointing out that grocery stores started advertising lower prices later than usual this year.

The AFBF said that the higher price of a Thanksgiving dinner is the result of supply chain issues and other economic disruptions from the pandemic, as well as an increase in the global demand for meat. The trend of consumers cooking and eating at home more often due to the pandemic led to increased supermarket demand and higher retail food prices in 2020 and 2021, compared to pre-pandemic prices in 2019.” (Taken from AARP.org-John Waggoner)

As inflation rises and we experiencing serious financial issues with the consumer product challenges we are facing in our country, it all reminds me of God’s supply and demand when it comes to grace!

The demand for God’s grace is worldwide and all humans are in need of it. Sadly most of the world’s population has no idea that they are in need of this amazing and saving grace.

As consumers we are accustomed to getting what we want, when we want it, and most of us want it now! But that isn’t the case this holiday season. We have been warned that the shelves are sparse and the supplies are dwindling. The prices are rising and we better shop early.

What a blessing it is to know that the supply of God’s grace will never run out. It will always be available the moment we need it. And best of all, the price is 100% free!

One of the basic principals of economics is the concept of supply and demand. If the quantity for something is limited and demand is high then the expectation is that prices should rise. If something is abundant and demand is low then market dynamics will push prices down. But how does this apply to God’s grace which is infinite?

Like everything else in life, when something is abundant it is more likely that we, the consumers, will take such items for granted. Think about the basic provisions in life: Our bodies; The air we breathe; The water we drink; and that despite the fact that we are absolutely dependent on these things to survive, we probably do not value them as much as we should or even think about them being available. It is not until our bodies give out, and our breathing becomes labored, and we are dangerously dehydrated that we realize the true value of these precious elements.

God’s grace works in a similar manner, because it is so abundant most people take it for granted.

John 1:16 says: ***“Out of His fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.”***

God’s supply of grace always exceeds our needs. His grace is always greater than our need and will never run dry. Once we receive His grace into our lives we want to make sure we never treat it like a commodity. God’s grace is beyond value, there will always be a demand for it, inflation can’t touch it and His supply will never run out!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Thanksgiving Enchiladas!

Ingredients: Serves 6-8

2 cups turkey, shredded

8 medium tortillas

1 cup mashed potato

1 cup stuffing

1 cup leftover cooked veggies (your choice)

1 cup stuffing

2 cups gravy

2 cups shredded Monterey Jack or Colby Jack cheese

Fresh parsley, chopped, to serve



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Spray a 9 x 13 baking dish

Place one tortilla on a work surface. Place a small amount of each of your yummy thanksgiving leftovers on the tortilla.

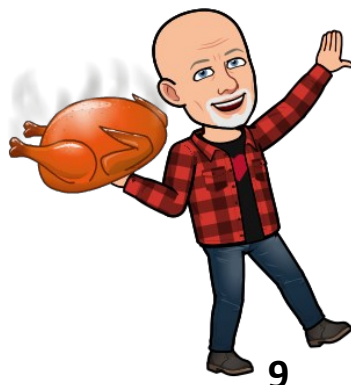
Fold the ends in, rotate the tortilla and roll upward, making sure none of the ingredients are coming out of the tortilla. Place in your baking dish. Repeat with remaining tortillas.

Once your baking dish is filled with enchiladas pour the gravy over the top. Sprinkle the Monterey Jack over the enchiladas.

Bake for 30 minutes until golden and bubbling.

Sprinkle parsley over the enchiladas. Serve immediately. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.” Matthew 5:13

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Peachy Ginger Chicken**

Ginger is a stem or a bulb of a flowering plant with the same name, ginger. This root has been used as a spice and as medicine since ancient times.

Ginger first emerged in the southern parts of China. From there, it spread to India, to the Spice Islands and then the rest of Asia and West Africa. Ginger first showed up in Europe during the 1st century when the ancient Romans traded with India. After the fall of Rome, Europe forgot about ginger until Marco Polo brought it again from his travels to the East.

During the Middle Ages, a price of half a kilogram of ginger was the same as of one sheep. In the 15th century, with the discovery of the New World, ginger was brought to the Caribbean where it started to grow easily. Today, India is the greatest producer of ginger in the world.

Ginger is used in many different ways and for a range of reasons. The main use of ginger is as a herb for cooking. Tea can also be made from parts of the root which are soaked in boiling water and often mixed with honey.

Ginger can even be made into wine, beer and brandy. You can even make candy out of ginger by mixing it with sugar and cooking it until soft. The result is candied or crystallized ginger.

Ginger can be used for a variety of medical purposes. But the most popular use is relief from nausea and stomach issues.

Fun fact: Most people think that ginger is a spice, but it is actually an herb.

As I sit here writing this devotion I can smell the ginger and garlic cooking in my chicken for dinner tonight. Herbs and spices make all the difference in cooking delicious food, but nothing can really take the place of salt. And salt is neither a spice or an herb. It is an organic mineral used to enhance the taste of food.

Jesus spoke about salt during His Sermon on the Mount. **Matthew 5:13** *“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”* In many ways, Jesus’ teachings during the Sermon on the Mount represent the major ideals of the Christian life. This verse is no exception.

There were two purposes for salt during the time Jesus was speaking—preserving food and enhancing flavor. So how was this metaphor something that Jesus was applying to the life of the believer?

By using this salt metaphor, Jesus could have been saying that as His followers we need to make sure that God’s Holy Word is preserved. **Psalm 14:3** says, *“All have turned away, all have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.”* As Christians we are to preserve truth and virtue in a sinful world, not help add to the spiritual and moral decay.

Salt is also used to enhance food, so Jesus could have also been telling His followers that to live a Christian life, one that that is pleasing to our heavenly Father, they would need to enhance how they lived their lives by Loving others; Practicing acts of kindness; Feeding the hungry and the poor; Caring for widows and orphans; And forgiving others. The Sermon on the Mount is where He talked about the Beatitudes after all.

No one knows for sure what Jesus was referring to when He used this metaphor other than saying that His disciples are the salt of the earth. The rest of the Scripture seems to be a rhetorical question because salt can’t become less salty. The good news is that true followers of Jesus can’t lose their saltiness. They are new creations and completely changed because of Jesus Christ. Those that are pretending to be Christians are to be “thrown out and trampled underfoot” because they have no effectiveness for the kingdom of God.

We can never be too salty for Jesus! So if you forget the spices and the herbs, just pass the salt please!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Peachy Ginger Chicken

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

8 skinned and boned chicken thighs
1/2 cup flour
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
4 tablespoons olive oil
2 shallot, thinly sliced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
12 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
1 cup chicken broth
3 large peaches, cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
(about 2 cups)



Instructions:

Season chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. Put chicken thighs in a bowl and toss with the flour. Shake off excess flour.

Cook chicken in hot oil in a large oven-proof skillet over medium-high heat. Heat 2-3 minutes on each side or until browned. Remove chicken from skillet and set aside, keeping drippings in skillet.

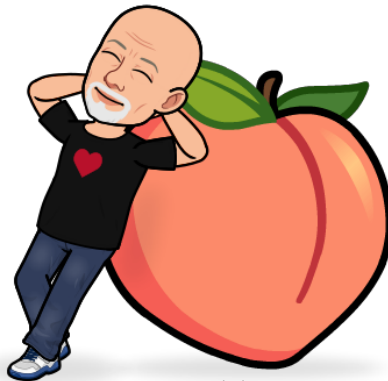
Reduce heat to medium. Add shallot to your skillet, and sauté until tender. Add garlic and ginger and sauté until you can really smell the garlic and ginger.

Add basil, chicken broth and peaches. Return chicken to skillet, and turn to coat.

Cover your skillet and reduce heat to medium low. Cook until sauce is thickened and chicken is cooked through. About 20-30 minutes.

Serve with rice!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” John 10:11

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today
Cheesy Chicken Shepherd’s Pie

Shepherd’s pie is a pie that usually contains no pastry. Although you can use a crust, it is not the traditional way to make this delicious comfort food. It is made with a meat filling, traditionally minced, and topped with potato. ‘Shepherd’s pie’ is also known as ‘cottage pie’, and ‘potato top mince pie’.

Historically, cooked meat from leftover meals was the most common meat used in shepherd’s pies, and the container the pie was cooked in was often lined with mashed potato. This was a great way to use up leftovers from the day before.

The term cottage pie was used in the 1790s and usually referred to a beef version of the dish, while shepherd’s pie emerged in the 1870s in reference to a version using lamb or mutton. Today you can find shepherd’s pie made with a variety of ingredients including vegetarian. Whatever you prefer to call it, and however you wish to make it, this cheesy, creamy casserole has been a delightful comfort food for over two hundred years!

Ellie Krieger is an American registered dietitian and nutritionist and she says this about comfort food: “Comfort food is the food that makes us feel good, satisfied, calm, cared for and carefree. It’s food that fills us up emotionally and physically...Finding comfort in food is a basic human experience.” I tend to agree with her, especially when it comes to shepherd’s pie.

But let’s be honest here, when it comes to comfort, nothing can comfort us spiritually, emotionally or physically like the “Good Shepherd”. David understood very well just how good the Lord was when he called Him his Shepherd in Psalm 23: ***“The Lord is my***

shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, He leads me beside quiet waters, He refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for His name’s sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” And Jesus called Himself the Good Shepherd in **John 10:11**; ***“I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”***

First, to understand the purpose of a shepherd during the times of Jesus, it is important to understand that sheep are totally defenseless and completely dependent upon their shepherd. Sheep are always exposed to danger and should always be under the attentive watch of their shepherd as they graze. Any number of disastrous things could happen to them if let alone with no protection.

No wonder we are called sheep in the Bible several times. The Prophet Isaiah makes it very clear that no one is exempt from this label either: ***“We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”*** Isaiah 53:6 God could have chosen to compare us to any other animal, but He clearly sees us as sheep and Himself as our shepherd.

When one sheep moves in a herd, the rest will follow, even if it is not a good idea. The herding and following instinct of sheep is so strong that it caused the death of 400 sheep in 2006 in eastern Turkey. The sheep plunged to their death after one of the sheep tried to cross a 15-meter deep ravine, and the rest of the flock followed. While this is a tragic story, it reminds us clearly as to why we are referred to as sheep in Scripture.

Just like sheep, we have no direction without Jesus in our lives. We are vulnerable and lack protection on every side. Sheep know that they need their shepherd to guide them and keep them safe, just like we can not make it alone without our Good Shepherd.

We are called sheep because we act just like them. We need to learn a lesson from sheep and run to the Good Shepherd who will lead us to the spring of living waters and take care of us forever.

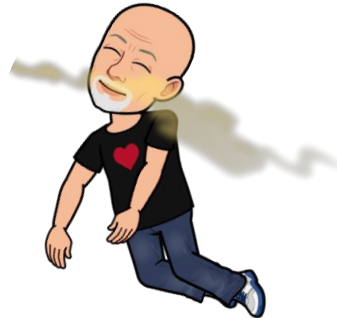
Now that is what I call true comfort!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Cheesy Chicken Shepherds Pie

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

1 pie crust
1 pound potatoes (made into mashed potatoes)
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 cups diced onion
1 cup sliced mushrooms
2 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup corn
1 cup thinly sliced carrots
Salt and pepper, to taste
2-3 cups cooked shredded Chicken
1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce
1 cup shredded cheddar Cheese
1 tablespoon butter, cut into tiny pieces



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°F

Form your pie crust into a large pie dish. Pierce the bottom of your pie crust with a fork. Bake for about 15 minutes in the oven.

Add your oil to a skillet and let it heat up over medium heat. Once heated, add in the onion, garlic, mushrooms, carrots, peas, salt and pepper.

Sauté for 5-6 minutes, or until the onions are starting to turn clear and the carrots are slightly tender. Add the chicken into the skillet and use a spatula to crumble it while it's cooking. Add the tomatoes and Worcestershire, stir to combine, and let it simmer until everything is heated through.

Transfer your chicken mixture into your pie crust.

Spread half of the cheddar cheese evenly over the chicken. Top the chicken and cheese with the mashed potatoes, and carefully spread them out evenly over the mixture.

Spread the remaining half of the cheese over top the mashed potatoes and dot with the cut up butter.

Bake it in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until everything is heated through and the top is nice and crispy. Total Comfort Food!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’” John 16:15

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Greek Chicken Bake**

Greek food is often considered among the most healthy diets in the world because it is linked to the Mediterranean diet, which has been proven to have countless health benefits.

The Mediterranean diet is the best example of a diet that never goes out of style; it has stood the test of time and it is still considered one of the healthiest diets that there is.

This type of diet is very high in monounsaturated fatty acids. Monounsaturated fats are simply fat molecules that have one unsaturated carbon bond in the molecule. Oils that contain monounsaturated fats are naturally liquid at room temperature but start to turn solid when chilled. Olive oil is an example of a type of oil that contains monounsaturated fats, and these fats are the good ones! The Mediterranean diet also contains carotenoids, antioxidants, vitamin C, polyphenols, as well as other vitamins and minerals.

Grains are whole or in the form of bread or pasta and cooked al dente, so that they don’t become too starchy and soft. This lowers the glycemic index. Slightly processed foods, which are a staple in the Greek diet, also provide prebiotic fiber, which promotes intestinal health.

According to several studies, the Mediterranean diet is associated with lower risk of several chronic diseases, including Cancer, Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, type 2 Diabetes and Heart disease.

Robert Mondovi, one of America’s favorite wine makers, once said: **“If you go back to the Greeks and Romans, they talk about all three - wine, food, and art - as a way of enhancing life.”** And it looks like he was right! We can always enhance our quality of life. And as Christians we should be making sure that we are looking for ways with God’s guidance to enhance the world around us too. Today, more than ever, we need a better world and Christians should be leading the way. And we also know that making the world a better place starts with knowing Jesus.

Did you know that one of God’s greatest desires is for us to share our faith with others? In **John 16:15** after Jesus has risen from the grave, He finds His 11 disciples and **“He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.’”** So why is it so difficult for some to share their faith with unbelievers?

Let’s be honest, it can be intimidating, even scary, to share Jesus with others. Our relationship with Him is very personal and intimate. But the fact that He is relying upon us to introduce Him to unbelievers is also an exhilarating experience, and one that we should feel honored to be asked to do.

In **John 6:44** Jesus takes all of the fear away from being intimidated about sharing His love to others by reminding us that: **“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws them.”** God does all the work, we just share about what He has done for us!

It is our mission to plant seeds into the hearts of others and allow the Holy Spirit to work on those we witness to. We are sent as God’s ambassadors to spread the love of Jesus to whoever crosses our path and to tell them about the love, grace and mercy of our Lord and Savior.

There is no greater honor given to a child of God than for Him to trust us with the responsibility of sharing His Gospel, and we should never take it lightly. And there is nothing that can “enhance” our lives more, or the world’s for that matter, than to share Jesus with others.

“God’s plan for enlarging His kingdom is so simple - one person telling another about the Savior. Yet we’re busy and full of excuses. Just remember, someone’s eternal destiny is at stake. The joy you’ll have when you meet that person in heaven will far exceed any discomfort you felt in sharing the gospel.” Charles Stanley

Lynda's Recipe For Greek Chicken Bake

Ingredients: Serves 4

4 medium Yukon potatoes peeled and quartered
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 teaspoons dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon ground paprika
1 large orange bell pepper cut into chunks
1 large red bell pepper cut into chunks
1 large red onions halved and then cut into large chunks
6-8 chicken thighs, boneless and skinless
1 lemon sliced
1/2 cup Kalamata olives
3 ounces feta cheese crumbled



Instructions: Preheat your oven to 425°F

Place the potatoes in a baking dish and toss them with 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon dried thyme and 1/2 teaspoon ground paprika.

Add the vegetables and chicken pieces, then toss everything with the remaining seasoning. Arrange the chicken thighs on top of the vegetables and potatoes and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

Remove the tray from the oven and stick the lemon slices in between the chicken pieces. Scatter the olives on top, and finish baking for another 20-25 minutes until the chicken is browned and cooked through all the way.

Serve immediately topped with crumbled feta. Delish and healthy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him.....For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.” Luke 15: 22-24

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu:
Baked Chicken Thighs with Strawberry Relish

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary the word relish means; “Characteristic flavor. An especially pleasing or zestful flavor. A quantity just sufficient to flavor or characterize.”

Relish belongs in the condiment category. It’s a chunky jam that contains finely chopped vegetables, fruit, or sometimes both in a vinegar mixture. It’s commonly used as a spread on sandwiches or added into sauces. It can make a boring humdrum dish become festive and lively. Get daring with some spices and it becomes a palette party!

Summer is a time to celebrate all of the delicious fruits and vegetables that spring forth from the soil during this festive time. Play around with your produce and make a wonderful relish to top off a boring dish and celebrate the fruits of the earth!

One of the most beloved Biblical stories is found in the Gospel of Luke and it is all about celebrating. The “Prodigal Son” is a glorious story. This father has mourned the loss of his son for years all because his son wanted to leave his family and squander away his money and party day and night. As the wayward son returns penniless and filled with remorse, his father sees him coming from afar. He can’t believe what he is seeing. It is too good to be true. His son who was once lost, has come home. And the father takes off running to his son. He embraces him and welcomes him home with a

celebration fit for a king. ***“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him.....For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.” Luke 15: 22-24*** The father forgives his son for everything, the old has gone and new is here. He rejoices because his son has come home.

Why do we love this Biblical story so much? Let’s be honest, it is because the prodigal has been you and me. We all go our own separate ways in one way or another. Some of us have made big mistakes that have life long consequences. Others have insisted upon doing things their own way and falling flat on their faces. We have all struggled with our pride and desire to live by our own rules.

Inside the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, you will find what most art and history experts have deemed Rembrandt’s greatest masterpiece, “The Return of the Prodigal.” This painting has been called one of the 10 best paintings of all time. It is a beautiful painting too. My guess would be that Rembrandt van Rhin could also identify with the parable that Jesus teaches in Luke 15. Like us, Rembrandt also knew the grace, love and mercy of a righteous, forgiving Father embracing him when he was ready to come home.

Rembrandt so perfectly shares the importance of God’s grace. Our heavenly Father’s grace knows no bounds. He will go to great lengths to woo us home. And He will embrace us with His loving and forgiving arms. God welcomes and embraces prodigals.

I can’t paint like Rembrandt. I don’t think anyone can. I can barely draw stick figures. But I can understand the depth of the grace he is trying to depict through his painting. Rembrandt has his own story. He clearly understands the prodigal in himself. Grace happens when we identify with the prodigal son, repent, and fall into the arms of our loving Heavenly Father. John MacArthur said it best in his book ‘A Tale of Two Sons’. “Here is a shocking reality: the Prodigal Son is not merely a picture of the worst of sinners; he is a symbol of every redeemed sinner—alienated from God and without a hope in the world. He is a precise and living effigy of the entire human race—fallen, sinful, and rebellious.” It’s never too late to come home. God loves a coming-home celebration!

Lynda's Recipe for Baked Chicken Thighs with Strawberry Relish

Ingredients: Serves 2-3

4 boneless chicken thighs, skin removed, trimmed
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tablespoon dried oregano
1 tablespoons chopped chives, divided
1 cups strawberries, chopped
2 teaspoons freshly grated lemon zest
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil
salt and pepper



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°

Combine chicken in a bowl with oil, oregano, 1/2 tablespoon chives, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Place in a medium baking dish. Bake the chicken for about 30 minutes or until thermometer reads 165°.

Meanwhile, combine strawberries, lemon zest, sugar, vinegar, the remaining chives, basil and a pinch of salt and pepper in a bowl. Let stand at room temperature until the chicken is done. Serve the chicken with the relish and top with chives. Serve with Pasta or Rice. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“They took palm branches and went out to meet Him, shouting, ‘Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!’” John 12:13

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!
On the menu today: **Chicken Paprikash!**

“Paprikash” comes from the Hungarian word for paprika, and expresses a variety of stew-like dishes made with meat, onions, lots of paprika, and sour cream. You won’t find tomatoes in the authentic Hungarian dish, but Americans always include tomatoes. Though chicken seems to have been the original meat used in paprikash, lamb, pork and veal are also used, and mushrooms make a good meat substitute for vegetarian versions. Traditionally, Chicken Paprikash is served with dumplings, but wide egg noodles have now become just as common.

“When 16th century explorers began sending new foods back from the Americas, it was as if a giant cornucopia had been emptied over Europe. Italy and Spain made tomatoes a staple of their cuisine, potatoes found a home in northern Europe and Turkey began raising and exporting red peppers, which the Hungarians found a perfect match for their soil and, eventually, their cuisine. The peppers’ odyssey eventually lead to Hungarian paprika and Hungarian paprika lead to one of the world’s great peasant dishes –Chicken Paprikash. (Cheesehouse.com/John Kassell)

Paprikash is one of the few dishes in the world that gets its name from a spice. The name is stemmed from the generous use of paprika, a spice commonly used in Hungarian cuisine. The meat is typically simmered for a lengthy period of time in a sauce that begins with a paprika-infused roux.

Whether you are in Hungary or America, you will always find this dish made with sour cream. It is yummy too!

It doesn’t matter where you live, whether it be the United States or Hungary, yesterday was Palm Sunday and Christians all over the world begin to focus on Holy Week, or as some call it, Passion Week. Passion Week gets its name because of the passion with which Jesus freely went to the cross in order to pay for the sins of His people.

Passion Week begins with the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday on the back of a colt as prophesied in **Zechariah 9:9** *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”*

Did you know that in the ancient Middle Eastern world leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace? God doesn’t do anything without a reason. The mention of a donkey in **Zechariah 9:9** fits the description of the King who would be righteous, loving and humble, coming in peace to reconcile God’s people to Himself. Rather than riding to conquer, this King would enter in peace. But alas, God’s people just didn’t get, it did they?

As Jesus enters into Jerusalem on a humble donkey, the people are cheering and shouting: *“Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!” John 12:13* They weren’t thinking that they wanted to be saved from their own sins. They were thinking that He would save them from the sins of the Roman Empire. Sadly, the saving that the people wanted that day was political, not spiritual. They were only interested in a brief, worldly happiness and political order. They just didn’t understand that in order for Jesus to take care of the political problems of His people, He had to take care of their sin problem first.

Read these lyrics that are sung by Hillsong as if it were your “Hosanna prayer”: **“I see the King of glory coming on the clouds with fire, the whole earth shakes. I see His love and mercy washing over all our sin and the people sing ‘Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest’. I see a generation rising up to take their place with selfless faith. I see a near revival stirring as we pray and seek. We’re on our knees. Heal my heart and make it clean. Open up my eyes to the things unseen. Show me how to love like You have loved me. Break my heart for what breaks Yours. Everything I am For Your kingdom’s cause, as I walk from earth into eternity.”**

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Chicken Paprikash

Ingredients: 4

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 pounds chicken pieces, boneless/skinless is healthier, but not necessary
- 3 large shallots, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Roma tomatoes, seeds removed and finely diced
- 1 bell pepper, diced (any color)
- 3 tablespoons sweet paprika
- 2 cups chicken broth (I always use unsalted)
- 1 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream



Instructions:

Melt butter in a heavy pot and brown the chicken on all sides. Transfer the chicken to a plate. In the same pan (don't clean), add the shallots and cook until golden brown. Add the garlic, tomatoes and bell pepper and cook another 2-3 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the paprika, salt and pepper.

Return the chicken to the pot and place it back over the heat. Pour in the chicken broth. Make sure your chicken is mostly covered with the broth. Bring it to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 40 minutes. Remove the chicken and transfer to a plate.

In a small bowl, add the sour cream and heavy cream, then add your flour mixture to form a smooth paste. Stir the cream mixture into the pan of sauce from the chicken, whisking constantly to prevent lumps. Bring it to a simmer for a couple of minutes until the sauce is thickened. Add salt and pepper to taste. Return the chicken to the sauce and simmer to heat through. Serve the chicken paprikash with egg noodles. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“...And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

Ephesians 3:17-19

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Lennie’s Chicken!**

Almost every new wife hears this phrase “Can you make it like my mom does?” at least once within the first year of marriage. At least I did. Considering the fact that the first time I cooked chicken and tried to serve it (very proudly) to Jeff and my parents for dinner, it was completely raw inside, so I can’t blame Jeff for asking either.

When Jeff was growing up his favorite chicken dish that his mom, Lennie would make was baked chicken coated in crushed corn flakes. His mom used a whole fryer chicken usually for this dish, but I have tweaked it and usually use the chicken tenders or chicken breast. I haven’t made this dish in probably 30 years! I am not sure why I stopped making it, considering how much Jeff loved it. So I decided to make it once again. This time it was for Jeff and his dad.

When I took the chicken out of the oven and it had cooled off a bit, I asked Jeff to taste it. His response was priceless. He said “I miss my mommy”. What a joy it was to bring a loving and nurturing memory back to my sweet hubby. When dad joined us for dinner we surprised him with the chicken. He took his first bite and exclaimed “Lennie’s Chicken” with his hands up in the air. This too was priceless for me. I love being able to fill the tummies of the two men in my home, and what an added bonus when I can also nurture their hearts!

Nurturing is a basic need that all humans have. It can come in many different forms, but we all have the need to be nurtured.

The most important way that we can be nurtured is by spending time with God. Just like when we love someone, and we nurture that relationship and we want to know all we can about them, so it is with our relationship with the Lord. The more we love Him, the more we should want to get to know Him. As we nurture our relationship with Him in Scripture, worship and prayer, the Holy Spirit reveals to us the unmeasurable depth of God’s love for us.

Along with nurturing our own relationship with Jesus, walking along side another person and helping to nurture their relationship with Him is one of the greatest privileges we have been given as Christians. There have been countless times in my faith journey with my Lord that I have been able to witness those ‘aha’ moments when a sweet soul comes to faith, and better yet, when they truly grasp the depth of God’s love for them. Although I don’t think we will ever fully understand the depth of His love until we are in heaven, He does give us glimpses of His amazing love. And not just once or twice either. God reveals His love to us every single day and in many different ways!

Scripture reminds us over and over again about the importance of feeding our faith. In **John 14:26**, Jesus says ***“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.”*** God has supplied the very Person that will feed us. And as we allow the Holy Spirit to ‘feed’ us God’s precious Word, our hearts are open and we begin to understand the love that our Heavenly Father has for us.

Ephesians 3:17-19 says: ***“...And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”*** And in order for us to know this knowledge we must ‘nurture’ our faith.

God doesn’t want to hide His depth of love from us. He knows that the more we begin to understand how deep His love is for us, the more we will want to spend time with Him. And the more we spend time with Him, the deeper His love becomes.

So dive into God’s Word, spend time with Jesus, worship and meditate on Scripture. It’s all about nurturing your faith!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For "Lennie's Chicken"

Ingredients: Serves 4

28 ounces of boneless and skinless chicken tenders (You can use a fryer chicken too)

One stick of butter, melted

1 cup of cornflakes, crushed

Salt

Pepper

Garlic powder



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Place chicken tenders in a large bowl. Add salt, pepper and garlic powder.

Mix really well until all the chicken is coated.

Put the melted butter in a bowl for dipping the chicken into.

Put the cornflakes into a bowl for coating the chicken with.

Dip the chicken into the butter and make sure you coat it all over.

Add the buttered chicken to the cornflakes and cover the chicken all over.

Place the chicken tenders into a greased baking dish (9 x 13).

Bake the chicken tenders for 25-30 minutes.

Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





***“A cheerful heart is good medicine,
but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”***

Proverbs 17:22

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace!*

On the menu today: **Juicy Chicken and Peppers**

For a while I stopped cooking with chicken breast. I got tired of them drying out so much. And I didn’t always want to make them with a sauce. But recently I have learned that my chicken would dry out because I was too lazy or impatient to make sure that it was cooked right.

It turns out that my chicken coming out dry had nothing to do with whether I was cooking the chicken breast in a sauce or not. In fact, it has everything to do with the temperature at which the meat is prepared. When intense heat comes into contact with proteins, such as chicken, the proteins tighten and forces out the moisture. And because water transfers heat more effectively than air, adding water when cooking chicken will only make it hotter and more likely to drying out, not keep it more moist.

When cooking chicken it is always best to use an internal thermometer. Chicken is safe to eat when its juices run clear, the inside is no longer pink, and it registers at least 165°F in the thickest part of the meat. Checking the temperature is really the only reliable method for doneness. If you keep cooking it past 165°F, the meat will most definitely dry out, so it is very helpful use that as your best indicator.

Do you know what is worse than dried out chicken? A dried out faith! What are we to do when we feel like our faith feels dry and withered? When there doesn’t seem to be any clear connection between your heart and the presence of Jesus in your life? What do we do when we find our faith withering up like dry old bones?

Feeling dry in our faith isn’t a new concept that only the 21st Century Christians have faced.

The struggle with keeping our feelings aligned with the joy and gratitude for our faith has been around from the beginning. **Proverbs 17:22** says: ***“A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”***

Life isn’t easy. I don’t have to tell you that though, do I? It seems that as each new decade approaches we find ourselves with new challenges. Our bodies are aging (At least mine is! I turn 60 in one week!). Our children grow up and make a place for themselves in this world, and often times that doesn’t include us. Our parents pass away. People disappoint us. Diseases can cripple us. Bills pile up and life just isn’t as much fun as it use to be. The circumstances of this fallen world can and does cause us to often experience a crushed spirit.

As Christians we know that our joy comes from the Lord. We also know that our joy in Jesus isn’t based on happenstance. So why do we often find ourselves walking around with dried up bones?

Let’s look closer at **Proverbs 17:22** to see if we can’t find the answer to why we can feel all dried up and joyless. Scripture says that “A cheerful heart is good medicine.” So, if a cheerful heart is good medicine, how can we nurture and bring out our internal joy? Afterall, no one wants to walk around with dried up bones! **Jeremiah 15:16a** says: ***“When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight...”*** Jeremiah is reinforcing that when we spend time in God’s Word, and meditate on His promises, this is a guaranteed way to do your heart some good. The prophet Isaiah said ***“Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord Himself, is my strength and my defense. He has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”*** **Isaiah 12:2-3** And Jesus Himself said ***“...Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”*** **Luke 10:20** Clearly they knew that their time here on this broken and sinful Earth was temporary and we should keep our focus on our eternal home.

Read **Ezekiel 37** to see just what our God can do with dried up bones! If God can make an army with a bunch of dry bones, He certainly can do wonderful things with us! So don’t get discouraged when you start to feel dried up and brittle...run to the watering hole...God’s Holy Word, and be refreshed. **Ezekiel 37:4** says ***“Then He said to me, ‘Prophecy to these bones and say to them, ‘Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!’”***

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Juicy Chicken and Peppers

Ingredients: Serves 6

4 skinless chicken breast halves, with bone
2 skinless chicken thighs, with bones
1/2 teaspoon salt, plus 1 teaspoon
1/2 pepper, plus 1 teaspoon
1/4 cup olive oil
1 red bell pepper, sliced
1 green bell pepper, sliced
3 ounces pancetta, diced
3 cloves garlic, chopped
1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1/2 cup white wine
2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
1/2 cup chicken stock (low-sodium)
3 tablespoons capers
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves



Instructions:

Season the chicken with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. In a heavy, large skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. When the oil is hot, cook the chicken until browned on both sides. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Using the same pan over medium heat, add the peppers and pancetta and cook until the peppers have browned and the pancetta is crisp, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add the tomatoes, wine, and Italian seasoning. Make sure to scrape the browned bits off the bottom of the pan. Return the chicken to the pan, add the stock, and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, covered, until the chicken is cooked through, about 20 to 30 minutes.

Add the capers and the parsley. Stir to combine and serve. Yummy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



*“I have hidden Your Word in my heart
that I might not sin against You.”*

Psalm 119:11

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu:
Baked Chicken with Lemon and Dill!*

I love dill. I use it with egg salad, fish, tuna salad, chicken, green salads and anything else that I think it will taste good on. Just writing about dill is making my mouth water. No joke! Ivan Pavlov would have loved me!

Dill instantly brings to mind dill pickles (which I love) and egg salad sandwiches, but it has had a place for centuries in cuisines throughout Europe and Asia. Dill leaves are known as the dill weed herb, while dill seed is used as a spice. Fresh dill is in season in spring and early summer, but it is often grown in greenhouses so you can get it year-round or buy it dried. Some recipes also call for dill seeds. They are also available at your grocery store in the spice aisle.

You can find dried dill in the spice section of the grocery store, but the flavor is a weak substitute for fresh dill weed. But hey, if that is all that is available then just use double what the recipe for fresh dill calls for when using it to cook.

When used in cooking, dill will lose flavor the longer it is cooked, so that is why you want to top off your dish with fresh dill once it is cooked and ready to serve.

Here is a little hint if you are a serious dill lover and you enjoy it chopped fresh but can’t use all of it up at once. Chop up your dill and put equal amounts into an empty ice tray. Fill your ice tray with water and freeze until you are ready to use!

As I write this information about dill I am reminded about how important it is to be ready to use God’s Word when we need it. If we memorize Scripture and save it in our hearts we will be more apt to call upon God’s Truth when we are in need of Him. It is also a good way for the Holy Spirit to transform us into the likeness of our Savior.

As we deliberately make God’s Holy Word the central part of our thoughts, we begin to see sin the way God does. But memorizing can be difficult for many people. One of the things that has helped me over the years is to take it one Scripture at a time. I write that verse on a 3 x 5 card and put it by my speedometer reading area in my car. I can’t miss it!

Psalm 119:11 says; *“I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.”* One of the keys to unlocking God’s plan for us is to memorize His Word. Nothing will do more for our Christian life than developing the habit of memorizing Bible verses. When we memorize Scripture according to **Psalm 119:11** it will help us to overcome temptation.

Did you know that memorizing Scripture is a great way to pray to God as well? Praying back His Word will help us to be in line with His will for our lives. **John 15:7** says; *“If you remain in Me and My Words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”*

The wonderful pastor and evangelist Chuck Swindoll shares some great wisdom that we should all take to heart...literally! **“I know of no other single practice in the Christian life that’s more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture. That’s right. No other single discipline is more useful and rewarding than this. No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your counseling will be in demand. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified.”**

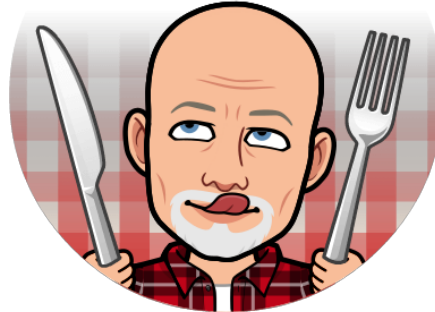
Find whatever memorization method works for you, choose one or two Scriptures that have recently spoken to you, memorize and tuck them into your heart for when you will need them!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Baked Chicken with Lemon and Dill!

Ingredients: Serves 2-4

2 chicken breasts
2 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, quartered
1 Large red bell pepper, quartered
1 large green bell pepper, quartered
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon honey
1/4 cup olive oil
1 lemon: zest finely grated
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Lemon slices from 1 lemon
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
2 tablespoons dill, divided



Instructions: Preheat your oven to 425°F

Lightly oil a baking dish. Season chicken breasts generously on both sides with salt and pepper.

Arrange seasoned chicken breasts in your baking dish. Whisk lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic, mustard, Italian spices, cumin, half of the dill and honey in a medium bowl. Slowly whisk in 1/4 cup oil until blended. Season with salt and pepper.

Pour the 3/4 of the sauce over chicken and arrange potatoes and bell peppers around chicken. Drizzle the veggies with the remaining sauce. Top each chicken breasts with a lemon slice.

Put in the oven and bake, loosely covered with foil for 35 minutes, until chicken and potatoes are done. Remove foil and bake for 5 minutes more to crisp up the edges. Remove from oven and serve immediately, garnished with remaining dill. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“...God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Braised Short Ribs**

Braising is just simmering meat and vegetables in a small amount of liquid in a covered pot to thicken and enrich the liquid’s flavor and tenderize tough cuts of meat to melt-in-your-mouth perfection. Braising takes time but once you get it into the pot it is pretty much hands-off for several hours. Braising can be divided into three simple steps.

The first step is browning. Browning generates a deep, rich color on the meat and also helps extract some of the fat. Because braising is a fairly low temperature cooking method, natural browning won’t occur.

The next step is to deglaze your pan. Those brown bits of food stuck to the bottom of the pan after browning are called fond, and it’s full of great flavor which will become your foundation for building a delicious sauce.

The final step is the actual braising. Once you return the browned meat to the pan along with your veggies and spices, you then add more liquid to cover everything about halfway. Braising with red wine goes very well with beef or lamb, whereas a chicken or vegetable stock would be more suitable for chicken or pork. Covering the pan with a tight-fitting lid to create a steamy environment inside the pot is key to keeping the meat moist. Then let it all simmer, either on top of the stove or in the oven. It’s normally desired to braise in the oven because the heat surrounds the entire pot. On the stove, heat comes just from the bottom and isn’t quite as even as it is in the oven, but you can still do it on your stove top if preferred.

One last note-while you can use any solid pot with a lid, generally it is best when cooked in a Dutch oven pot. A good choice is one made of cast iron. Whether it’s plain or enamel-coated, the even heat transmission and retaining of cast iron makes it ideal for braising.

Speaking of “good choices” reminds me of a character named Geraldine. She was first introduced by name on Labor Day, September 1, 1969, in a television special put together by Flip Wilson. The show was called The Flip Wilson Special, and its success led to Wilson’s variety show called The Flip Wilson Show. In the routine, Wilson plays a preacher’s wife named Geraldine. She explains to her angry husband why she has an expensive new dress, telling him that “the devil made me buy this dress.” She describes how the devil followed her on the street, sweet-talked her with praise, showed her the dress in a shop window, forced her into the shop, and then pushed her to sign the preacher’s name to a check. The preacher is suspicious and says that “she is too quick to blame the devil”. He then reminds her of the time she rammed the car into the side of the church. She counters by saying that at the time of the car accident, she was trying to get control of the steering wheel away from the devil, and she was also trying to kick the devil, which prevented her from using the brake pedal.

While this was a very funny scene to those that were watching, and Flip Wilson had a way of making us all laugh, there was also some valuable lessons to learn here. Too often we as Christians are quick to blame the devil for our own poor choices. **1 Corinthians 10:13** says, ***“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”***

Guess what? Flip Wilson wasn’t the first one to blame the devil. The first instance of “the devil made me do it” was made in the Garden of Eden. Eve says, ***“The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*** **Genesis 3:13**. Her excuse did not get her off the hook and it won’t help us much, either. In fact, God promises us that we have everything we need to withstand the temptations that the devil throws at us in **1 Corinthians 10:13**, doesn’t He? God never allows us to be tempted beyond our ability to withstand the temptation, and He always provides a way of escape for us.

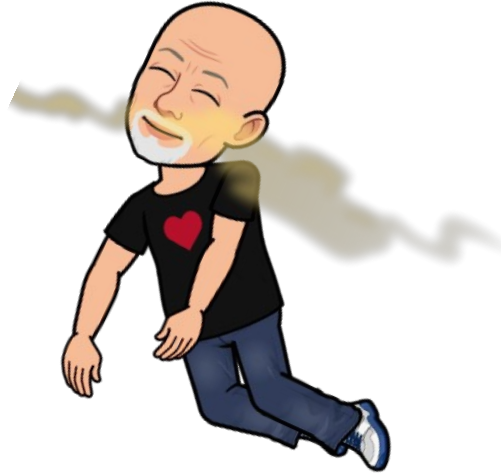
No Christian should be labeled a “Geraldine”. The good news is that God always gives us a way to avoid sinning. And the great news is that God’s Grace covers us even when we fall into the devil’s temptations. We take responsibility, pick ourselves up, and start all over again, and with God’s help, we will make the right choices!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Braised Short Ribs

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

5-6 pounds of pork short ribs
1 bottle wine (good wine)
3 cups of chicken broth
1 cup button mushrooms-sliced
4 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1/4 cup oil
1/2 cup of chopped bacon
2 large onions-chopped
1/2 cup shredded
1 tablespoon dried thyme
4 dried bay leaves
8 garlic cloves-peeled
1/3 cup tomato paste
2 cups canned plum tomatoes



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Season each short rib generously with salt. Coat a pot large enough to accommodate all the meat with olive oil and bring to a high heat. Add the short ribs to the pan and brown very well, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Do not overcrowd pan. Cook in batches, if necessary.

While the short ribs are browning, puree all the vegetables, garlic and bacon in the food processor until it forms a coarse paste. When the short ribs are very brown on all sides, remove them from the pan. Drain the fat, coat the bottom of same pan with fresh oil and add the pureed vegetables. Season the vegetables generously with salt and brown until they are very dark and a crud has formed on the bottom of the pan, approximately 5 to 7 minutes. Scrape the crud and let it reform. Scrape the crud again and add the tomato paste. Brown the tomato paste for 4 to 5 minutes. Add the wine and scrape the bottom of the pan. Lower the heat if things start to burn.

Return the short ribs to the pan and add enough chicken broth to just about cover all of the meat. Add the thyme and bay leaves. Cover the pan and place in the preheated oven for 3 hours. Check periodically during the cooking process and add more broth, if needed. Turn the ribs over halfway through the cooking time. Remove the lid during the last 20 minutes of cooking to let things get nice and brown and to let the sauce reduce. When done the meat should be very tender but not falling apart. Serve with the braising liquid and mashed potatoes. Delish!

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



***“The fool has said in his heart,
‘There is no God.’” Psalm 53:1***

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Pork Tenderloin With Bourbon-Peaches

Pork tenderloin as a lean-meat option, providing a lower-fat alternative to other cuts, such as pork chops or bacon. Pork tenderloin is moderately low in calories and with any visible fat removed, a 3-ounce serving only contains 93 calories. Almost three-quarters of these calories come from the tenderloin’s protein. Pork tenderloin also contains 1.8 grams of fat per serving, which accounts for only 17 percent of its calories. Healthy amounts of fat help you absorb vitamins from your food and also provides energy you need to support a active lifestyle.

Pork tenderloin also provides as a good source of the essential minerals selenium and phosphorus. Selenium helps to control your metabolism by regulating the activity of thyroid hormones, and it also protects the cells that line your blood vessels from damage. Pork tenderloin also contributes to strong bone tissue.

Pork tenderloin drastically boosts your intake of vitamin B-1, and contains choline. The vitamin B-1 in your diet triggers coenzymes your cells need to perform a series of chemical reactions that help produce energy. Pork tenderloin’s choline content aids in nerve cell communication and helps your body metabolize cholesterol. Consuming 3 ounces of pork tenderloin boosts your choline intake by 69 milligrams. This makes up 13 percent of the recommended daily intake for men and 22 percent for women. So when eating lean pork in moderation, it really is a healthy “other white meat” choice.

Sticking with my “pork” theme here, I have a joke for you: “What do you call a laundromat for pigs?
Answer: “Hogwash”. Ha ha!

Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary gives the definition for hogwash: “Nonsense or balderdash”. In other words, it is ridiculous foolishness.

Have you heard of the “New Atheism”? For lack of a better word, it is ‘hogwash’! They obviously believe that there is no God. But the ‘new’ part says that blind, natural forces are responsible for all of reality that we perceive. The new atheists don’t restrict themselves to a passive disbelief. They are actively involved in admonishing others to follow suit’ To proclaim their non-belief in God; And to take the needed steps to rid the world of religious belief and practice. As outspoken atheist Richard Dawkins puts it in his book ‘The God Delusion’, “I do everything in my power to warn people against faith itself.”

An ironic aspect of the new atheism is its strong faith in the weakness of having faith. The new atheists mistakenly redefine faith as an “irrational belief in the absence of evidence.” This distortion of the nature of faith is hogwash, for faith is not fundamentally a strong belief in something, but the foundation of Christian faith is believing in God Himself. A.W. Tozer said, “Faith rests upon the character of God, not upon the demonstration of laboratory or logic.” In other words, when we have faith in God Himself, there is no need to be distrusting or need strong evidence in respect to who He is. **Psalm 53:1** says ***“The fool has said in his heart, ‘There is no God.’”*** In other words it is ‘hogwash’ to not believe in God!

As long as non-Christian professors, scientists and philosophers peddle their atheistic hogwash as truth and wisdom, people will continue to buy it because the idea of being your own god appeals to our rebellious natures. This philosophy is nothing new, but the embracing of the changing cultural standards are making it more widely acceptable.

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as ***“Confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”*** And **Ephesians 2:8-9** says ***“For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so that no one can boast.”*** Faith is the result of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The truth is that it is available to anyone that will receive it. So even if you run into someone that believes in the ridiculously foolish hogwash of ‘having faith that there is no God’, remember that God loves them too, and He sent Jesus to die for their sins just like He did yours and mine. So always make sure you are sharing God’s Truth to them with the same love that He has shared with you-be patient and pray for them!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Pork Tenderloin With Bourbon-Peaches

Ingredients: Serves 4

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 pound pork tenderloin, trimmed
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 cups sliced peeled fresh peaches
2 tablespoons bourbon
1 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme



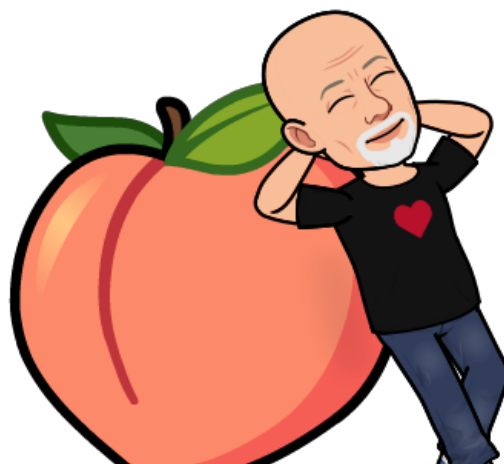
Instructions:

Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high, and add 1 tablespoon oil. Season pork with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Add to skillet, and cook, turning to brown all sides, until a thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 140°F, 5 to 6 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate.

Add peaches to skillet; cook, stirring often, until lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Add bourbon, 1 tablespoon vinegar, and 1 tablespoon honey; cook, stirring often, until sauce is slightly

Slice tenderloin and pour peach sauce and peaches over it before serving.
YUM!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.””

Galatians 5:14

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:

Grilled Italian Sausages with Caramelized Onions and Apples

Greeks eat it. Italians eat it. Germans, Spanish, Polish British, Portuguese all eat it and the list goes on. Across civilizations and cultures, encased meat has been a human staple. There is even an annual sausage party in Taiwan, Taipei.

There are sausages in China, the "Lap Cheong", a smoked pork sausage, sometimes flavored with rose water or rice wine. I must say that it doesn’t sound to appealing to me though.

Greeks eat "Loukanika"(sausage) just as every other culture has. They too have plenty of different flavors and types, but two prominent ones are pork meat sausages mixed with orange peel and fennel or smoked pork and leek sausages. Now that I can get on board with. It sounds delicious!

Across cultures sausage is obviously enjoyed, regardless of the type of foods you cook, but sausage along with any other foods that have been ‘cured’ with chemicals called sodium nitrate and sodium nitrite, must be eaten in moderation. Too much of a good tasting thing can be bad for you, so be careful about how much you consume on a regular basis.

You can find sausage pretty much anywhere you travel. So will the humble sausage ever leave our earthly plates? Probably not. Sausage provides such a blank canvas, it’s easy to invent new tastes for the palette with them.

Mark Twain was sharing a good piece of wisdom to tuck into the back of your brain when he said; **“There are two things nobody should ever have to watch being made, sausage and laws.”**

The English word “law” occurs over 400 times in

God’s Holy Word. As Christians we know that in order for us to recognize that we sin and need a Savior, we must be confronted with God’s laws. And the Gospel reveals to us Who our Savior is.

Martin Luther said this about the two: “Now the first sermon, and doctrine, is the law of God. The second is the gospel. These two sermons are not the same. Therefore we must have a good grasp of the matter in order to know how to differentiate between them. We must know what the law is, and what the gospel is. The law commands and requires us to do certain things. The law is thus directed solely to our behavior and consists in making requirements. For God speaks through the law, saying, ‘Do this, avoid that, this is what I expect of you.’ The gospel, however, does not preach what we are to do or to avoid. It sets up no requirements but reverses the approach of the law, does the very opposite, and says, ‘This is what God has done for you; He has let His Son be made flesh for you, has let Him be put to death for your sake.’ So, then, there are two kinds of doctrine and two kinds of works, those of God and those of men. Just as we and God are separated from one another, so also these two doctrines are widely separated from one another. For the gospel teaches exclusively what has been given us by God, and not-as in the case of the law-what we are to do and give to God.”

This all can seem a little overwhelming and theological of course, but the bottom line is that the Law and the Gospel are both important. In fact, you really can’t separate them. We must have one in order to receive the other.

Paul is actually referring to the Law and Gospel when he said in **Galatians 5:14: “For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: Love your neighbor as yourself.”** In other words, God’s Laws direct us to our Savior, protect us from harming ourselves and those we love and pleases God. If we truly understand what we have been given through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we will be living out the Law by loving others and living a humble life knowing who we would be without Christ, and more importantly, who we are in Christ!

In understanding the Law and Gospel for our lives as Christians we must remember this: **“The Law says where is the righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction? The Gospel says, Christ is the righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction.”**

Patrick Hamilton

Lynda's Recipe For Grilled Italian Sausages with Caramelized Onions and Apples

Ingredients: Serves 4

8 Italian sausages
2 tablespoons butter
2 medium onions, halved and sliced
1 large red bell pepper
3 large granny smith apples - peeled, cored, and cut into thin wedges
2 tablespoons apple cider or red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
Salt and pepper to taste



Instructions:

Prepare grill for high heat. I use a grill pan on my stovetop.

With a fork, poke sausages several times. Place in a pot, cover with water, and simmer over medium-high heat until cooked through, about 7 minutes. Remove from heat, and set aside.

Warm butter in a skillet over medium heat. Stir in onions, red bell pepper and cook until soft and translucent. Stir in apples, vinegar, and brown sugar; cook, stirring gently, until caramelized, about 10 to 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Meanwhile, place sausages on your grill or grill pan, and cook until well browned. Serve on a mound of caramelized apples and onions. So yummy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings.” 1 Corinthians 9:23

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Swedish Meatballs**

Just like how German Chocolate Cake didn’t come from Germany, and French Fries didn’t come from France, Swedish meatballs didn’t come from Sweden either.

This is probably going to surprise you. It did me! It turns out that the original recipe for Swedish meatballs seems to have originated from the Turkish Empire. Charles XII (known as “the Lion of the North” and the “Swedish Meteor”) reigned as King of Sweden from 1697 to 1718, and lived in Turkey from 1709 to 1714 during the Great Northern War. When he returned home after the war, he brought the meatball recipe home with them, and adapted them to the Swedish way of life as köttbullars.

It really doesn’t matter where these delicious meatballs and their creamy sauce came from though, does it? They are a wonderful edition to anyone’s dinner table. In life, we should all aim to be like meatballs- well seasoned and well rounded.

Meatballs remind me of the Apostle Paul. Just hear me out before you start to think that my brain has turned into a “meatball.” **1 Corinthians 9:19-23** are Paul’s words: *Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like*

one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings.” You have to admit that Paul was “well seasoned and well rounded” in his approach to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We could all use a little more well rounded seasoning when it comes to sharing our precious Savior with those that don’t know Him. But first we must understand what the apostle Paul meant when he wrote, “I have become all things to all people.” Paul was explaining to the Corinthian church his motivation for submitting himself to a hard life. He had totally relinquished himself to the purposes of Christ and bore the marks of that decision in his own body. In **Galatians 2:20** Paul says: *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”* Part of Paul’s calling was to preach to the Gentiles and that required him to change elements of his approach when needed. He had to engage with a culture that he was not accustomed to as a Jew. So this required wisdom, respect and learning how best to approach them without offending them. His goal was to bring them to Jesus-not ostracize them from the one true faith.

Paul wasn’t saying that he would need to compromise with God’s Holy Word in order for the world to fit into God’s plan. He was saying that he, like we, need to be willing to give up traditions and customary comforts in order to reach any and all audiences, Jew and Gentile alike. To be well seasoned in how we share the Gospel we need to be able to listen to others; We need to practice kindness with those that are different than us; We need to always be sensitive to another person’s culture; We need to be able to deal with prejudice attitudes, especially within ourselves.

Part of being a well-seasoned Christian means learning to humble ourselves, let go of our pride, meet people where they are, and do whatever Jesus calls us to do. Jesus died to save all people. We must love them enough to share this Good News in ways they can understand. And sometimes that takes a little more well-rounded seasoning that we are use to.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Swedish Meatballs

Ingredients: 6-8

1 pound ground beef
1 pound Italian sausage
1 small onion
2 tablespoons milk
4 pieces of white bread
1/2 cup dried bread crumbs
1 egg
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground allspice
1 teaspoon garlic powder
3 tablespoon butter
1 cup beef broth
3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 cups heavy cream
1/2 cup chopped parsley



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350⁰

Break up your bread and put in a separate small bowl. Add the 2 tablespoons of milk to the bread and let it soak. Mash it up like the consistency of apple sauce. Set aside.

In a sauté pan cook the onion in 1 tablespoon of butter. Set aside.

In a large bowl add your beef and your sausage. Add the onion into this bowl. Add all of your spices. Then add your white bread, dried bread crumbs and your egg. Mix gently with your hands until well blended.

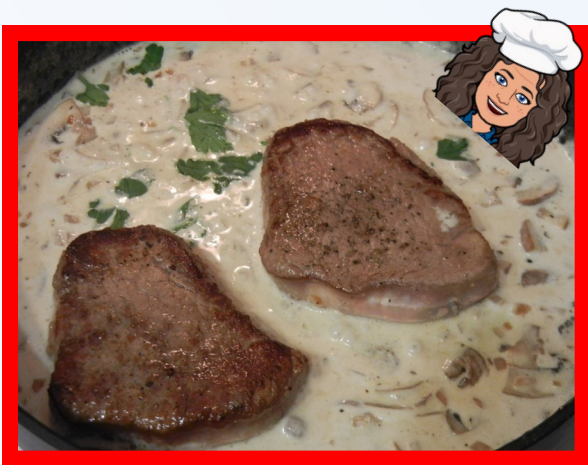
Make into round balls the size of your pleasing. Sauté them until deep brown on all sides. Place them in an oven proof baking dish and bake them in your oven while you prepare your sauce.

Do not clean the delicious bits out of your sauté pan. Add 2 tablespoons of butter to your pan and melt. Then add your flour and sauté until golden brown. Add your beef broth and your heavy cream. Simmer until thickened.

Check your meatballs. They should read 165⁰ in the center with a meat thermometer. Once they are done add them to your sauce and let simmer for 5 minutes.

I served this over brown rice. But egg noodles are delicious and more traditional.

Bon Appétit, Lynda



“For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.” Deuteronomy 4:24

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Steak Diane**

When and where Steak Diane actually started no one really knows. New York City seems to be the most likely place for the source of Steak Diane’s beginnings. The Drake Hotel, the Sherry-Netherland Hotel, and the Colony restaurant are all possible contenders according to a 1950’s New York Times article.

One thing is for sure, Steak Diane was the rage in the 50’s and early 60’s, especially in New York. A popular culinary trend at the time in expensive restaurants was dishes that could be extravagantly prepared tableside. Steak Diane was traditionally done this way and caused drama arising from the ‘flambéing’ of the cognac or brandy used to make the sauce.

Flambéing is not just about ‘putting on a show’ at table side. Lighting the alcohol in a recipe increases the flavor of the finished sauce. This is called caramelization is a type of browning response, much like what takes place when you char a piece of meat on a grill. During caramelization the powerful heat causes the sugars in the dish to experience a series of chemical changes. The most important of these for the cook is the increase of flavor. So you really don’t want to skip this important step in preparing such a delicious steak. And don’t worry, you won’t get burned if you follow directions!

In the Old Testament God is identified as a “consuming fire” in **Deuteronomy 4:24**: ***“For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.”*** In the New Testament **Hebrews 12:29** says once again; ***“Our God is a consuming fire”***.

There are a couple dozen Scriptures in the Bible that refer to God as fire. So what does this mean? It is actually pretty simple in it’s purest form. The idea of God as a consuming fire in these Scriptures is talking about Him being a jealous, holy and righteous God by nature and His judgment upon those who compete with Him. Used in more than one way in the Bible, the overall idea is one of supremacy, both positively in the sense of praise-worthy worship and negatively in punishing those who oppose Him.

God isn’t fooling around when He said that we shall ***“have no other god’s before Him”***. The writers in both Deuteronomy and Hebrews are warning God’s people to worship Him in reverence and awe, ***“for our God is a consuming fire.”*** **Exodus 20:5** says; ***“You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God...”*** This jealousy that God talks about isn’t like the human jealousy that you and I struggle with. God is "jealous" in the sense that He expects full devotion, not just a partial, lukewarm loyalty. Worship belongs to Him alone, and He is right to be jealous of it. After all He created the World and everything in it and it, including us, belongs to Him!

God’s holy righteousness is the reason He is referred to as being a consuming fire, and it burns up anything unholy. The holy righteousness of God is that part of His nature that separates Him from us sinful humans. **Isaiah 42:8** says; ***“I am the Lord; that is My name! I will not yield My glory to another or My praise to idols.”*** This seems pretty clear to me. I think He means business when it comes to whom we worship. God is a jealous God. God understandably maintains and defends what is rightly His. This is called divine jealousy. Fortunately for us Christians, God poured out His wrath on His Son, Jesus Christ when He was crucified on the Cross for our sins.

Hebrews 10:31 says; ***“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*** Praise God for His never ending fierce love and mercy for His children. His grace abounds and we need not fear the wrath of a ‘consuming fire’ when we have been bought and covered by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ! **2 Corinthians 5:21** says it all: ***“God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.”*** God consumes all of the ugly sin in us, and purifies us with His love and grace through His Son, Jesus Christ, so that we will never get burned!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Steak Diane

Ingredients: 2

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1/2 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 8oz beef tenderloin medallions, pounded gently 3/4 inch thick
salt and freshly ground pepper
1 small shallot, minced
1 garlic clove, minced
1/4 pound cremini mushrooms, sliced 1/4 inch thick
1/4 cup brandy
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup demiglace
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon finely chopped scallions
1 teaspoon finely chopped flat-leaf parsley



Instructions:

In a large skillet, melt the butter in the olive oil. Season the meat with salt and pepper and cook over high heat until lightly browned on the bottom, about 1 minute. Turn the medallions and cook for 45 seconds longer, then transfer to a plate and tent with foil.

Add the shallot and garlic to the skillet and cook over moderate heat, stirring, until fragrant, about 20 seconds. Add the mushrooms, season with salt and pepper and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat, add the Cognac and carefully ignite it with a long match. When the flames die down, add the mustard and cream and stir over moderate heat for 1 minute. Whisk in the demiglace, Worcestershire sauce, scallions and parsley and season with salt, pepper.

Add the meat and any collected juices to the saucepan and turn to coat. Simmer until heated through, about 1 minute. Transfer the meat to plates, spoon the sauce on top and serve.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“In Him you also, when you heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.” Ephesians 1:13

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **London Broil in the Oven**

“London broil, despite what you might find at the local meat market, is not a cut of beef. Rather it is a method of cooking a steak. It was one of the first recipes to become popular in early restaurants in the United States and so the name London broil became synonymous with a cut of meat. Where this dish originated is unknown; it certainly didn’t start in England, where the term “London broil” has no meaning. A London broil is a lean but tough steak that is marinated and then grilled or broiled.

So what is London Broil? Originally London broil was made with flank steak, but over the years, the name has been applied to many other lean, thick cuts of beef, such as top round. Generally, you will find London broil being marketed as anything from a 1-inch steak to a 4-inch roast that comes from the sirloin or round sections of beef. These cuts all have something in common: They are lean and tend to be tougher. Although the label may not direct the consumer how to cook the piece of meat, a London broil is meant to be marinated and cooked over high heat. It’s a great way to get a really good meal out of a less expensive cut of meat.” (taken from www.thespruceeates.com; Derrick Riches)

A marinade simply means a sauce, typically made of oil, vinegar, spices, and herbs in which meat, fish or other food is soaked before cooking in order to flavor or soften it. In simple terms we could say that “the meat and marinate become one”.

This reminds me of how it is for us humans once the Holy Spirit takes up residence in our hearts. Once the Holy Spirit lives in the believer, He brings

about some life-changing results. The Bible teaches that anyone who receives Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior receives God’s Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation: **Ephesians 1:13**: ***“In Him you also, when you heard the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and believed in Him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.”*** Once this happens we can’t help but be changed from the inside out.

Much like a meat marinade, our hearts begin to soften and we start to see things in a new and different way. The ‘flavors’ so to speak that are absorbed in a marinade remind me of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives. A new Christians we begin to take on new attitudes and priorities. We find ourselves more loving. Our level of praise and thankfulness becomes more joyful. We discover that even in the midst of storms we can have peace. With a lot more prayer and determination, we can actually be more patient with those that irritate us. We will see someone in need and suddenly be moved to act in kindness toward them. We strive to live lives of goodness and mercy because of what we have been given in Christ Jesus. We even realize that we can respond to those that we disagree with, with a gentle attitude. Our conviction and desire to stay firm and faithful to God overpowers sinful, ungodly desires, and we realize that the Holy Spirit has given us the self-control to turn our back on sin that we used to struggle with on a daily basis.

As silly as it seems to make this analogy similar to a meat marinade, I can’t help but think that it is not that far off. Just as you would put your favorite herbs and spices into a marinade, so God fills us with His Holy Spirit and the sweet flavors begin to change who we are from the inside out. Our hearts begin to soften and desire the things that please Him. **Galatians 5:22-23** says: ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”*** Not only will we begin to show the fruit of His Spirit in our lives, but He helps us to understand the wisdom of God and not of man. He transforms us into the person we were created to be.

You can take a tough, cheap piece of meat and marinade it for a few hours and completely transform it. A.W. Tozer said: ***“Religion can reform a person’s life, but it can never transform him. Only the Holy Spirit can transform!”***

Lynda's Recipe for London Broil in the Oven

Ingredients:

2 pounds top round, London Broil cut
1 1/2 tablespoons meat tenderizer
1/3 cup olive oil
3 teaspoon lemon juice
3 teaspoons salt
1/3 teaspoon lemon pepper
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
1 tablespoon Cherry Balsamic Vinegar



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Poke 1/4 inch knife holes all over the front, back and sides of meat. Sprinkle meat liberally with unseasoned meat tenderizer. Sprinkle lightly with water, and rub in tenderizer. Place on a plate, cover, and set aside for an hour.

In a small bowl, mix together oil, lemon juice, seasoned salt, lemon pepper, garlic, parsley, and cherry balsamic vinegar. Pour marinade over meat, reserving a portion to be used for brushing. Cover dish and refrigerate for three hours, turning every half hour.

Put London Broil in the oven and after 1 hour pour remaining marinade over the top of your Roast. Cook for half an hour more. Let rest for 10 minutes before carving. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’” Matthew 16:24

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Silky Beef Bourguignon!**

This delicious indulgent dish is adapted from Julia Child’s Beef Bourguignon. I hope you like my version!

Renowned chef, author, and television personality Julia Child, made French cuisine user-friendly to Americans. She was one of the first women to host her own cooking show on television, providing tips and lessons on how to prepare French food simply and easily. Well, maybe not always simple and easy, but most often French cooking is just about preparation and time.

Julia started organizations in hopes of motivating others to share her love of French food and to develop good cooking skills. “She co-founded the American Institute of Wine and Food in 1981, and created the Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and Culinary Arts in 1995. For her work, she was awarded honorary doctorate degrees from numerous schools, including Harvard University and Brown University.”

Julia died on August 13, 2004 at the age of 91. “Her kitchen, made famous by her cooking programs, was donated to the Smithsonian National Museum of American History. By visiting the Smithsonian museum, thousands of people now peek into Child’s kitchen each year. The US Postal Service marked Child’s achievements, when they included her in the 2014 Celebrity Chefs Forever stamp series.”

Women’s History.org. Dr. Kelly A. Spring

I remember growing up watching Julia’s TV show and thinking that she had a funny voice. But I was mesmerized by the way she made things look so easy. Come to find out, it isn’t as hard as it looks!

Speaking of things being easy, or not, reminds me of being a Christian. I am sure that it has never really been easy to live the Christian life. But in today’s hostile,

anti-faith based culture, I can’t imagine anyone thinking that being a Christian is easy!

Anyone who tries to tell you that being a Christian makes your life easier is not telling the truth. Is it rewarding? Yes! Is our faith joyful? Definitely! But is it easy? No way! In fact, for all Christians, old and new, trying to put Christ first can make life more difficult. Struggling with our sin is more noticeable. We battle with being lazy in our faith, greed, anger, jealousy, self-centeredness, materialism, pride, idolatry— let’s face it, the temptations seem never-ending and Satan is always enticing us. The world, the flesh, and the devil don’t go away because we have a saving, intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. And if we don’t recognize this by keeping our heart and mind alert, we will trip and fall.

As Christians we need to always be confronting our lives from a different worldview that comes from God’s values. We live in a world order that declares its own individual ideals, and attacks anyone who objects to their own standards. Standing up against what the culture says is ok can sometimes be exhausting. So no, being a Christian isn’t easy!

If a Christian is truly living their life to please Jesus it can be difficult because we find ourselves swimming upstream, against the current of the culture around us. Often times non-Christian friends don’t understand us; Our families can be divided by politics; Friends that aren’t serious about their relationship with Jesus can feel rejected, angry, judged and defensive.

If a Christian desires to grow in their faith (and we should), we have to constantly say “no” to our own sinful desires and relinquish ourselves to the Holy Spirit. We are always learning how to handle conflict with grace. We need to swallow our pride and forgive, rather than hold grudges. And yes, we must constantly die to self in order to become obedient to God and His Word. The list goes on and on when it comes to the sanctification of a Christian’s life.

So is living a Christian life easy? No, but it isn’t suppose to be! ***“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’” Matthew 16:24***

Being a Christian, taking my faith serious, having a personal relationship with the One True Living God, seeking out God’s guidance daily, sometimes minute by minute, being humbled repeatedly, growing closer to Jesus; I wouldn’t trade it for anything!

Jesus + nothing = Everything!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Silky Beef Bourguignon

Ingredients: Serves 6

5 oz. diced pancetta
3 1/2 tablespoons canola oil
3 lbs Brisket Flat Prem Angus Beef (cut into 2 inch squares)
2 large carrot, cut into medallions
1 large white onion (cut into pieces the size of your meat)
1 large yellow onion (cut into pieces the size of your meat)
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons flour
3 cups of a dry red wine
3 cups of beef stock 1 tsp tomato paste
4-6 cloves smashed garlic
1/2 teaspoon thyme
1 crumbled Bay leaf
4 tablespoons butter
1 herb bouquet (4 sprigs parsley, 2 sprigs thyme, 1 Bay leaf)
1 lb fresh white mushrooms, quartered



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 450°F (325°F later)

In a pan with about 2 cups of water, boil your diced pancetta for about 10 minutes. When done, drain and pat dry.

Sauté the pancetta in a large Dutch oven with a tablespoon of canola oil for about 3 minutes or until it begins to brown lightly. Using a slotted spoon, remove the pancetta from the Dutch oven and set it aside.

Pat dry your beef using a couple of paper towels. Sear the beef on both sides in the same Dutch oven. If needed, cook the beef in batches. Set aside the pancetta once you are done.

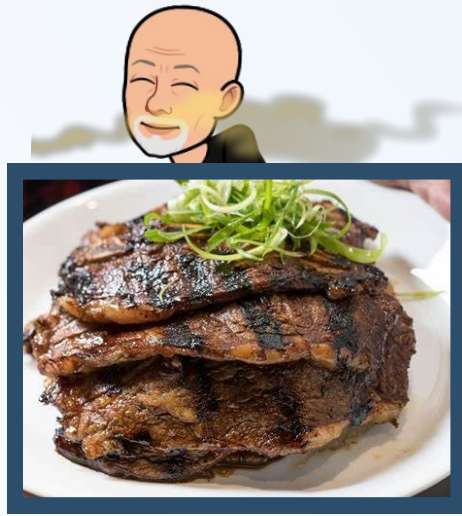
Add your vegetables (carrots, onions & mushrooms) to your Dutch oven. Sauté until lightly brown. Make sure you drain the excess fat.

Add your beef and pancetta back into the Dutch oven and season with half teaspoon of salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Toss everything together, then sprinkle with flour. Toss again before placing it in the middle of the preheated oven to bake for 5 minutes.

Take the pot out of the oven. Toss the beef, then bake again for another 5 minutes. Remove the pot again from the oven, and turn your oven down to 325° F.

Pour the wine and beef stock into your pan, barely covering the meat and veggies. Then add in the tomato paste, garlic and thyme. Gently mix everything together in your Dutch oven. Cover your pot and place in oven. Cook for 4 hours. Check to see if meat is tender before serving.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man.” Genesis 2:21-22

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Korean BBQ Short Ribs (Galbi)

Galbi (Kalbi) is a very popular Korean meat dish made from beef short ribs. The ribs are marinated in a sauce made from Korean pear juice, rice wine, soy sauce, garlic, sesame seed oil and sugar. Most recipes contain these basic ingredients but many variations exist from sweet to spicier marinades.

The meat itself is often cut in the L.A. rib style, which is basically a rack of ribs cut in thin slices across the bones. This makes eating the meat easier with chopsticks or with fingers. Galbi is usually available in most Korean restaurants but it is generally served in venues that specialize in Galbi and the meat is cooked on an in-table BBQ. Galbi is the Korean word for "rib".

In the first book of God’s Holy Word we see God using a rib in a very specific way. **Genesis 2:21-22:**
“But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man.” The phrase for “one of his ribs” could be translated “a part of his side”, but almost every English translation specifies the part as a “rib.”

It fascinates me that God used Adam’s rib to form Eve. He used existing tissue and did not “start from scratch” to indicate that Adam and Eve were of the same substance; she was made from the same stuff as Adam and she was equally a bearer of God’s image and likeness. **Genesis 1:27** tells us that ***“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*** From the very beginning of creation, it was clear that God never intended for Adam to be superior to Eve. They both were to reflect His image.

Remarkably, ribs have amazing regenerative ability. Portions of rib bone and cartilage removed in bone graft surgery will regrow in a few months time, as long as the ribs connective tissue (the perichondrium) is left intact. This means that Adam’s loss of a rib was only temporary; he did not have to go through the rest of his life with one less rib than Eve. Sorry, that is an old wives tale.

Why did God use Adam’s rib? I believe that God wanted to make sure that we understood that Eve was to walk beside Adam, not behind or before him. They were to be equal partners in their journey of life in the garden. Scripture doesn’t imply anywhere that women are unequal to men in God’s eyes or that they should have less significance than men. Men and women may have different roles, but different roles do not indicate differing worth. A frying pan has a different role in my kitchen than a spatula, but that doesn’t mean one is more valuable than the other. The roles of men and women are divinely designed to be complementary.

People who believe men and women are not equal in God’s eyes often have a misunderstanding of God’s Word or they have taken Scriptures out of context. When Eve gave into temptation and Adam was disobedient in the Garden of Eden, the harmonious relationship between them was broken by sin, and each had their own consequences to bare. But there is not even a hint of Eve being inferior or unequal to Adam.

I am going to go out on a limb here (this may offend some) and state what I believe is the obvious: God has chosen distinct roles for both men and women so that they may complement each other in a way that most glorifies Himself. And it is when we embrace those differences in all of His glory, then we truly understand the beauty of God’s plan for creating both man and woman.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Korean BBQ Short Ribs (Galbi)

Ingredients: Serves 5-6

3/4 cup soy sauce
3/4 cup pear juice
3 tablespoons white vinegar
1/4 1/4 cup dark brown sugar
2 tablespoons white sugar
1 tablespoon pepper
2 tablespoons sesame oil
1/4 cup minced garlic
1/2 large onion, minced
3 pounds Korean-style short ribs (beef chuck flank steak, cut 1/3 to 1/2 inch thick across bones)

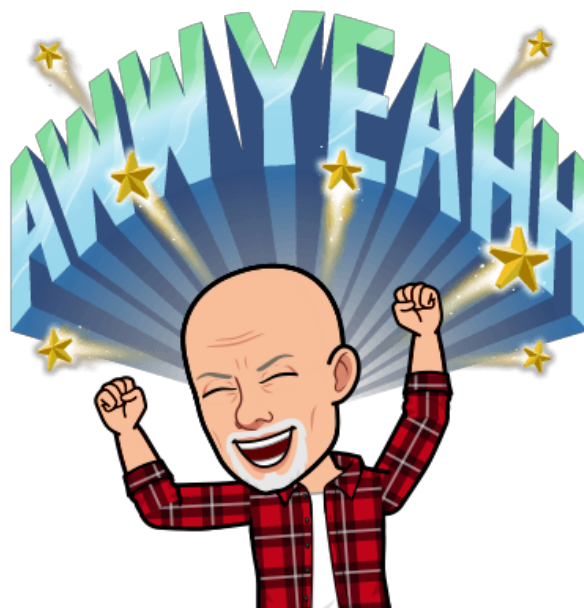


Instructions: Prepare Your Grill on Medium High

Pour soy sauce, pear juice and vinegar into a large, non-metallic bowl. Whisk in brown sugar, white sugar, pepper, sesame oil, garlic and onion until the sugars have dissolved. Submerge the ribs in this marinade and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 7 to 12 hours, the longer the better.

Remove ribs from the marinade, shake off excess, and discard the marinade. Cook on preheated grill until the meat is no longer pink, 5 to 7 minutes per side. Traditionally served with rice.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.” Psalm 119:111

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Shrimp Creole**

Shrimp Creole is a tomato-based shrimp dish that is usually served over rice. Creole is a type of cooking that originated in southern Louisiana, although its influences include Spanish, Native American, Portuguese and French. Making this dish starts by creating a mixture of butter and flour (roux), and then adding vegetables like celery, onions, sweet bell peppers and usually hot peppers, but I tend to not add hot peppers. If you want a little kick, and a traditional creole, go for it and add the heat!

Shrimp Creole is a perfect example of how settlers in southern Louisiana used local ingredients available to them. When combined with the cooking styles of their home countries it created a delicious dish. It is almost always served white rice or grits.

The term "Creole" was used to indicate New World products originated from Old World stock, and could relate to an individual, a type of building structure and of course food. When the term is being used to identify a person, Creole historically referred to those born in Louisiana during the French and Spanish periods, regardless of their ethnicity.

Today Creole transcends racial boundaries just as it always has. It connects people to their colonial heritages.

What is your heritage? Not everyone feels like they have a bond with their cultural heritage, but many people do. Some people embrace their

heritage because it allows them to connect with others of similar mindsets and backgrounds. Cultural heritage can give a person a natural sense of unity and belonging within a group and allows them to better understand previous generations and the history of where we come from.

Cultural heritage is made up of many things. And they are important to a lot of people. But no heritage is more important than a heritage that is spiritual and eternal. God’s Word has a lot to say about inheritance and the fact that children of God are given a spiritual heritage. **Ephesians 1:11a** tells us: ***“In Him we have obtained an inheritance...”***

For the Christian parent there is nothing more important than to pass down their faith to their children. **Psalm 127:3** says; ***“Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.”*** God entrusts parents with vulnerable tiny little human beings and gives them the responsibility of raising and training those children to know and honor Him.

A cultural or family heritage is a magnificent gift that brings enjoyment to our lives and helps us to identify where we came from. But these heritages are temporary. The Bible urges us to set our sights on our eternal heritage. **Colossians 3:1-4** says: ***“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”*** Wow! This is the ultimate heritage anyone could ever have!

If our heritage is in Christ Jesus then we don’t have to wait until we arrive in heaven to start enjoying our spiritual inheritance. According to **Psalm 119:111** God’s Holy Word has been passed down to us as an inheritance. ***“Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart.”***

There is no greater heritage to belong to than that of Jesus Christ. And there is no greater earthly inheritance to embrace than God’s Holy Word. **Hebrews 4:12** reminds us that: ***“The Word of God is alive and active.”*** As we live here on earth there is no inheritance more nourishing, enjoyable and powerful than spending time in God’s Word and allowing it to transform us, encourage us, and draw us closer to Christ.

Lynda's Recipe for Shrimp Creole

Ingredients: 4-6

1 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 green bell pepper, diced
1/2 red bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup onion, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1 14.5 ounce can diced tomatoes
1 8 ounce can tomato sauce
1 cup chicken broth (or vegetable broth)
1 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning
1 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 pound large shrimp peeled and deveined
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon water



Instructions:

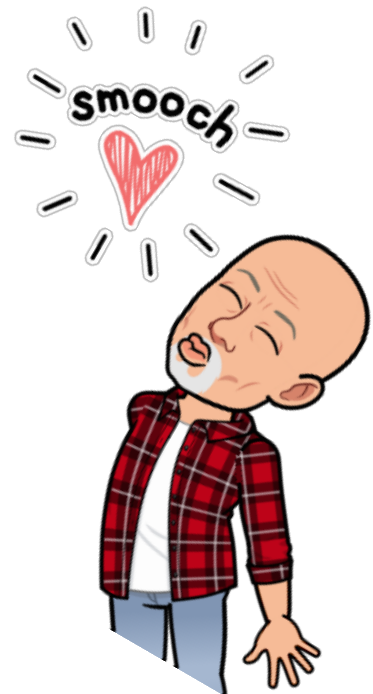
In a medium sized skillet over medium high heat add the olive oil. Add in bell peppers, onion and celery and cook until tender.

Add in diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, chicken broth, red pepper flakes, and Worcestershire sauce. Add shrimp, Old Bay seasoning and cover and let simmer for about 5-7 minutes until the shrimp are cooked through.

Mix together the cornstarch and water and stir into the sauce and cook for an additional 3-4 minutes to let the sauce thicken.

Serve over rice (I use brown rice). Enjoy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu:
Grilled Salmon with Sesame and Lemon

My favorite salmon is Atlantic salmon. This is one of the largest salmon species. I know, it’s a sin for me to have this be my favorite when I live in the Pacific Northwest. But it is. What can I say?

The Atlantic salmon are very fast swimmers and can jump almost 12 feet! Their actual species’ name is Salar, which means the ‘leaper’ because of its incredible ability to jump over rapids and low waterfalls to reach their spawning territory.

Atlantic salmon begin their life in freshwater and travel to the ocean to feed and grow, and return to freshwater to lay their eggs.

Once their eggs hatch, the salmon spend two to three years in the river that they were born in before going on a one to three year journey in the North Atlantic where they grow into an adult. They will travel over 6,000 miles before coming back home to start the spawning cycle all over again.

Unlike their Pacific cousins (which should be my favorite), Atlantic salmon do not normally die after laying their eggs. They migrate back out to the ocean to feed and recover, and if they are not dinner themselves by larger predators, they return to spawn again. And so the cycle of life continues and they can live up to 6 years.

The cycle of life for the Christian would be more accurately called the “sequence of life”. It is a natural process for Christians to be growing closer to and more like their Savior Jesus Christ as their lives are lived out here on earth and then ultimately in heaven.

Determining the correct priorities in our lives is fundamental for our growth as a Christian. We need

to always be putting God first. But there is a pesky little problem called “sinful nature” that tends to get in our way all too often when it comes to our faith growing.

I believe that there are Christians that think that they don’t need to do anything to grow their faith. They lean on the belief that everything has already been done for them on the cross and the Holy Spirit will do the rest. It is certainly true that **Titus 3:5** says: ***“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.”*** There is absolutely nothing we can do to earn our way to heaven. When Jesus died on the cross and rose again from the grave He did everything! But eternal salvation isn’t the only thing that matters about being a Christian.

Once we receive Christ into our hearts as Savior we begin our cycle of life here on earth as a Christian. But we can’t do this alone. **John 14:26** says ***“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”*** It’s the role of the Holy Spirit to help us grow in the faith that we now have in Christ, so that we will understand and experience Christ’s will for our life and His love in our heart.

It is the Holy Spirit who works in and through us to help us become more like Jesus. This is called Sanctification, which is the faith cycle of a believer’s life while still on earth. We know that our Justification (our salvation), is only in Jesus. At the same time, our motives, desires and actions are a shared responsibility with the Holy Spirit. Because of our free will we are rightly held responsible for them.

As Christians living out our ‘sequence of life’ here on earth, the Holy Spirit guides us to maturity. Our character changes for the better. We become more like Jesus Christ. When we relinquish our own will, and are obedient to God’s Word we grow in Him; We become more like Him; We grow to love others; We enjoy life from a whole new perspective, a godly one. And that’s how we experience God’s glorious riches while still on this earth.

I don’t just want my life sequences to be striving to enjoy life because of grace, but a life thriving to enjoy Christ because of Grace.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Grilled Salmon with Sesame and Lemon

Ingredients: Serves 4

4 (6-oz.) skin-on salmon fillets, pin bones removed, patted dry
2 tablespoons plus 1/3 cup olive oil, plus more for grill
1 lemon
1 shallot, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves-minced
2 teaspoons black sesame seeds
1 teaspoon honey
1/2 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1/2 teaspoon of pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup basil leaves, sliced in thin sticks



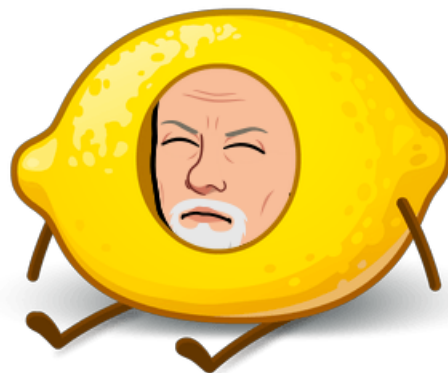
Instructions: Grilling

Prepare a grill for medium heat. Rub salmon with 2 tablespoons of olive oil; and season both sides with salt (this isn't your 1 teaspoon).

Juice your lemon into a small bowl; you should have about 1/3 cup. Add shallot, garlic, sesame seeds, honey, sesame oil, and 1/3 cup olive oil, basil; season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Toss to combine.

Clean and oil grate, then immediately place salmon on grill, skin side down. Cover and grill, without turning, until skin is lightly charred and flesh is opaque all the way through, 6-8 minutes. Transfer salmon to shallow bowls or plates; let cool slightly. Spoon sauce over salmon. Top with basil; sprinkle with salt.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5: 8

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Kaiden’s Salmon Patties**

My sweet grandson Kaiden just turned 16 years old! I can not believe that he is that old and as always, I ask “Where has time gone?”

When Kaiden was 3, he and his mama (our daughter) lived with us for a year in Hawaii. Nikki’s wonderful hubby, Greg, was stationed in Korea, and with Nikki due to deliver their second child, they decided that the best thing would be for her and Kaiden to come live with us. We loved it too!

When Nikki went into labor Jeff and I took turns being with her as her coach at the hospital. One of us would stay with Kaiden while the other one was there for Nikki. It was my time for Kaiden duty. I told Kaiden that it was time for dinner, and he said he wanted “crabby patties.” I obviously had no idea what he was talking about, so I decided to try and guess.

I asked him if he wanted a hamburger? “No”, he said. How about pancakes? “No Nana!” On and on this went until he broke down in tears because his Nana didn’t know what a “crabby patty” was. I was so desperate that I finally called Jeff and said “You have to ask Nikki what a crabby patty is.”

Nikki was deep in labor pains mind you, but I was determined to give my precious grandson what he wanted! I could hear her frustration as her dad asked her my question. I heard that ever annoying “MOM SIGH” in the background. Then, in between her breaths, she yelled to her dad that crabby patties are on the Sponge Bob Square Pants TV show! I still

had no idea what that meant or how to help my sweet grandbaby. But I made him a grilled cheese sandwich, and sat him on my lap and I watched “Sponge Bob Square Pants” for the first time in my life! Kaiden was a happy camper, and I was his hero and that’s all that mattered to me!

The world seems to have a fascination with heroes, super humans with amazing abilities that always save the day. Marvel and DC are huge businesses creating movies that people can't wait to see, action figures that kids have to have, and costumes to dress up in and mimic their favorite characters.

There is something satisfying and secure in thinking that there is someone that can conquer the world; Someone that no one can bring down; Someone that is invincible! Everyone needs a hero to look up too. This is all fine, good and innocent as long as we don’t cross the line into worshipping that person.

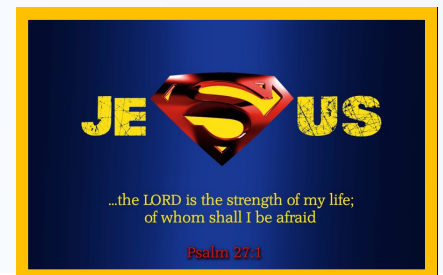
Let’s be honest. There is only One true super hero. Jesus is the most powerful being in the Universe, and nothing can stop Him. He is the world’s supreme superhero, because there are no weaknesses or limitations that make Him imperfect.

Most superheroes are motivated by saving innocent people and destroying their enemies. But Jesus died on the cross for all people on earth, even those that didn’t follow Him, or respect Him. Even His enemies! What superhero would do something like this? Only Jesus would die to save the people who wanted Him dead. Jesus knew that His life was the only way that people could truly be forgiven for their sins. **Romans 5:8** says, ***“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*** His ability to forgive even the worst enemy is without a doubt a supernatural power.

Our ultimate superhero, Jesus Christ, came to heal the sick, feed the hungry, love the unlovable and ultimately bring eternal life to everyone who received Him.

Not all superheroes wear capes. Mine, the ultimate only true superhero, wore a cross and He did it for you and for me!

In His Grace,
Lynda



Lynda's Recipe for Kaiden's Salmon Patties

Ingredients: 4-6

1/2 pound fresh salmon fillets
Olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
5 tablespoons unsalted butter
3/4 cup small, diced yellow onion
2 stalks small, diced celery
1/2 cup small, diced red bell pepper
1/2 small, diced yellow pepper
1/2 cup small, diced green bell pepper
1/4 cup minced fresh flat, leaf parsley
1 tablespoon capers, drained
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/2 teaspoon Siracha
1 1/2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning
1 cup bread crumb
1/2 cup mayonnaise
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
2 extra-large eggs, lightly beaten

Dill Sauce:

1/2 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon dill weed
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
Salt to taste
Mix everything together, chill

Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F (250° later)

Place the salmon on a sheet pan. Brush with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 20 minutes, until just cooked. Remove from the oven and cover with aluminum foil. Allow to rest for 15 minutes and then refrigerate until cold. You need your salmon cold to make the patties.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat put 3 tablespoons of the butter, 2 tablespoons olive oil, the onion, celery, red, yellow and green bell peppers, parsley, capers, Siracha, Worcestershire sauce, Old Bay, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Cook until the vegetables are soft and cool to room temperature.

Tear the bread slices in pieces and put it in a food processor fitted with a steel blade. This should give you about 1 cup of bread crumbs. Place the bread crumbs on a sheet pan and toast in the oven for 5 minutes until lightly browned.

Flake (using a fork) the chilled salmon into a large bowl. Add the bread crumbs, mayonnaise, mustard, and eggs. Add the vegetable mixture and mix well. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes. Shape into cakes of your desired size.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons butter and 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the salmon cakes a couple at a time and fry for 3 to 4 minutes on each side, until browned. Drain on paper towels; keep them warm in a preheated 250 degree oven and serve hot on top of your favorite salad and top with your dill sauce.



Bon Appétit, Lynda



“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”
Matthew 11:28

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu:
Creamy Coconut Shrimp with Tomatoes

Coconuts probably originated somewhere in Indo-Malaya and are one of the most essential crops of the tropics. Coconut meat is high in fat and can be dried or eaten fresh. The liquid of the nut is used in beverages.

The lean, ring-shaped trunk of the coconut palm grows to a height of up to 80 feet from a puffy base and is overcome by a beautiful crown of massive featherlike leaves. Matured fruits, oval or ellipsoid in shape, 12–18 inches in length and 6–8 inches in diameter, have a thick husk surrounding the recognizable single-seeded nut. A hard shell encloses the inconsequential seed with its abundant tissue, composed of both meat and liquid. Coconut fruits float readily and have been distributed extensively by ocean currents and by humans throughout the tropics.

Although the coconut finds its greatest commercial operations in the industrial countries of the Western world, its usefulness in its native areas of culture is even greater. Indonesians claim that coconuts have as many uses as there are days in a year. Other valuable products resulting from the coconut palm include toddy, palm cabbage, and construction materials. Toddy, a beverage drunk fresh, fermented, or refined, is produced from the sweetish sap yielded by the young flower stalks when injured or cut; toddy is also a source of sugar and alcohol. Palm cabbage, the delicate young bud cut from the top of the tree is, like the buds from other palms, eaten as a salad vegetable. Mature palm leaves are used in thatching and weaving baskets. The fibrous, decay-resistant tree trunk is included into the construction of huts; it is also exported as a cabinet wood called porcupine wood.

When Jeff and I lived in Hawaii we had several coconut trees on our property. In the corner of our front yard we had one very large tree. And one of my absolute most favorite sounds while living there was the sound of the coconut tree leaves swaying in the breeze at night. When one of the coconuts would fall off of those trees I was always amazed at how hard the outer shell was. It usually took a hammer and chisel to crack it open!

Coconuts remind me of how people deal with, or should I say, don’t deal with their hurt. We often think that if we ignore our hurts and build up a wall to protect our heart against the pain, then we will be just fine. But that just isn’t the case, is it?

Like the hard outer shell of the coconut, in order to get to the real stuff, we need to break open the outer shell of our heart! If we don’t allow ourselves to feel the pain we might be caring around, eventually it comes out in all different ways. And those ways are almost always very unhealthy manifestations. So we have to learn how to let Jesus help us carry our pain and deal with it appropriately.

In Matthew 11:28 Jesus said: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” Jesus is giving us an invitation to allow Him to lovingly remove the outer shell of our heavy hearts and trust Him. We all have burdens and hurts in life so why not come to Christ and have Him carry what we cannot carry by ourselves?

One of the dangers we face when we choose to hold on to hurt is becoming bitter. Pain is unavoidable in life. There’s just no way around it. So we have to deal with it if we want to be healthy emotionally and spiritually. So how do we do it?

In order to not become bitter and build a hard shell around our hearts, we need to cast our pain on Jesus. Otherwise we will just wallow in our misery. We then become unhealthy spiritually, emotionally and even physically. It has been said that ‘If you don’t transform your pain, you will surely transmit it’. In other words if we don’t deal with our pain, we will keep passing it on. But we can’t really transform our pain on our own. That’s why we need Jesus. He can transform our pain because He is not only an expert on pain but also carried our pain on the cross.

Jesus invites us to come to Him, and then He promises He will give us rest. Just like the coconut balm that softens our skin, Jesus will soften our hearts once again.

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Creamy Coconut Shrimp with Tomatoes

Ingredients: Serves 4

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion-chopped 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon ginger, minced
- 2 tablespoon basil, chopped
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 2 cups tomatoes, chopped
- 1 1/3 cup can lite coconut milk
- 2 lb. shrimp



Instructions:

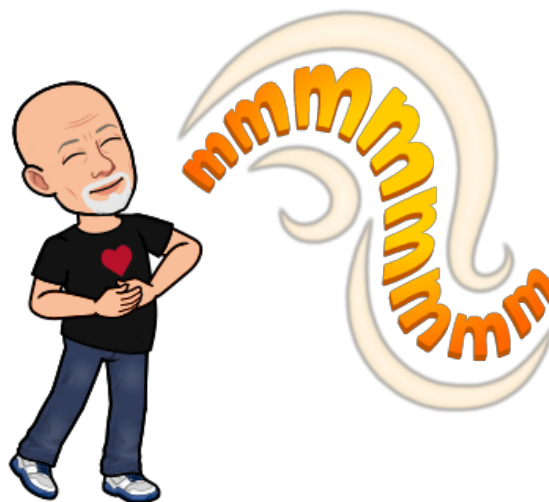
Heat the coconut oil over medium high heat in a sauté pan.

Add the onion and cook for 3-4 minutes until it begins to soften. Add the garlic, ginger, basil, and red pepper flakes. Cook for 1 minute until fragrant.

Add the tomatoes and cook until they soften and begin to release their liquid. Season with salt and pepper.

Add the coconut milk and bring to a simmer. Let cook for 5 minutes.

Add the shrimp and cook for 5-7 minutes until pink and cooked through. Top with more basil. I serve it over pasta!



Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”
1 Corinthians 16:13

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today: **Very Special Sautéed Morel Mushrooms**

I have always wanted to cook with Morel mushrooms, but due to their high cost I have refrained from buying them. Recently a very special person brought me a bag of his Morel mushrooms that he had harvested off of his property. I was like a giddy kid that just received a long awaited gift. I couldn’t wait to try them out in my kitchen!

Morels are one of the most sought after mushrooms for the kitchen. Known for their unique looking honeycombed cap and hollow inside, they are hard to miss, but on the other hand they are hard to find sometimes, and they only grow in the springtime. So every spring, Morel lovers and chefs head to the woods to find these delicious little treats.

Morels have a unique meaty texture that’s different from other mushrooms. They have a nutty yet earthy, woody flavor to them. They are delicious cooked in butter and garlic.

It took me several days to cook my Morels. Let me tell you about my special friend that shared his Morel mushrooms with me. His name is Bob Anderson. Bob and his sweet wife Ilene have been members of our church for years. Ilene attended Immanuel as a child.

While we have missed seeing almost all of our members this past year during the pandemic, Bob and Ilene were two members that we saw regularly. Every 1 1/2 to 2 weeks Bob and Ilene would come by with two dozen fresh eggs from their chickens.

Bob is one of those guys that you like immediately when you meet him. He is friendly, unarming and delightful. The first time I met Bob was when we had just moved back here and I stopped by the parsonage to see how the laying of the new floor was going. In walks a tall man with farmer-like

overalls on. He welcomed me with the warmest spirit, even offering me some of the lunch that Ilene had packed for him. From that moment on I knew that I would like Bob.

Bob is everything that you would think of when you here someone say “That is a true man of God”. **1 Corinthians 16:13** reminds me of him: ***“Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”*** Bob is a man that could stand firm in his faith. He was a gentlemen. He was certainly a very strong man. Our family called him “Bob the builder.” I mean seriously, for goodness sake, He and Ilene built their log cabin home from their own trees which he fell himself!

Bob and Ilene would leave every December to go to their home in Yuma, where there was lots of sun but no snow. I would always send them their church bulletins to keep them up on things here, and I would usually add a sticky-note message telling them that I missed them. And I really did too. I was always overjoyed on the Sunday that they would return to our church family. Getting a hug from Bob (and Ilene) always gave me a sense of security.

Bob never spoke out of turn or too soon either. If you asked him a question he would take time to contemplate his answer before giving it. I really appreciated that about him. Bob had a heart of gold. He was generous and always willing to help where he could. Bob was an all-around great guy!

The day after Bob brought me my Morel mushrooms he suffered from a massive heart attack. He had just been to our house with Ilene the day before and he had shared that his doctor wanted him have some tests done on his heart and they were scheduled for next week. But that never happened for Bob.

Bob entered into heaven just a few days after I saw him at my home. Along with many, many others, I will miss this godly man here on earth. He was special. He was a kind, strong, faithful man. But as we are left grieving him, God has embrace him and welcomed him home!

“When a man of God dies, nothing of God dies.”
A.W Tozer

Thank you for the Morels Bob, they were delicious just like you said they would be! But more importantly thank you for touching my life, and so many other lives in such a positive way with your faith, your generosity, your strength and your kindness. You will be missed for now. See you soon! In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Very Special Sautéed Morel Mushrooms

Ingredients: Serves 2-3

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 tablespoons unsalted butter
Morel mushrooms, sliced in half (about twenty whole mushrooms)
Garlic, minced
Salt
Fresh basil



Instructions:

In a sauté pan add your olive oil over medium high heat. Add your Morel mushrooms to the pan.

Add a pinch of salt and cook for about 4-5 minutes.

Lower the heat to medium low and add the minced garlic and the butter to the pan. Cook for another 1-2 minutes until butter is completely melted.

Take off heat and top with ribbons of fresh garlic. Delicious!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.” Galatian 2:20

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Savory Sweet Potato Pie!**

The South is attributed with warm hospitality, soul food, and an influential music scene. I was born in Nashville, Tennessee, but we moved to Oregon when I was one year old. My dad on the other hand, was born and raised in Memphis, Tennessee. He loved southern foods like black eyed peas, collard greens and cornbread. And he loved sweet potato pie.

My dad’s love for this southern pie was not a savory desire. He loved the sweet and creamy sweet potato pie that is much like the traditional pumpkin pie. But I have never been able to become accustomed to eating any form of potato with sugar, so I was very happy when I ran across different ways to cook savory sweet potatoes.

While buttery vegetable pie recipes date back to Medieval Europe, sweet potato pie started appearing in the southern United States from the early colonial days. The use of sweet potatoes in Southern and African-American cuisine traces back to West African influences. The sweet potato, which is native to the Americas, was likely used by African slaves as an alternative to the yam that grew in their native land. Recipes for sweet potato pie first appeared in cookbooks in the 18th century, where it was included with savory vegetable dishes. By the 19th century, sweet potato pie was more commonly classified as a dessert. But it looks like the savory pies are making a come back, at least in my kitchen anyway.

Just because something is “classified” as one thing doesn’t mean it is the only way to do something. As with my savory sweet potato pie, some things can be changed!

I have never let ‘classifications’ define me. I don’t like labels put on anyone. I have never really fit into what some people might classify a Lutheran pastor’s wife to be like. I don’t sing well. I love to sing, but it isn’t a pretty sound...trust me! I don’t play the organ and I wasn’t raised a Lutheran. I have strong opinions about certain things and if asked or provoked I will share those opinions gladly. And I prefer to be introduced as Lynda, not the pastor’s wife.

Whether it is called classification, grouping or labeling, it is a trap that we all fall into and it isn’t necessarily a good one. In this sinful, fallen world labels will always be changing. What “conservative” meant fifty years ago doesn’t mean the same thing today. Just like being a pastor’s wife today doesn’t look the same way it did fifty years ago.

We tend to find our identity in labels. When I was in high school we classified types of people as nerds, jocks, socials, stoners, popular or unpopular. As we get older the labels change. We tend to size people up by being rich or poor, educated or uneducated, conservative or liberal, Republican or Democrat. The danger lies in placing your identity in those labels and “attaching them to your forehead”.

For the Christian this practice should not apply. Especially when it is referring to our spiritual lives. The Bible makes it simple for us and gives very basic labels. Based upon who we say Jesus is and whether or not we know Him, we are either ‘lost’ or ‘found’. As Christians we should truly have only one label that classifies us. **Galatians 2:20** says: ***“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”***

One of the greatest blessings about our identity in Christ is the grace we are given in order to grow into the spiritual maturity that reflects our true identity in Him. The only classification I want attached to my forehead for all to see is the label “Redeemed by Jesus Christ”! Our lives in light of our identity in Christ are filled with a heavenly Father, a large, loving family, and the knowledge that we are aliens in this world and we are citizens of heaven.

If you know that your identity is in Christ, it won’t matter what classification, label or group you have found yourself in...All that matters is who you are in Jesus. It is in Him that we find out who we truly are and what we are living for.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Savory Sweet Potato Pie

Ingredients: Serves 6

3 large sweet potatoes
1 (9-inch) Pie Crust (I buy mine)
1/2 stick of softened butter
1/2 cup shredded pecorino cheese
1/4 cup crumbled blue cheese
3 large eggs, beaten
1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon dried sage
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 ground pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 chopped and sauteed onion
1/2 cup bacon, chopped and cooked (optional)



Instructions Preheat Oven to 375°F

Using a baking sheet with parchment paper, roast potatoes for 45 minutes to 1 hour. They should be soft to the touch. Let the potatoes cool and then peel them. After your potatoes are done turn down heat to 350°F.

In a large bowl add potatoes, butter, cheeses, eggs, spices, and sauteed onion. Stir mixture until smooth and combined. If you are adding bacon now is the time to fold it into your pie mixture.

Pour everything into your pie crust and bake for 40-45 minutes. It is done when a toothpick comes out clean from the center of the pie.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Then Jesus declared, ‘I Am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty.’” John 6:35

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Cheesy Zucchini Bake**

Zucchini is a summer squash which means that it is picked while it is young and while its rind is still tender and edible. The skin of the zucchini comes in dark green, light green, orange or deep yellow. It is harvested when it is about 8-10 inches long because it loses good taste if it is left to grow older.

Botanically speaking, Zucchini is actually a fruit, but it is treated as a vegetable in a cooking context and is often cooked and prepared into savory meals. But it can also be used in sweet recipes as well. Who hasn’t tried a zucchini bread in their lifetime? The world’s largest zucchini was over 8 feet long. I bet they got some serious loaves of zucchini bread out of that one!

Let’s talk bread. Bread is considered a staple food. A person can survive a long time on only bread and water. Bread is such a basic food item that it becomes synonymous for food in general. I can’t help but think that this essential food that is known all over the world became a staple accidentally.

Bread, specifically in the Bible, is a significant food. It came in the shape of manna in the desert for the Israelites. It was broken at the Passover meals, and Jesus fed over 5,000 plus people with two fish and five loaves. **John 6:35** says; ***“Then Jesus declared, ‘I Am the Bread of Life. Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in Me will never be thirsty.’”*** This is one of the seven “I Am”

statements of Jesus found in the Gospel of John. Jesus used the phrase “I Am” in seven declarations about Himself. In all seven, He uses the I Am with incredible metaphors that convey His salvation toward the world.

Literary and figurative language is used in several places in the Bible. From the poetry in the Psalms to the parables of Jesus, imagery and metaphor are a part of how God speaks to us in His Word. It communicates heavenly concepts that are difficult to put into words and provides concrete images to help us grasp abstract, metaphysical ideas. The Bread of Life Jesus is speaking of is not physical bread, but the bread of spiritual food found only through Him. By likening Himself with bread, Jesus is saying He is essential for life.

Jesus also says in **Matthew 5:6** ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”*** When Jesus declares that those who come to Him will never hunger or thirst, He is saying He will satisfy all our spiritual needs and we will be made righteous in the sight of God.

When Jesus died on the cross, He took the sins of the world upon Himself and paid for them all. When we place our faith in Him, our sins are credited to Jesus, and His righteousness is credited to us.

I spend a lot of time thinking about what food I am going to cook. I must confess that I don’t spend as much time planning my spiritual diet. There needs to be a time and place every day where we all go and get fed spiritually. We need to live on a constant diet of God’s precious Word. Through it, He nourishes us and prepares us for His work. He expands our heart and opens our eyes. Just as food gives us energy for our physical activities, God’s Word gives us the nourishment for our daily walk with Him.

The amazing thing about God’s Word is that the more we eat it (read it and meditate on it), the more we crave it and will want more. The bottom line is if we aren’t craving His Holy Word it is because we have ignored it, or there is a sin in our life that is making us avoid it. And this is just crazy behavior because the longer we stay away from God’s Word the farther apart we are from Him.

Praise God for His grace! Because even when we don’t deserve it, when we completely neglect Him, He loves us anyway. He pursues us no matter what!

We all need to be mindful about our spiritual diet. We can’t stay on milk alone if we want to grow deeper in our Biblical knowledge and closer to our Savior. And the best thing about the “Bread of Life” is that it never gets stale!



“A cheerful heart is good medicine.”

Proverbs 17:22a

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu: **Risotto with Leeks and Shiitake Mushrooms!**

I am using Shiitake mushrooms for this recipes. They tend to be on the expensive side, ranging from 12-16 dollars per pound. But when you buy them dried and rehydrate them, you can get them much cheaper. You can also use button mushrooms or baby bello mushrooms as well and they are the cheapest. I served my risotto with sausage and apples.

The most expensive mushrooms in the world are rare and hard to cultivate. They are sensitive and not easy to mass-produce, therefore driving prices up for consumers.

If you’re a mushroom lover, you probably already know that they’re edible fungi. Sounds gross, but the good news is that they’re highly nutritious and delicious.

Mushrooms grow wild in habitats across the globe, can be cultivated by individuals, and are being produced by innovative mushroom farmers in metropolitan warehouses, basements, caves and under trees on forested acreage. The demand for “trendy and expensive” mushrooms is flourishing. And some of them fetch very high prices.

Mushrooms are actually the “fruit” of fungi that thrive under certain specific conditions. They are fast-growing and flexible and have been used in several ways by diverse cultures throughout history. Tens of thousands of varieties of fungi have been identified. But a relatively small number of edible mushrooms exist.

Mushrooms are loaded with antioxidants, minerals and healthy vitamins. Some have significant amounts of potassium, iron, manganese, Vitamin D, B2 and B6. They are also low in calories and fat, high in fiber and protein. Bottom line, they are good for you!

I came back home from grocery shopping the other day. Immediately Jeff asked me where the mushrooms were. I said, "There aren't any. There wasn't 'mush-room' in my cart." He started throwing things at me. Suddenly he wasn't a 'fungi' anymore. Hee-hee! I am sure you have all heard that “laughter is good medicine”. It’s true, laughter is a strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that bring about healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Laughter strengthens our immune system, boosts our mood, can diminish our pain, and helps us alleviate stress.

My husband has a picture of Jesus in his office that is my absolute favorite. It is charcoal drawing of Jesus laughing. Traditionally, paintings of Jesus have tended toward unhappy or melancholy portrayals of a somber, gloomy Savior. It is true that Jesus bore our sins and He suffered an excruciating death on the Cross for us. But I really don't think that He was always unhappy or stern as so many famous pictures portray.

The picture of Jesus that we find in the Gospels is one of a well-balanced, charismatic personality. Jesus had a serious mission to complete in this world, but I don't believe that He was somber all the time. Even though there is no verse in the Bible that says, “Jesus laughed,” we know that He empathized with us completely and felt all of our emotions. Laughter is part of life. Scripture does tell us that He experienced joy: **“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11**

To think that Jesus never laughed or had joy bubble up from His spirit is to deny a huge aspect of who He was in His human form. How could He know the depth of our sorrow or pain if He never experienced joy or laughter? Laughter is a part of our lives, and we know that Jesus empathized with us in all of our humanity. I think that there are many times when Jesus wept for us and He was brought to sorrow because of our sinfulness, but I just can't imagine Jesus never laughing!

Proverbs 17:22a says: **“A cheerful heart is good medicine.”** I think we could all use a little more laughter in our lives these day. Laughter is a powerful and contagious thing. God gave us the ability to laugh, so let's make sure we are doing more of it.

“Laughter is the most beautiful and beneficial therapy God ever granted humanity.”
Chuck Swindoll.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Risotto with Leeks and Shiitake Mushrooms

Ingredients: Serves 6-8

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 ounces of dried shiitake mushrooms
1 1/2 cups of arborio rice
6 cups of chicken stock (or veggie stock)
1 large leek, thinly sliced
1/2 cup pecorino cheese, shredded
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper



Instructions

In a small bowl add your dried shiitake mushrooms. Pour boiling water over them until covered and let sit for at least 20 minutes or until completely softened.

In a small pan on medium heat, add your stock. Keep it warm on your back burner the whole time. It is helpful to also have a ladle near by. Your stock must be warm when adding to your arborio rice each time.

In a large skillet on medium heat sauté your arborio rice in 1 tablespoon olive oil for about 5 minutes until your rice smells nutty. Don't leave it or it will burn.

Add your leeks and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Sauté until your leeks are done.

Add your first ladle of stock to your rice. Mix it really well. Add another ladle and let cook down until your stock is gone. Continue to add your stock in this order. Risotto is a labor of love that is worth the effort. This method is what creates delicious rice.

Take your mushrooms out of the hot water and slice them up. Add them to your risotto. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper.

Take your risotto off of the heat and add your cheese. Mix well. You should have a creamy wonderful dish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**

Lynda's Recipe for Cheesy Zucchini Bake

Ingredients: Serves 4-5

3 medium zucchini
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon Salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 chopped onion
1 teaspoon sweet paprika
2 16 oz cans of diced tomatoes
1/8 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon thyme
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 teaspoon rosemary
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 cup freshly grated Gruyere cheese
fresh chopped basil to top



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 450°

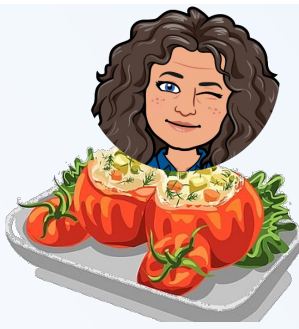
To make tomato sauce, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat and add onion. Cook until tender, about 5 minutes.

Add garlic. Cook, stirring, until you can smell the garlic. Then add tomatoes, salt, pepper, sugar, thyme, rosemary and basil . Increase heat to medium-high. When tomatoes are bubbling briskly, stir and reduce heat to medium. Cook, stirring often, until tomatoes have cooked down and are beginning to stick to pan, 15 to 25 minutes, depending on consistency.

Line 2 sheet pans with parchment. Trim ends off zucchini and cut in half crosswise, then into lengthwise slices, about 1/4 to 1/3 inch thick. Season on both sides with salt and pepper and toss with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Arrange zucchini slices on baking sheets in one layer and sprinkle with paprika. Roast for 12 minutes, until lightly browned. Remove from oven and reduce heat to 375 degrees.

To assemble the dish, spray a 8x8 oven proof dish with olive oil. Spread 1/4 cup tomato sauce over bottom of dish. Arrange a third of the zucchini in an even layer over tomato sauced and sprinkle 1/4 cup Gruyere. Spoon a third of remaining sauce over zucchini and sprinkle with 1/4 cup Gruyere. Repeat with 2 more layers, ending with 1/4 cup Gruyere. Drizzle on remaining tablespoon olive oil. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, until bubbling and browned on the top and edges. Remove from heat and allow to sit for 5 to 10 minutes before serving.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



Way to hot to cook. Trust me it's delish!

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”

Ephesians 2:8

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God's love and grace!

On the menu today: **Cheesy Stuffed Tomatoes**

Believe it or not during Colonial Times, people wouldn't dream of put a tomato near their mouths, let alone try to eat one. Legend had it that if you ate a tomato, its poison would turn your blood into acid.

The tomato is a vegetable whose history has not been easy and it was steeped with mistaken beliefs and obstructions. Eventually this South American plant managed to spread all across the world, becoming one of the best known food ingredients and one of the most beloved vegetables (even though theoretically it is a fruit) ever.

“An interesting aspect of tomato history is the classic debate: Is the Tomato a Fruit or Vegetable? I guess that depends on whom you are asking. By definition, a fruit is the edible plant structure of a mature ovary of a flowering plant, usually eaten raw; some are sweet like apples, but the ones that are not sweet such as tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, etc. are commonly called vegetables. Botanists claim that a fruit is any fleshy material that covers a seed or seeds where as a horticulturists point of view would pose that the tomato is a vegetable plant. Until the late 1800's the tomato was classified as a fruit to avoid taxation, but this was changed after a Supreme Court ruling that the tomato is a vegetable and should be taxed accordingly.” *(Taken from www.tomato-cages.com)*

When you sum it all up and look back at history, it is fair to say that the tomato has been labeled as a toxic plant, a tax-evading fruit, and a taxable vegetable. Even so, the tomato is the most loved vegetable in America and enjoyed by people all over the world.

Speaking of summing up, if you were asked to sum up Christianity in one word, what would that word be? Mine would be 'Grace'. God's grace never ceases to amaze me. He is always generous beyond infinity.

God's Riches At Christ Expense is what Christianity is all about. **2 Corinthians 8:9** tells us: ***“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.”*** My astonishment at God's grace grows the more I see that it comes at Christ's expense, which means that grace is totally undeserved by me; That God's grace can only come in Jesus; And that grace is for God's glory.

As Christians we walk in God's grace everyday, all day long. But do we really understand what grace is? The Gospel is the Good News of God's grace, it is important for us to know what grace is and to continually ask the Holy Spirit's guidance as look for what grace does in our lives on a daily basis.

Grace happened when God extended His kindness to us. Grace is what saves us: ***“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith- and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.”***

Ephesians 2:8

Grace is the core of the good news of the Gospel: ***“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me- the task of testifying to the good news of God's grace.”***

Acts 20:24

Grace gives more grace to help us conquer sin: ***“But He gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: ‘God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.’”*** **James 4:6**

Grace gives us everlasting reassurance and great hope. For the Christian that is walking in God's grace, there is no hopelessness or despair: ***“May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope...”***

2 Thessalonians 2:16

Jesus Christ and the gospel is the personification of grace! ***“The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*** **John 1:14**

Martin Luther summed it up when he said ***“Christ took our sins, and the sins of the whole world, as well as the Father's wrath, on His shoulders, and He has drowned them both in Himself so that we are thereby reconciled to God and become completely righteous.”*** He didn't use just one word, but it seems to me that it is all summed up with **GRACE: God's Riches At Christ's Expense!**

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe Cheesy Stuffed Tomatoes

Ingredients: Serves 4

4 medium Tomatoes (vine ripened)
1 cup rice (cooked)
2 tablespoons olive oil
8 firm-rip medium tomatoes
3/4 cup mozzarella
1/2 cup grated pecorino cheese
1/2 tsp dried basil
1/2 tsp dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon salt



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°

Cook your rice and set aside in a bowl.

Slice the top off all the tomatoes, reserve. Scoop out the inner flesh of the tomatoes with a spoon, leaving a thick shell. Put the pulp in a strainer set over a bowl to collect the juices.

Chop the tomato flesh and put in bowl. Add rice, mozzarella, 1/2 cup of the grated pecorino, basil, oregano and salt. Toss to combine to make your stuffing.

Pour reserved juice in the bottom of a 9 x 9 baking dish. Evenly divide stuffing in tomatoes. Arrange tops in the baking dish and place the stuffed tomato on each top, this way the tomatoes won't fall over.

Drizzle tomatoes with olive oil and sprinkle tops with remaining grated pecorino. Bake until tomatoes are soft and juicy and stuffing is browned on top, about 20 to 25 minutes.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





Sorry, but I'm not getting anywhere near a stove or grill this week!

“O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.” Psalm 90:14

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God's love and grace!

On the menu today: **Grilled Sweet Potato Salad**

Grilling became popular at campsites and picnics well into the 1940s. After World War II, the average middle class household started moving to the suburbs, and backyard grilling caught on, becoming a common trend by the 1950s.

In suburban Chicago, George Stephen, a metal-worker by trade and a tinkerer by habit, had grown unsatisfied with the flat, open fire-style grills common at the time. After he inherited the dominate interest in the Weber Bros. Metal Spinning Co., a company best-known as a producer of harbor buoys, he determined that the buoy needed some adjustments. And before you knew it the Weber grill was born and backyard cooking has never been the same.

When it comes to grilling I think it takes the formal pretense out of entertaining. Grilling is something that everyone can get involved with. There is nothing like being outside with family and friends, enjoying the fresh air, fellowship, watching your food cook and eating it right off the grill. It brings satisfaction for everyone!

Satisfaction is something everyone strives for in life isn't it? And for some, if you can't get it you even write a song about it like Mick Jagger and Keith Richards and then you sing it to the world so they all know that “they can't get no satisfaction”, even though they tried and tried.

Someone forgot to tell the Rolling Stones that the only true satisfaction comes from God Himself! According to **Psalm 90:14** Moses knew exactly where to find real satisfaction: ***“O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.”***

Satisfaction is the state of being satisfied, the feeling that one's needs or desires are fulfilled. This fulfillment seems to be a rare condition in our world today, as many people express dissatisfaction with their jobs, their marriages, their relationships, their circumstances, and themselves. The Bible teaches that finding satisfaction in life depends on having a relationship with God through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

For us to be satisfied means we are not desiring for something else. When our hunger is satisfied, we don't want any more food. When our thirst is satisfied, we don't crave more to drink. When we have accomplished a goal we set for ourselves we have a sense of accomplishment and we are satisfied with the outcome.

So it is when we are in a right relationship with God, our souls are satisfied. There is nothing more important for us as humans then to be satisfied with the condition of our soul. The soul is truly who we are and it will always be with us. Whether in heaven or hell, our soul goes with us. So of course, finding satisfaction in Jesus is of the upmost importance to our heavenly Father. **Psalm 73:25-26** says: ***“Whom have I in heaven but You? And earth has nothing I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”***

The Rolling Stones song reminds me of a whining person who will never be satisfied. And isn't that so true of us humans if we are left on our own without Divine intervention to satisfy us? It is according to **Jeremiah 17:9**: ***The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?”***

The only way we can find real satisfaction is when we realize what our true purpose is in being here to begin with. As long as we follow our own ideas of what we think will satisfy us, we never quite find it. We are like little children chasing bubbles. We are sure that if we could just grab hold of that beautiful dream, we would be forever satisfied. And then we catch it and poof, it's gone. So we start to look for another bubble! So on we go wasting our lives chasing dreams of happiness while all the time our Creator waits with His instruction manual for a truly satisfied life in His hands.

The Rolling stones were looking in all the wrong places for their satisfaction, and they were never satisfied. Where are you looking for yours?

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe Grilled Sweet Potato Salad

Ingredients: Serves 4

3 sweet potatoes, skin on and sliced into 1/2-inch rounds
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup Champaign vinegar
3 tablespoons chopped capers
2 tablespoons maple syrup
1 teaspoon whole-grain mustard
1 cup sliced scallions-whites and greens
1/2 cup toasted pecans
1 green apple, cored and julienned
1 tablespoon sliced chives
2 tablespoons toasted sesame seeds
Fresh cilantro leaves, for garnish



Instructions:

You can use an outdoor grill or a grill pan on your stove top. Put your sliced sweet potatoes in a large bowl. Sprinkle the potatoes with salt, pepper and enough olive oil to coat (this is not your 1/2 cup of oil).

In a separate bowl add 1/2 cup olive oil, capers, maple syrup, mustard, scallions, pecans, apple slices, chives and sesame seeds and set aside.

Grill the potatoes until caramelized and have beautiful grill marks on them, about 4 minutes per side.

If you are grilling outdoors, place them on the top rack and close the grill, allowing them to finish cooking through, about 20 minutes more.

If you are cooking them indoors, turn heat down to low and cover. Check on the potatoes after 10 minutes and turn over on the other side for 10 more minutes. Remove the potatoes from the grill and allow them to cool to room temperature.

Place potatoes in the bowl with the dressing and toss lightly. Top your salad with fresh cilantro. So yummy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.” James 4:14

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Caprese Spaghetti Squash**

Spaghetti squash is small to medium in size, and 2-3 pounds. It has an oblong shape, similar to a melon, and is connected to a small, rough, light brown stem. The rind is firm, smooth, and turns from green to a vibrant canary yellow or pale-yellow when mature. The flesh is thick, dense, moist, and filled with stringy pulp and flat, cream-colored seeds. Spaghetti squash is best known for its unique flesh that separates into long, translucent strings that resemble angel hair pasta. When cooked, the texture of the squash is tender and offers a very mild flavor.

Spaghetti squash was first discovered in China and was a popular vegetable in the countryside of northern Manchuria, China in the 1920’s. Today Spaghetti squash is widely available at farmers markets, grocers, and through online seed catalogs in North America, Central America, South Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Spaghetti squash is low in calories but high in fiber, vitamin C, manganese, and vitamin B6. Spaghetti squash is high in beta-carotene and vitamin C, two antioxidants that can curb free radical formation and reduce your risk of chronic diseases. Spaghetti squash is a versatile ingredient. You can bake, roast, or microwave it for use in various recipes. And yes, you can use it as pasta in your dishes!

I find myself looking for healthier alternatives to those guilty pleasures that I have enjoyed so much in the past, like pasta. In November I turn 60 years old. That is a crazy number to me. I know that

people say that age is relevant; 60 is the new 50; You’re only as old as you feel, right? Age is all in your mind...blah blah blah! But I find it so strange to say I am 60 years old because time flew by so fast and I still remember my 30th birthday like it was last year!

“A new study by U.S. Trust has found that perceptions of the onset of old age vary widely among different generations. Millennials, for example, say that you are old once you turn 59. Gen Xers, on the other hand, hold a slightly more generous view, saying that old age begins at 65. When it comes to boomers and the silent generation, both agree that you’re not really old until you hit age 73.” (www.aarp.org)

Good health is something we take for granted, until we start to lose it. When our health takes a downturn, we quickly begin to question our habits and diet. God has created the human body so that it is a wonderfully tuned instrument that is the most resilient on earth. It can endure breaks, chronic pain, emotional stress, physical stress and diseases. But I don’t think anything prepares us for how fast life goes by and how quickly our days are numbered.

James 4:14 says; ***“Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.”*** Scripture like this one is what usually causes me to be introspective and look at what my life has been like and how I will continue to live it out. The Bible has a lot to say about how we take care of the life that God has given to us. And we know that the cause of death is the result of Adam and Eve and their sin. Scripture makes it clear that God is more interested in our spiritual health than our physical well-being, but according to **3 John 1:2**; ***“Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul”***. So we also know that He does want us to be physically healthy as well.

God, who is often called the ‘Great Physician’, knows everything about us, and He’s provided the necessary keys to good health both spiritually and physically. The choice to obey the Lord and reap the benefits He so freely gives is up to us.

Pablo Picasso said: “One starts to get young at the age of sixty and then it is too late.” Life is a precious gift from God to be used for His glory! I don’t want any regrets. How about you?

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Caprese Spaghetti Squash

Ingredients: Serves 2-4

1 spaghetti squash
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper



Filling

1 tablespoon oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 yellow onion, diced
1 cup cherry tomato, halved
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
8 oz mini mozzarella balls
fresh basil, to garnish



Instructions: Preheat oven to 400°F

With a sharp knife, slice the squash in half.

Scoop out the seeds, brush with oil, and sprinkle with salt, and pepper. Bake for 40-45 minutes, or until a fork can easily pierce the skin.

In a pan over medium heat, add the oil, garlic, and onions, and sauté until onions are translucent.

Add the cherry tomatoes, salt, and pepper and simmer until they are cooked and begin to become softened.

Remove squash from the oven, with a fork pull at the edges to produce that stringy spaghetti quality. Add the squash to the tomato mixture and mix in the pan.

Add mixture back to the hollowed out spaghetti squash halves. Top with mini mozzarella balls and basil.

Return to oven and bake an additional 5-10 minutes, or until cheese melts. Serve in the squash, and top with basil. Healthy and Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

Matthew 19:26

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Sautéed Tortellini with Spinach

Tortellini are a ring-shaped stuffed Italian pasta. Not only is this pasta popular in Italy, the stuffed pasta is also well known and beloved in many other parts of the world. A wide range of fillings from mushroom and vegetable blends to abundant meat and cheese mixes can be found in tortellini, and the pasta can be served in a number of ways. Many stores stock dried tortellini, along with frozen and fresh tortellini.

Dried tortellini tends to be the lowest in quality, since the ingredients must be basically dehydrated to be made for shelf life. Frozen tortellini is kind of in the middle, it is good, but not fresh. Fresh tortellini is usually considered to be the best, since the freshest ingredients can be used, although it will have a shorter shelf life as a result. I prefer the fresh, but frozen or dried work just about as well.

Let’s talk about the shape and appearance of this delicious stuffed pasta. Supposedly the shape of tortellini was inspired by the navel. In all honesty, I would have to say that I can see that it does resemble the bellybutton.

Tortellini has undoubtedly been made for quite some time, and it is common in Italian cuisine. Different parts of Italy have their own traditional fillings and serving methods, making the dish quite varied across the region. Tortellini is among several other beloved stuffed pastas, including the manicotti and the ravioli. When it comes to this wonderful Italian favorite, don’t forget that the “pasta-bilities” are endless!

Speaking of possibilities, have you ever thought that you wanted to do something but there was just no way it could happen? Sure, there are times when we set expectations for ourselves that are just short of a true miracle, and not possible-like me trying to stuff a

basketball into a 10 foot hoop! But more often than not we dream of possibilities that are not in God’s plan for our lives. And as Christians, we know that ultimately we should want what God wants for us.

“Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.’”

Matthew 19:26 So what does “all things” actually mean? While God can do anything He wishes to do, He will not do things that would be against His righteousness or conflicting to His purposes.

When Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane with His disciples in **Matthew 26:39**; ***“He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.’”*** Jesus knew that God could intervene and not have Him crucified and die upon the Cross. But more than anything Jesus wanted to make sure that He lived out the will of His Father in Heaven.

As Christians we need to claim **Matthew 19:26** as a declaration of Truth with complete confidence. All things are possible with God! But we also need to make sure that our heart and motives are in the right place before we decide to claim this Truth for ourselves.

Philippians 4:13 is one of the most loved verses of all time for Christians, but it is also one of the most misused and misunderstood. It says: ***“I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.”***

So often Christians claim this verse for themselves when it comes to things of this world, like health, wealth and prosperity. But this verse doesn’t say “I can do all things”. It says “I can do all things through Christ”. Simply put, if it isn’t God’s plan; If it contradicts Scripture; Or His purpose for our lives, then don’t think you can just rub a ‘genie bottle’ and get what you want in life.

While God loves us more than we can imagine, His primary concern isn’t for our pleasures in life. His ultimate desire is for us to surrender to a life that is His will for us. And in doing so, we can then say with complete confidence; ***“I can do all things through Him.”***

When Paul gave us **Philippians 4:13** he concluded it with **verse 19-20**, which put everything in perspective: ***“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”*** What other possibilities could we possibly want or need?

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Sautéed Tortellini with Spinach

Ingredients: Serves 4

10 oz package of fresh tortellini
1/4 cup olive oil
2 garlic gloves, finely chopped (I use 4-you might not want too!)
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1 shallot, finely chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
4 cups fresh spinach
freshly grated Pecorino cheese



Instructions:

Cook the tortellini as directed, drain and set aside. Heat the olive oil, shallots, garlic, Italian seasoning, and salt over medium heat for about three minutes. Add the pasta in a single level. Let cook on one side for about 2-3 minutes.

Flip and let cook for an additional 2-3 minutes. To get through all the pasta, you will likely need to cook in 2 batches. Once you are done with all of the pasta, add the spinach to the pan and toss. Toss the pasta in the oil before removing from the skillet. Top with fresh grated Pecorino and serve. I served mine with sauteed shrimp!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” Matthew 6:34

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Wild Mushroom & Saffron Risotto

This recipe calls for a tiny little amount of “saffron threads”. It takes just a pinch to go a long way and makes all the difference too! But just what is this expensive, colorful spice?

Saffron is collected from the *Crocus sativus*, a flower better known as the “saffron crocus.” Each bloom from this crocus produces three yellow styles, each of which ends with a crimson-red stigma. The blend of golden style and crimson stigma create what is known as a saffron thread. These threads are pulled by hand and dried, resulting in a fragrant, beautiful spice that is prized all over the world.

So why exactly is it so costly? The answer is that it is extremely complicated to harvest saffron. The saffron crocus only blossoms during a short period in the fall. Once a flower blooms, it must be picked that same day, as it begins to wilt almost immediately. Since each flower contains only three delicate stigmas, it takes upwards of 50,000 flowers to yield one pound of dried saffron. Taking into account the intensive work needed for a comparatively small yield, it is not difficult to see why saffron is so expensive.

So what does saffron taste like? Some will note its sweet, honey-like flavor, while others find it earthy and musky, and still while others are able to notice a balance of the two. Saffron is cherished as much for its color as its flavor, exposing a rich, golden shade onto recipes ranging from saffron risotto, curries and bouillabaisse. You can even use it in desserts like pudding, cakes and sweetened rice. If you are concerned about the cost, don’t worry! A little goes a long way. For most dishes, you will only need 1-3 saffron threads to get the desired results.

We have all heard of the phrase “Carpe diem” which is pronounced ‘*kar pay ‘dee um*’. This is a Latin phrase meaning “seize the day,” or more literally, “pluck the day when it is ripe”, (just like saffron). This phrase implies that we should live for today and not worry about tomorrow. Although the concept of carpe diem has some value to it, there are also some negative connotations that a Christian should consider before using it as a life motto.

Jesus shared His own translation of ‘carpe diem’ in **Matthew 6:34** when He said; ***“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*** This directive came after Jesus’ Words about how our heavenly Father knows what we need before we ask in **verses 31-32**; ***“So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”*** Jesus’ instruction differs from the customary understanding of carpe diem in that Jesus’ focus was on trusting God for tomorrow, not pretending it won’t come. Jesus’ example in **Luke 12:16-21** of a man living by the carpe diem attitude was decidedly negative. ***“And He told them this parable: ‘The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. And I’ll say to myself, You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”*** Jesus called people ‘fools’ who say to themselves, ‘I have plenty of grain laid up for many years. I’ll take life easy; eat, drink and be merry’”.

Our lives were given to us for a purpose, but that purpose is not what the world tells us it is. We were not given life so that we could “seize the day” in selfish ways. Our purpose is to glorify God in everything we do. **1 Corinthians 10:31**: ***“So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”***

So, how about we “Carpe diem” for Jesus and not worry about the cost?

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Wild Mushroom & Saffron Risotto

Ingredients: 6-8

1/2 pound shitake mushrooms, sliced
1/2 pound cremini mushrooms, sliced
1/2 pound porcini mushrooms, sliced
6 cups chicken stock
7 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 shallots
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/2 cups Arborio rice
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/2 teaspoon saffron threads
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2/3 cup freshly grated pecorino, plus extra for serving



Instructions:

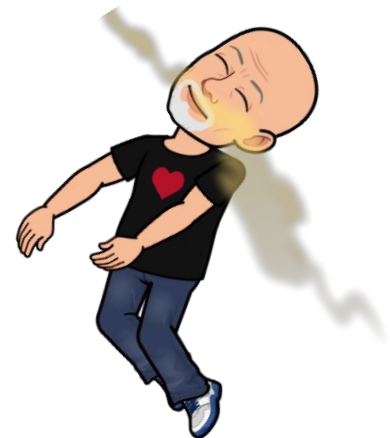
In a large skillet add 1 tablespoon of butter and 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Add all of the mushrooms and the shallots and sauté until done. Set them aside in a dish.

In a medium saucepan, heat the chicken stock and keep it hot on the stove. Make sure you have a ladle handy.

Add the rice and the rest of the butter to your large skillet. Add the wine and cook for 2 minutes. Add 2 full ladles of the chicken stock mixture to the rice plus the saffron, salt and pepper. Stir and simmer over low heat until the chicken stock is absorbed, 5 to 10 minutes. Continue to add the stock mixture, 2 ladles at a time, stirring every few minutes. Make sure you cook the rice mixture until it seems a little dry before you add more of the chicken stock. Continue until the rice is cooked through, but still firm, about 25 to 30 minutes total. When done, the risotto should be thick and creamy and not dry. Fold in the sauteed mushrooms and shallots.

Take your pan off of the heat, stir in the pecorino cheese. Serve hot in bowls with extra cheese. I love to top mine with sauteed shrimp!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” Psalm 90:12

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Savory Vegetable Strata!**

A strata is a savory bread casserole (or pudding) that consists of bread, eggs and cheese. Vegetables or meat can also be added. Strata is usually a casserole served for breakfast or brunch, but also can be served for dinner. And it is on my dinner menu for tonight!

The strata is similar to the quiche and the frittata in the fact that you need eggs. But the strata also has bread in it whereas the frittata and the quiche do not. A strata is in some ways similar to a Thanksgiving stuffing recipe. It really doesn’t matter what it is called to me...the strata had me at “bread”.

I have been trying to really cut back on how much bread we eat in our house. But every once in a while I just need to indulge. So to keep my conscience free of guilt I use whole grain fresh baked bread. And I discovered that the nuts in the bread are absolutely delicious in the strata!

The great thing about making a strata, much like the quiche and the frittata, is that you can add pretty much anything you want to your dish. A lot of people make strata’ for a brunch and add sausage or ham. But you can serve it for any meal you want. One last tip-I would stay away from sweet breads when making your strata unless you are going for a sweet bread pudding!

So today is my birthday and I am officially 60 years young. I have to confess that I have been struggling a bit with this birthday. I just can’t seem to wrap my head around the fact that I am now in my sixties. Not that being 60 is a bad thing, I mean common on, I will take it over the alternative of not reaching this

age at all. What has actually been bothering me isn’t about my age as much as it is about how I got here so fast.

This whole concept of time is a real puzzle. When we are younger we wish the days weren’t so long and when we are older we wish the days weren’t so short. I think one of the reasons we humans see time as a mystery is because it is something that we have no control over. Money can’t buy it and we can’t stop it!

So, what is time? Well in the simplest term, time is duration. Time is measured by seconds, minutes, hours, days, years, etc.... We follow the clock or the calendar to keep us balanced. I am sure that we all pretty much understand what time means in our lives. We are born, we live our lives and then we die, all over a span of time.

Time is a very precious gift from God, isn’t it? As we get older we become more aware of just how much of a gift it is too. I try to remember each morning when I first wake up and come stumbling into the living room to thank God for the day. Regardless of what the day will bring, I am alive and that means I have another day to spend loving others and serving Jesus.

No matter how much I try to figure out the reason for time seeming to pass us by so quickly, I won’t be able to. So this causes me then to reflect on what I can do. **Psalm 90:12** says: ***“Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.”*** God’s Word often points us toward wisdom. Not just any wisdom, but His wisdom. **Proverbs 4:7** says: ***“The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding.”***

The primary way we gain godly wisdom is by learning God’s Word according to Scripture: ***“May my cry come before You, Lord; give me understanding according to Your word.”*** **Psalm 119:169** The message for this birthday girl is loud and clear...it doesn’t matter how young or old you are, our time, however much we are given, is to learn and grow more like Jesus so that we are fruitful for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Don’t let missionary David Brainerd’s words become reflections of your own life: ***“Oh, how precious is time, and how it pains me to see it slide away, while I do so little to any good purpose.”***

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Savory Vegetable Strata

Ingredients: Serves 6

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large red bell pepper-diced
1 large yellow onion-diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 medium leeks-sliced
1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
1 medium yam-diced
1/2 cup broccoli florets
1 teaspoon fresh thyme
2 teaspoon salt (divided)
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/2 loaf of baked whole grain bread, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 4 cups)
1 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1/2 cup of grated parmesan cheese
6 large eggs
1-3/4 cups milk



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Grease a 9 x 13 baking pan.

In a large sauté pan over medium heat add your olive oil. Add onions and cook for 3-4 minutes.

Add your vegetables, 1 teaspoon of salt, pepper, garlic and thyme. Sauté until cooked but not mushy. They should still be firm. Set aside and let cool off.

In a large bowl add your eggs and 1 teaspoon of salt and beat really well. Then add your milk and cheddar cheese.

Add the vegetables to your egg bowl along with your cubed bread. Fold in everything gently but make sure everything is coated.

Add your mixture to your greased baking pan. Add your 1/2 cup parmesan on top.

Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes remove your foil and put back in the oven for 20 more minutes uncovered. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Cranberries & Butternut Squash!**

I usually pass on the cranberries during Thanksgiving because I am not crazy about their taste. But this recipe is one that I thought I would try and I loved it! I hope you do too.

“Cranberries are a unique fruit. They can grow and survive only under a very special combination of factors. These factors include acid peat soil, an adequate fresh water supply, and a growing season that extends from April to November. Cranberries grow on low-lying vines in beds layered with sand, peat, gravel and clay. These beds are commonly known as bogs or marshes and were originally created by glacial deposits. Commercial bogs use a system of wetlands, uplands, ditches, flumes, ponds and other water bodies that provide a natural habitat for a variety of plant and animal life.

Cranberries are grown through the northern part of the United States. The major production areas are New Jersey, Massachusetts, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Quebec. Other regions grow cranberries as well, to varying extent, and these include Delaware, Maine, Michigan, New York, Rhode Island, as well as the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario. Cranberries are also commercially grown in Chile. These regions offer the special conditions that cranberries require, including sandy soil; abundant fresh water and a dormancy period that provides enough chill hours to produce a crop the following growing season.”

www.cranberries.org

Hey, what do you call a sad cranberry? “A blue berry.” Hee-hee

Winter is coming and a lot of people tend to get the blues during this time of year. The holiday season is packed with faith, family, fun and responsibility. From church events, to gift buying to cooking and preparing, the holidays bring a hustle and bustle that seems to arrive every year with lots of activity. And with already busy lives, the holiday demands can sometimes be overwhelming.

The holidays can also be difficult for those who don’t have a lot of family or loved ones to enjoy them with. On the other hand, the holidays can bring family dynamics to individual struggles that can push joy out of the season. There are plenty of events and situations that can lead to holiday stress and depression.

A lot of us look forward to the holidays and then experience the let down once they are over and the joyful celebrations have passed. For others the holidays can be something that they dread. But with a little planning, positive thinking, prayer and keeping your eyes on Jesus, I believe that it is possible and even probable to find peace and joy during the holidays.

Jesus said; ***“I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15:11*** We live in a world that almost completely takes Jesus out of the holidays now. If we as Christians aren’t conscious about the absence of Jesus during the holiday season we will find ourselves falling for the secular way of celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas. And for those of us that know the true meaning of these joyous festivities, nothing is more depressing and a joy stealer than celebrating with an absent Jesus.

This Thanksgiving why not decorate your festive table with different placemat cards that have Scripture about being thankful? Go around the table and have each person read their place card out loud. Just reading God’s Holy Word invites Jesus to your table. And there is always someone that is alone and would love an invitation to your dinner table.

For Christmas why not reach out and give to those that have less than you? And if you can’t go to your family’s home or have them come to you, there is always Zoom. What a joy it would be to Zoom with far off loved ones and read the true Christmas story from one of the Gospels.

No one wants to be a blueberry during the holidays. So invite Jesus to be at the center of the joyous season this year. And watch what happens!

Lynda's Recipe for Cranberries & Butternut Squash!

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

1 medium butternut squash, cubed
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 cups cranberries (I used frozen)
3 tablespoons honey
1/2 cup feta, crumbled
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°F

Spray a baking sheet

Add cubed squash, 1 tablespoon oil, salt, pepper and garlic into a large bowl.

Mix really well and put on your baking sheet and bake for 25-30 minutes.

Then add the cranberries to the pan and bake for 15 more minutes.

Remove from oven and add your nutmeg, honey and feta cheese. Toss gently together and place in a bowl and serve!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’”

Matthew 16:24

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Delicious Zucchini Fritters!**

The word fritter can be used to describe any kind of fried batter mixture, but it usually refers to fruit, vegetable, or even meat that is battered and fried in oil. The fruit, vegetable or meat may be solid pieces, or minced, shredded or mashed. They also may be encased in batter or mixed into the batter itself.

The word fritter is actually used to describe a wide variety of fried items. Fritter stems from the Late Latin frictura, meaning “a fry.” Fritters are found in many cuisines. The French beignets, Italian bigne, and Greek loukoumades are sweet cake types if fritter. Fritters are extremely popular roadside snacks all over South Asia and are commonly referred to as ‘pakora’.

The first record of the fritter dates back to 1665. Samuel Pepys, an Englishman who served as a member of Parliament during the English Restoration period, wrote in his diary that he would be enjoying some fritters before Lent!

During the last week of Lent people from all over the world honor the death of Jesus by walking the “Via Dolorosa”, which literally means “the sorrowful way.” But no place is as dramatic and impacting as it is in Jerusalem, where it is walked on the traditional route in which our Lord traveled on the day of His crucifixion from the judgment seat of Pilate, also called the Praetorium.

This is where Jesus was mocked, spit upon, beaten severally and then forced to carry His own cross to Calvary. The Bible does not specifically mention the Via Dolorosa. All we know from Scripture is that Jesus carried His cross from the Praetorium to

the site of Golgotha where He was crucified. The locations of these two sites are not known for certain, but that doesn’t matter, because wherever they were, the route was truly a devastating, painful and sorrowful way. The scourging and physical pain that Jesus suffered was minor in comparison to the pain caused by the real burden He was bearing, the burden of the sins of the world. He bore our sins to the cross where He paid the penalty for them all.

As Jesus is walking a physical journey that most humans would not be able to accomplish, a man named Simon of Cyrene enters the picture and becomes part of the journey with Him. **Matthew 27:32:** *“As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry the cross.”* After being brutally tortured by the Romans, Jesus was forced to carry His cross to the place where He would be crucified. At first, Jesus carried His own cross, but eventually, because of the extreme torture He had already endured, Jesus was no longer able to carry the cross on His own. As a result, the Roman soldiers forced another man to help Jesus carry the cross. The account of Simon of Cyrene is listed in three of the Gospels, but there is no mention of this man anywhere else in Scripture.

What must it have been like for this man to be so close to Jesus? He was actually looking right into the face of the One that would die for his own sins. He would have been physically closer to Jesus than anyone else during this horrific time. I wish we knew more of this man, Simon of Cyrene. I would like to think that this amazing, close-up encounter with God Himself, would have transformed him into a great man of God. But what I do know is that while Simon may have borne the cross part of the way to Golgotha, Jesus carried the entire burden.

Jesus tells us in **Matthew 16:24** *“...’Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.’”* I am reminded of this verse when I think about the man from Cyrene carrying the cross for Jesus. When Jesus carried His cross up Golgotha to be crucified, no one was thinking that the cross would later be a symbol of a burden to bare. No one was thinking that in order to be followers of Jesus they too would have to pick up their cross.

To pick up your cross means to “die to self.” It’s a call to absolute surrender. Are you carrying your cross for Him? It is worth every step of the journey.

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Delicious Zucchini Fritters!

Ingredients: Serves 4

3 cups zucchini, shredded
1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese
1 egg
1/2 cup flour
3 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons vegetable oil



Instructions:

Lay your zucchini out on a cheese cloth or dish towel and sprinkle with salt. Wait 10 minutes and then all of the excess water out of the zucchini.

Put zucchini in a bowl and add Parmesan cheese, egg, flour, minced garlic, salt and lemon to a bowl and mix until the mixture has a semi-creamy texture.

Place a large pan over medium-high heat and add vegetable oil. Use a spoon to scoop out heaping tablespoons of mixture and place it in the pan.

Let cook on each side for about 3 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from pan and place on paper towel to absorb excess oil. Top with sour cream and fresh parsley. YUM!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”

1 John 3:18

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu: **Fingerling Potatoes with Roasted Garlic Aioli!***

Roasted garlic is a tasty member of the onion family that can be eaten on its own on top of a sliced baguette or used to add some taste to a variety of foods. One of my all-time favorite soups is “roasted garlic”. If you’re a fan of garlic, then you probably already know that not only does it taste good, but it also has health benefits.

The health benefits of eating garlic are immense. Garlic was used during World War II when there was a shortage of medicines. This natural antibiotic can fight colds and flu, cure minor infections and promote wound healing.

Studies have actually shown that garlic extract stimulates white blood cells. Another benefit of garlic is its ability to promote detoxification. This makes it an excellent source for promoting a healthier liver.

Studies have shown that consuming garlic on a regular basis may improve your circulation; Lower your cholesterol; Aid digestion and treat intestinal Infections; Lower blood pressure; Help prevent heart disease; Controls diabetes; Prevent obesity; Is good for the skin; Prevent brain damage caused by diseases and aging; Improve bone health; Prevent and slow down progression of certain cancer; And promote healthier eye sight. WOW!

For those who don’t like the strong taste of garlic (that wouldn’t be me!), garlic supplements are also available in powder, macerate, extract and oil.

Before taking garlic supplements or increasing your garlic intake medicinally, speak with your doctor. There are so many things we can do to help promote better health. And there are so many ways we can benefit our spiritual health as well. One of the best ways to promote healthy spiritual benefits is by loving others. Expressing love has great benefits but we seem to have lost the desire in our culture to really seek out how to love others.

1 John 3:18 says; *“Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”* I absolutely love the smell of garlic. Something about it just makes me happy! But if all I did was smell it, I wouldn’t receive a single one of it’s health benefits. So it is with telling others that we love them and yet not doing anything to show our love. The two verses before **1 John 3:18** say this; *“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?”*

1 John 3:16-17 Those are strong words, aren’t they? And yet, they speak volumes of truth!

Loving others isn’t always easy. It can be difficult to show love when others aren’t loving us back. The key is to always remember that love is an action. Love is a choice that we must make every day as God’s precious children. Love is expected of us, because God loved us first. He didn’t wait until we showed Him that we loved Him. **Romans 5:8** tells us; *“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

Part of the challenge of loving others is that we often try to do it on our own, even pretending to have feelings of love where none exist. This can lead to hypocrisy and ‘play acting’ and others will see right through it. We must understand that we cannot love apart from God. It is when we remain in Jesus and the Holy Spirit remains in us that we are able to show and share the fruit of love.

Often times we think that it is for the good of others that we ought to love them. And while of course, that is true hypothetically, the reality is that we become more like Christ when we love others. And that is very healthy for us!

“To love someone means to see him as God intended him to be.” ~ Fyodor Dostoevsky

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Fingerling Potatoes with Roasted Garlic Aioli!

Ingredients: Serves 4

1 bag of fingerling potatoes
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon dried parsley
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
3 tablespoons Olive Oil



Roasted Garlic

1 head of garlic
Olive Oil
1/2 cup of Mayonnaise
Salt to taste
Pepper to taste
1/2 teaspoon champagne vinegar
1 teaspoon dried dill
Foil



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°F

Cut the top off the head of garlic to expose individual cloves. Place garlic in an aluminum foil. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake for 45 minutes until garlic is soft and light brown. Let cool.

Place mayonnaise in a small bowl. Squeeze the roasted garlic over it. Add vinegar and mix until combined. Set aside while potatoes roast.

Place your potatoes on baking pan. Add spices and drizzle with olive oil. Toss so potatoes are fully coated with oil and spices.

Roast for 45-50 minutes or until a knife slides easily into the bigger ones.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“A cheerful heart is good medicine.”
Proverbs 17:22a

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu:
Risotto with Leeks and Shiitake Mushrooms!

I am using Shiitake mushrooms for this recipes. They tend to be on the expensive side, ranging from 12-16 dollars per pound. But when you buy them dried and rehydrate them, you can get them much cheaper. You can also use button mushrooms or baby bello mushrooms as well and they are the cheapest. I served my risotto with sausage and apples.

The most expensive mushrooms in the world are rare and hard to cultivate. They are sensitive and not easy to mass-produce, therefore driving prices up for consumers.

If you’re a mushroom lover, you probably already know that they’re edible fungi. Sounds gross, but the good news is that they’re highly nutritious and delicious.

Mushrooms grow wild in habitats across the globe, can be cultivated by individuals, and are being produced by innovative mushroom farmers in metropolitan warehouses, basements, caves and under trees on forested acreage. The demand for “trendy and expensive” mushrooms is flourishing. And some of them fetch very high prices.

Mushrooms are actually the “fruit” of fungi that thrive under certain specific conditions. They are fast-growing and flexible and have been used in several ways by diverse cultures throughout history. Tens of thousands of varieties of fungi have been identified. But a relatively small number of edible mushrooms exist.

Mushrooms are loaded with antioxidants, minerals and healthy vitamins. Some have significant amounts of potassium, iron, manganese, Vitamin D, B2 and B6. They are also low in calories and fat, high in fiber and protein. Bottom line, they are good for you!

I came back home from grocery shopping the other day and immediately Jeff asked me where the mushrooms were. I said, "There aren't any. There wasn't 'mush-room' in my cart." He started throwing things at me. Suddenly he wasn't a 'fungi' anymore. Hee-hee! I am sure you have all heard that “laughter is good medicine”. It’s true, laughter is a strong medicine. It draws people together in ways that bring about healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. Laughter strengthens our immune system, boosts our mood, can diminish our pain, and helps us alleviate stress.

My husband has a picture of Jesus in his office that is my absolute favorite. It is a charcoal drawing of Jesus laughing. Traditionally, paintings of Jesus have tended toward unhappy or melancholy portrayals of a somber, gloomy Savior. It is true that Jesus bore our sins and He suffered an excruciating death on the Cross for us, but I really don't think that He was always unhappy or stern as so many famous pictures portray.

The picture of Jesus that we find in the Gospels is one of a well-balanced, charismatic personality. Jesus had a serious mission to complete in this world, but I don't believe that He was somber all the time. Even though there is no verse in the Bible that says, “Jesus laughed,” we know that He empathized with us completely and felt all of our emotions. Laughter is part of life. Scripture does tell us that He experienced joy: ***“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”*** John 15:11

To think that Jesus never laughed or had joy bubble up from His spirit is to deny a huge aspect of who He was in His human form. How could He know the depth of our sorrow or pain if He never experienced joy or laughter? Laughter is a part of our lives, and we know that Jesus empathized with us in all of our humanity. I think that there are many times when Jesus wept for us and He was brought to sorrow because of our sinfulness, but I just can't imagine Jesus never laughing!

Proverbs 17:22a says: ***“A cheerful heart is good medicine.”*** I think we could all use a little more laughter in our lives these day. Laughter is a powerful and contagious thing. God gave us the ability to laugh, so let's make sure we are doing more of it.

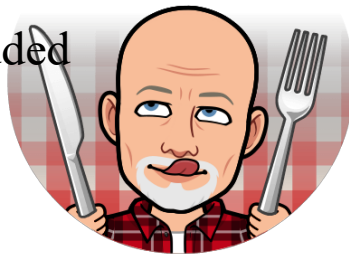
“Laughter is the most beautiful and beneficial therapy God ever granted humanity.”
Chuck Swindoll.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Risotto with Leeks and Shiitake Mushrooms

Ingredients: Serves 6-8

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 ounces of dried shiitake mushrooms
1 1/2 cups of arborio rice
6 cups of chicken stock (or veggie stock)
1 large leek, thinly sliced
1/2 cup pecorino cheese, shredded
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper



Instructions

In a small bowl add your dried shiitake mushrooms. Pour boiling water over them until covered and let sit for at least 20 minutes or until completely softened.

In a small pan on medium heat, add your stock. Keep it warm on your back burner the whole time. It is helpful to also have a ladle near by. Your stock must be warm when adding to your arborio rice each time.

In a large skillet on medium heat sauté your arborio rice in 1 tablespoon olive oil for about 5 minutes until your rice smells nutty. Don't leave it or it will burn.

Add your leeks and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Sauté until your leeks are done.

Add your first ladle of stock to your rice. Mix it really well. Add another ladle and let cook down until your stock is gone. Continue to add your stock in this order. Risotto is a labor of love that is worth the effort. This method is what creates delicious rice.

Take your mushrooms out of the hot water and slice them up. Add them to your risotto. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of pepper.

Take your risotto off of the heat and add your cheese. Mix well. You should have a creamy wonderful dish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.” John 13:35

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Thanksgiving Stuffed Acorn Squash!**

I have written about Acorn squash before. This funny looking squash is packed with gut-friendly fiber and plenty of nutrients. Acorn squash provides numerous health benefits including: Reducing inflammation; Boosts digestive health; Healthy eyesight; Reducing blood pressure; And supporting your immune system. And remember, squash is not a vegetable, but a fruit.

Speaking of fruit, how are your ‘fruit skills’ growing these days? **Galatians 5:22-23** tells us, ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”*** So, back to my question. Have you been pruning the bad fruit and fertilizing the good fruit with God’s Holy Word and the help of the Holy Spirit?

I have always believed that there was a very good reason for God making sure that the first fruit that was mentioned in Scripture was ‘love’. Did you know that Jesus talks about ‘love’ over 50 times in His teachings alone? One of the most important characteristics of a Christian’s character is love, because this fruit indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. The Bible says; ***“If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing... And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*** 1 Corinthians 13:3, 13

This love that Jesus spoke about and that is so clearly a trademark of being a Christian is the Greek word ‘agape.’ This is no ordinary love.

“I love pasta.” “I love Hawaii.” “I love being able to sleep in on Fridays.” “I love a cozy warm blanket that just came out of the dryer.” You get the idea. I “love” a lot of things.

Our society has used and unfortunately abused the word in so many ways. People tend to believe that ‘love’ is a feeling and not an action. But that is just not true according to Scripture. The word ‘love’ becomes a cliché in ways that minimize the depth of what real love is. **Luke 6:35** says: ***“But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back.”***

So what is ‘real love’? **John 15:9-14** does a really good job of laying out the true definition of the ‘agape love’ that Jesus teaches us in His Word: ***“As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Now remain in My love. If you keep My commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are My friends if you do what I command.”*** Genuine love in the eyes of our Savior is to keep God’s commandments and to love others as Christ has loved us.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention **John 3:16** which is the ultimate example of agape love: ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*** It is because of love that God carried out His plan to save you, me and the world. Love is the greatest gift that He can give us. As Christians, God’s children, we are the vessels of His love, as we are empowered by the Holy Spirit. We have everything that we need to love like this, but we need to exercise this fruit by fertilizing it with Scripture, prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit.

As a child of God, we need to strive to show others God’s love through us. **John 13:35** says: ***“By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*** God’s love, agape love, is selfless love. It is the love that extends even to those who aren’t lovable or worthy of His love.

“Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within reach of every hand.” Mother Teresa

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Thanksgiving Stuffed Acorn Squash

Ingredients: Serves 4

2 acorn squash
1 cup leftover turkey, diced
1 cup leftover stuffing
1 medium onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon dried rosemary
2 eggs
1 cup of cranberry sauce
1 tablespoon butter
1/4 cup of a sweet white wine
1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for drizzling
Salt and pepper, to taste



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°F

Using a sharp knife, slice off the top and bottom of an acorn squash to create flat surfaces. Slice the squash in half and scoop out the seeds with a spoon.

Place the squash halves on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Drizzle the squash with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Bake for 40 minutes, until the squash is tender and easily pierced with a knife.

Then heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat.

In a medium sauté pan add olive oil, chopped onion, rosemary and minced garlic. Cook for 5 minutes on medium low heat.

Put your stuffing and turkey leftovers in your sauté pan and stir the mixture so that everything is evenly mixed. Take off heat and let cool for 10 minutes.

Crack in the eggs and mix so that everything is evenly coated. Spoon the turkey mixture into the squash halves.

Bake for 20 minutes, until the turkey mixture has browned slightly.

While finishing the baking on your squash you want to make your cranberry sauce. Put cranberry sauce, butter, a pinch of salt and sweet wine into a medium sauce pan and bring to a simmer and reduce by half.

When squash is done serve with your yummy cranberry sauce poured on top!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“I am the Alpha and the Omega’, says the Lord God, ‘who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.’” Revelation 1:8

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Ham and Cheese Quiche**

To be fair I need to say that I am not a fan of ham. Pork is my least favorite meat, but also I just don’t care for how salty ham is. But my family loves it, so I usually have it served for Easter and Christmas.

“The word ham derives from the Old English hamm and refers specifically to a cut of meat from the hog’s hind legs. China takes credit for curing the first pork leg back in 4900 B.C. Enthusiasm for ham spread throughout ancient Europe with the Romans, who likely learned of the practice while trading with the Chinese. A surprisingly workable recipe for ham with figs survived from the second century when it commanded attention on ancient banquet tables. The Gauls produced precursors to the contemporary world’s renowned Bayonne, Black Forest, and Westphalian hams.

By the 17th century, most colonial farmers raised pigs. The long shelf-life of salt pork and bacon made both staples in early American kitchens. The expression “high on the hog” seems to have developed from the literal position of the ham on the upper half of the pig (as opposed to the belly, shanks, and trotters) and came to mean a luxurious lifestyle of dining on the best cuts of meat.” *(taken from www.thespruceeats.com/the-history-of-ham)*

We all know someone (maybe it’s you) that always wants to be the ‘ham’ of the party. This origin of the phrase “you are such a ham” has its roots as do most food references, in the early 1800’s. Ham was abundant and was usually the table centerpiece at family gatherings. As the ham was the main course, it

was placed appropriately, in the center of the table, with all the other dishes surrounding it. So, the phrase “you’re such a ham” refers to someone who likes to be the center of attention. These people want everyone to be drawn to them.

When people look at your life what is it that they are drawn to? There are endless things that others can be drawn to when they look at our lives. But for the Christian, according to God’s Holy Word, it should be because of our faith that people are drawn to us. More specifically, it should be the love of Jesus Christ in us, that draws others to us. **John 13:34-35** says, ***“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”***

We live in an age of narcissism. Time magazine reported in 2013 that Narcissistic personality disorder is nearly three times as high for people in their twenties as for the generation that’s now 65 or older. . . . 58% more college students scored higher on a narcissism scale in 2009 than in 1982. I can’t image what that report would say now, 8 years later! In a society that breeds self-promotion, self preservation and self-centeredness, how can we Christians make sure that their lives are reflecting Jesus and not ourselves? Afterall, even Jesus was a reflection of His Father. ***“Jesus gave them this answer: ‘Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by Himself; He can do only what He sees His Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’”*** **John 5:19** So in essence, we are not only reflecting Jesus, but God Himself. Those are some pretty high standards, wouldn’t you agree?

How can we, imperfect humans with selfish tendencies and the desire to be noticed, portray God’s perfect image and keep the ‘lime light’ off of ourselves? Simple, we don’t! We let the Holy Spirit do it through us. If we are truly meditating on God’s Word and surrendering to Him daily then we will reflect His character. **Matthew 7:16** says: ***“By their fruit you will recognize them...”*** And **Galatians 5:22-23** say: ***“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control...”*** For the growing Christian, when people are drawn to us, it shouldn’t be because of us; it should be the love that flows through us to share with a lost and sinful world, the love of our heavenly Father Himself! He is the one and only true and godly ‘Ham’ of this world! He says: ***“I am the Alpha and the Omega’, says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”*** **Revelation 1:8**

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Ham and Cheese Quiche

Ingredients: Serves 6-8

9-inch pie crust
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
1/2 cup shredded Gruyere cheese
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided
1/2 cup diced cooked ham
1 1/2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon honey
1 1/2 cups half-and-half
5 eggs, beaten
1/4 cup green onions
1/4 teaspoon salt



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Bake pie crust in preheated oven for 5-8 minutes, use a fork to poke holes into the crust, and continue cooking until lightly browned, about 5 minutes more.

Mix 1/2 cup Cheddar cheese, Gruyere cheese, and 1 tablespoon flour in a bowl; spread over the warm pie crust.

Stir ham, honey and mustard together in a bowl to coat the ham completely; spoon over the cheese mixture.

Mix half-and-half, eggs, green onions, 1 tablespoon flour, and salt together in bowl. Pour mixture carefully over the ham layer; top with remaining Cheddar cheese.

Bake in preheated oven until set in the center, 40 to 50 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes before cutting.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Let My teaching fall like rain and My words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.”
Deuteronomy 32:2

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Viola Pansy Spring Quiche**

I think that we could all agree that this has been one of the most trying and draining years that most of us can remember. I still find myself walking around thinking that this past year was just kind of put on hold. It seems like we just finished spring last year, and now here we are again going into a new summer year. As always, time continues to push forward even if the world finds its self at a stand still.

I love the springtime! Everything is fresh and new. The Earth wakes up! But this year it seems like spring passed by before it even arrived. I always want to hold on just a little bit longer to the spring. If earth could have a favorite season I think that it would be spring. Nature opens its eyes and stretches from a sweet slumber and it is energized.

There are so many reasons why people look forward to spring with excitement. Spring is a time of the year when nature promises new life and new hope. Yes, spring is a favorite season for many. Spring brings warmer weather and fresh smelling rain. The flowers begin to bloom and animals are born. And once again we are reminded of the innocence and beauty that exists in this world and that there is new life all around us.

As Christians, one of the greatest seasons of celebrating our Lord comes during the springtime. We celebrate new life, new mercies and eternal life. Spring will come and new life will come forth!

If I am honest with myself, I feel like I am just starting to come out of a cold and dreary winter,

where the months slowly hung around for a very long time. Spring delivers a wonderful reminder to us that we should be living a full new life and leaving the old dead parts of life behind. There is always hope during the coldest, dreariest winters of life and this past year is no exception to that truth in Jesus Christ. And just as the springtime brings renewed hope and new life, God’s Word brings new mercies and life every day.

Deuteronomy 32:2 says: ***“Let My teaching fall like rain and My words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.”*** This past year was different in so many ways. And while I don’t care to live a repeat of it any time soon, I have found some sweet blessings in it spiritually. I don’t remember a time in my faith journey with my Savior that I have ever spent so much time in His Holy Word. Like Moses in Deuteronomy, God’s Word became my saving grace and security during a world-wide pandemic. I found great comfort in knowing that like the prophets from the Old Testament, God’s Word truly is like a fresh spring rain, washing away all of the old and brining in the new. Thanks to Holy Scripture, I never gave in to the cold and dreary months of the pandemic. Was I tired? Yes! Was I missing my loved ones and their hugs? Yes! But I never gave in to despair because I knew that life in Christ is new every day, and this too would pass. God’s Word reminds us of this. **Lamentations 3:22–23** says, ***“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*** The old (pandemic year) has past and the new (God’s grace and mercy) has come. There is no expiration with God’s mercy toward us. His mercies are new every morning in that they are continuous and always available to us. We have our ups and down; We have battles; We have concerns, and yes, we have learned once again that life is fragile, precious and a gift. As we enter into a new season, let’s not forget that God’s mercies are always abundant and they spring for in life for us.

Summer is almost here and we will begin to see the beautiful butterflies fluttering around us, so remember: “We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.” Author unknown.

Yes, we have had a long season of unknowns, but God is faithful and the warm summer Son has never left us.

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Viola Pansy Spring Quiche

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

1 pie crust
1 teaspoon salt, plus more for blanching
1 small bunch of asparagus, woody ends trimmed
2 large egg yolks
3 large eggs
1 1/2 cups heavy cream
4 oz goat cheese, divided
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1/8 teaspoon of nutmeg
3 tablespoons fresh chives, divided, thinly sliced
Edible flowers (optional)



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Put pie crust in oven for 8 minutes and then remove.

Blanch the asparagus in simmering water for 30–60 seconds, until bright green and tender. Transfer to an ice bath to cool for 1–2 minutes, then drain and let dry on a paper towel or kitchen towel-lined baking sheet. Reserve 8–10 spears of asparagus. Cut the rest into 1-inch pieces.

In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, eggs, heavy cream, pepper, salt, and nutmeg. Add the asparagus pieces and 2 tablespoons of chives and whisk to incorporate.

Spread 3 ounces of the goat cheese across the bottom.

Pour the filling into the crust. Arrange the reserved asparagus spears on top. If you are using edible flowers (yes, viola pansies are edible), arrange on top of asparagus spears. Sprinkle with the remaining tablespoon of chives and dot with the remaining ounce of goat cheese.

Bake the quiche for 30-35 minutes, until the center is set, but still jiggles slightly when gently shaken.

Let cool and serve. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Jesus answered them, ‘It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.’” Luke 5:31

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:

Butternut Squash Crusted Quiche

There are so many ways to make a quiche. You don’t have to stay with the traditional pie crust with cheese in it either. I have written a lot of information about quiches in the past and quiche is not what I want to talk about today. It is turmeric, which is in this recipe. Turmeric has a pungent, earthy-sweet taste to it, much like ginger, but I think it is a bit more musky tasting.

Turmeric is a flowering plant that is related to ginger. Turmeric has been used in Asia for centuries, and you will find it in almost all middle eastern dishes. The turmeric plant is native to southern Asia, but it is now cultivated throughout the world in India, China, Africa, Central America, and the Caribbean. Turmeric has broad, dark green leaves and bright pink flowers, but the plant is mainly cherished for its root or rhizome. Initially, the rhizome was used to preserve food.

In recent years turmeric has drawn quite a bit of interest for its natural healing agents, but it has actually been used medicinally for thousands of years. According to registered dietician nutritionist Anne Pesek Taylor, RDN, CD at the University of Utah, “Researchers have found that phytochemicals from natural foods, such as the curcumin found in turmeric, may be a safe and effective way to help reduce inflammation and prevent and treat disease. While acute inflammatory responses are beneficial for the body in that they help heal injury, irritation, or infection, we know that chronic inflammation can contribute to disease onset. There is promising research to support curcumin’s use for the anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects on obesity, to reduce arthritis pain and swelling, and to aid in complications such as diabetic retinopathy, nephropathy, and cardiomyopathy.” If you are considering adding

turmeric as a supplement to your daily regiment, it is always suggested that you speak to your doctor first!

Speaking of doctors, let’s talk about my favorite physician. Jehovah, is the Hebrew name for God, which is derived from the word Havah and can be translated as “to be,” “to exist,” or “to become known.” The Hebrew word Rapha means “to restore” or “to heal.” Jehovah-Rapha is our “Great Physician” indeed!

God first revealed Himself as Jehovah-Rapha to the Israelites after their exodus out of Egypt in **Exodus 15:26** when He says; ***“If you listen carefully to the Lord your God and do what is right in His eyes, if you pay attention to His commands and keep all His decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, who heals you.”*** God clearly heals His people.

Jehovah-Rapha has the power to heal physically, mentally, emotionally and most of all spiritually. There isn’t a single impurity of body or soul that doesn’t need the purifying, healing power of Jehovah-Rapha.

Jesus refers to Himself as a "physician" (doctor) twice. Once in the sense of "spiritual healer" and once in the sense of "physical healer." As Jesus’ enemies attacked Him for having immoral characters such as the tax collectors and sinners among His disciples, He reminds them in **Luke 5:31** says; ***“It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.”*** Unfortunately those that were opposed to Jesus didn’t recognize that they themselves were sick indeed.

I believe that the greatest tragedy that happens on a daily basis, and has existed since the fall of Adam and Eve, is when someone doesn’t believe that they need to be healed spiritually. Our sinful nature is what makes us rebellious against God. When someone speaks of a sinful nature, they are referring to the fact that we have a natural inclination to sin; given the choice to do God’s will or our own, we will naturally choose to do our own thing. And unless the “Spiritual Healer, Jesus Himself, heals us, we are doomed to suffer and die a horrific spiritual death that separates us from a loving God for all of eternity. Jesus Himself said, ***“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me.”*** John 14:6

So the first step towards healing spiritually is to call upon the “Great Physician”, our Jehovah-Rapha, to heal you! And Guess what? He doesn’t even require medical insurance. It’s all free!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Butternut Squash Crusted Quiche

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

1 butternut squash
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon salt
8 eggs, whisked
1 tablespoon olive oil
3 small tomatoes
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1 cup chopped kale (no stems)
1 medium green pepper, chopped
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Spray or coat your pie dish with oil.

Thinly slice your butternut squash into rounds.

Spiral your squash rounds to cover all of the inside of the pie dish, sides and bottom.

Drizzle with more olive oil and a sprinkle of salt. Bake for 30 minutes.

While the crust bakes, cook your toppings.

Half the tomatoes and drizzle with 1/2 tablespoon olive oil. Roast these the same time you are baking your crust in the oven for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside when done.

Sauté kale and green pepper with 1/2 tablespoon olive oil and turmeric, salt, pepper and garlic for 2-3 minutes.

Whisk your eggs in a mixing bowl until well combined.

Remove crust from the oven, add your sauteed veggies to your egg mixture and pour into your crust and top with the roasted tomatoes.

Return the pie dish to the oven and bake at 375°F for an additional 20 minutes.

Remove from oven and let cool before slicing to enjoy. Delish!

Bon Appétit, Lynda





“They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over”
Matthew 14:20

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Fall Minestrone Soup**

Minestrone soup has a deep history that dates back hundreds of years. Its fame began to take off in the 2nd century BC when Rome conquered Italy. During this time, economic growth allowed a variety of new vegetables to inundate the market.

Instead of being restricted to only a few vegetable crops, Italians began to enjoy a wide variety. It was the new combination of vegetables, and different meals being made, that initiated the popularity of Minestrone.

Using ingredients from their leftovers, Italian peasants would make what was once called “poor man’s soup”. That’s why even to this day, there’s no precise or true way to make Minestrone soup. It all depends on what you have leftover from the night before.

The word Minestrone actually means ‘big soup’, because you can add almost everything except for the kitchen sink to it! Minestrone is a healthy, hearty soup that will keep you satisfied with all of its many ingredients. It is a super easy soup to make too. So go for it! Your family will think it is souper good!

I think Jesus would have loved Minestrone soup. After all, He was in the leftover business when it came to food. ***“They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.”*** Matthew 14:20 Did you know that besides the resurrection of Jesus (#1 miracle!) the feeding of the 5,000 is the only other miracle by Him that is recorded in all four of the Gospels? Obviously Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

considered this miracle to be a very significant one. But why? To be able to feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish is certainly miraculous, but the Greek term used in **Matthew 14:21** specifies males, and Matthew goes on to emphasize the point by adding, “besides women and children.” Many Bible scholars believe the actual number fed that day could have been between 15,000-20,000 people. And let’s not forget that Scripture says that “they all were satisfied”.

There are many ways we can apply the story of Jesus feeding all of these people. For example we know that Scripture teaches us that we will not go hungry or thirsty when we thirst or hunger for Him. We know that as much as God provides for the birds of the air, He will provide so much more for His children. But I think that one of the greatest lessons we can learn from this miracle that Jesus performed is this: God will smash the minuscule expectations of what His children can do if we would just learn to bring Him what we have already been given.

When we Christians are willing to offer our lives sacrificially and humbly, surrendering our hold on whatever God has given us in terms of time, money and talents (stewardship), He will use the ordinary to produce the extraordinary. As Christians we must never believe our resources are too little to serve God. God finds pleasure in taking a humble, seemingly unimportant person and using him or her for His glory. This is the most valuable lesson that I see in Jesus feeding the multitudes.

As God’s precious children that He loves very much, we also need to be reminded that our problems are never too big (or small) for God. Of course we have been taught through faith and His Holy Word that He can easily multiply and provide for whatever and whoever He wants. He is God after all. But the problem comes when we are faced with applying this Truth to our own lives; We tend to doubt that God will want to meet our need.

As Christians we need to present our lives to God in a spirit of obedience and surrender, no matter how insignificant we may think our gifts or talents are. It’s not about the quantity or quality, it is all about the heart.

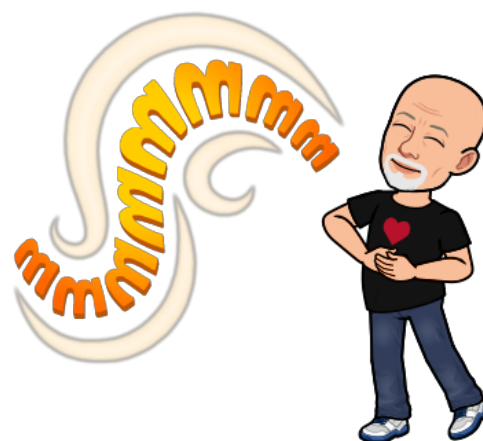
And when we are walking humbly in His love and grace, there will always be plenty of leftovers for all!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Fall Minestrone Soup

Ingredients: 6

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced (I use 6)
1 teaspoon ginger
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 stalks celery, diced
2 cups butternut squash, cubed
1 1/2 cups green beans
3 cups vegetable broth
1 28 ounce can crushed tomatoes
1 tablespoon dried basil
1 15.5 ounce can cannellini beans, including liquid
2 teaspoons dried oregano
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1 teaspoon dried sage
1 teaspoon dried thyme
Salt and pepper to taste
1 cup of dried pasta of your choice



Instructions:

Heat oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and salt and cook until onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, carrots, and celery and cook for 5 minutes. Add squash and green beans and cook 5 more minutes, adding more salt as needed throughout cooking.

Stir in broth, tomatoes, beans, oregano, crushed red pepper and black pepper to taste. Add sage, thyme and pasta and bring to a boil before decreasing to a simmer. Simmer for about 15 minutes or until pasta is done.

Wonderful Fall comfort!

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“...And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

Esther 4:14

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:

Roasted Red Bell Pepper Soup with Croutons!

Here is a bell pepper quiz for you:

Which bell pepper is harvested when it is unripe?

Red-Green-Yellow or Orange

Which bell pepper is the cheapest?

Red-Green-Yellow or Orange

Which bell pepper is the most bitter?

Red-Green-Yellow or Orange

Which bell pepper is the least expensive?

Red-Green-Yellow or Orange

If you answered ‘green’ every time you would be right. Yellow, orange and red bell peppers are sweeter and less bitter than green ones. The green bell pepper is picked unripe while the other colors all represent the maturing of the pepper while still on the vine.

Green bell peppers have a longer shelf life and are cheaper. Red bell peppers have 11 times more beta-carotene, twice as much vitamin C, and 10 times more vitamin A than a green bell pepper.

Green bell peppers are purchased more than all of the other peppers combined and this is most likely because they are so much cheaper. But I prefer red bell peppers to all of the other colors. And I especially like them roasted. I am guessing that they taste the best to me because they are actually ripened on the vine before they are picked. Timing is everything.

My women’s Bible study is currently studying the book of Esther. Talk about timing being everything. Esther found herself in the castle married to the King. Esther’s

relative Mordecai wanted to make sure that she knew that her position at this specific time in her life was no accident.

Mordecai was right too. Esther was the queen “for such a time as this,” and she became God’s instrument of deliverance for the Jews in Persia. Sometimes we miss the importance of Esther’s obedience in God’s plan. Mordecai presented Esther with a choice. She could choose to recognize her God-given place in the royal court and opt to risk her own life in an effort to save her people. Or she could choose to remain silent, try to protect herself, and hope for the best. Either way, Mordecai knew that God would rescue His people. Esther chose the path of joy and blessing when she agreed to play her role in God’s plan.

Like most of you reading this devotion, I often find myself scratching my head about all of the things that are happening in our country and around the world. I contemplate about what my role is in all of the muck that seems to be happening. I find myself asking God what it is that I can do to make a difference and does He have a specific plan for me? Esther, who found herself married to a pagan king, questioned her role as well.

We, like Esther, have important choices to make today more than ever in my opinion. We may not have as much power and influence as Esther had, but God has still placed us where He wants us to be “for such a time as this.” We are here for a purpose, God’s purpose!

We have a circle of influence in our lives regardless of who we are. We cannot stand frivolously by while injustice happens. We need to pay attention to what’s happening around us and seek God’s guidance in how He wants to use us. He has placed us in the time, the position, and the place He wants us to be. And He invites us to confidently join in His work.

In Esther’s day, the obligation to save a nation fell to her, and God had given her all she needed to accomplish the task. It is no different for us today. God has done the same for us that He did for Esther. Whatever the mission He assigns, He will give us all that we need. So as we look around us and can get discouraged about the upheaval and the division that is all around us, let’s look up to God and find out what our role is. The picking is ripe!

“...And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”

Esther 4:14

In His Grace, Lynda

Recipe For Roasted Red Pepper Soup with Croutons!

Ingredients: Serves 4

2 jars (12oz) roasted red bell peppers (and the juice from the jar)
1 cup of corn
1 cup vegetable broth
2 large garlic clove
4 tablespoons olive oil
6 tablespoons butter (room temp)
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 1/2 teaspoons salt



Croutons:

8 slices of bread (from a French baguette)
4 tablespoons olive oil
2 garlic cloves
2 teaspoons dried basil
1/2 teaspoon dried sage
1 teaspoon dried parsley
4 oz. goat cheese



Instructions: Preheat Oven to Broil

In a bowl add all of your ingredients for your croutons except for the bread. Mix really well and set aside so it becomes room temperature.

In a food processor or blender add roasted red bell peppers, the juice from the jar, garlic, olive oil, paprika and salt and blend until completely smooth. Add the mixture to your soup pan and put on medium heat.

Add vegetable broth and bring to a slow simmer. Once your soup is fully heated turn off heat and add your butter.

Cut your bread into 8 slices and place bread on a cookie sheet and put under the broiler and cook for about 2 minutes or until dark and toasted on one side.

Remove and spread goat cheese mixture on the untoasted side of the bread, and place back under the broiler for another 2-3 minutes or until the cheese is bubbly. Place croutons on top of the soup and serve. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Creamy Chicken Noodle Stew**

Today’s recipe is all thanks to a dear friend and church member named Elaine. She is a sweet lady in our church that makes a lot of my different recipes. She shared this recipes with me and I am honored to share it with all of you. Thanks Elaine!

If you have raised kids then you know that one of the most difficult traits to teach them is the art of sharing. I remember when Michael (our son) was about 14 months old and he and I were sitting in the Doctor’s waiting room for my appointment for Nikki (our daughter who was in my womb), when all of a sudden this adorable little girl about Michael’s age screamed so loud that both myself and her mother jumped. My sweet, adorable, precious, perfect little boy with his blonde curls and blue eyes had just bit a chunk out of this little girl’s shoulder! The little girl had wanted the toy that my son was playing with so she grabbed it out of his hands. Now mind you, she was being a bit pushy and rude (lol), but Michael was not going to have anything to do with it. That was the first day I realized that my sweet cherub of a son was no innocent angel!

It is never easy to teach children to share. But I think it is even harder to teach adults. God talks about sharing over and over in Scripture and yet we still seem to have more than we need and others don’t have enough.

Hebrews 13:16 says; *“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.”* From childhood we are taught to share with others. Sharing is an appreciated virtue in most cultures because we understand that selfishness and a lack of sharing are wrong.

But it doesn’t take long for the sinful nature to take over and fight for what we believe is our right to have. Regardless of our age, whether young or old, we can still be toddlers in our attitudes. And our teeth can be pretty sharp to the bite!

Humans by nature, sinful-nature that is, don’t want to share. Underneath our plastic smiles and expected responses, our sinful hearts are rebelling and saying “What’s mine is mine!” Sharing is seen as a nice concept, but it has its limits. If it is going to put us out in anyway then it no longer becomes comfortable.

Proverbs 19:17 says; *“Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and He will reward them for what they have done.”* God isn’t demanding that we give away everything that He has given to us. But He also doesn’t bless us just so we can feel good about our possessions and keep them all to ourselves either. We are blessed to be a blessing. As Christians there are countless ways that we can share with others. It isn’t about what we are giving away, but it is the heart attitude that matters to God. If He has shown you the need and you have the means, then it is very clear that He is saying share!

Sharing with others helps to keeps us humble. Recognizing that what we have comes from God and it was His to begin with keeps us from being prideful and falling for the love of money and materialism. We are most like Jesus when we freely share ourselves and what we have been given with those He brings into our lives.

God expects us to help each other. After all, isn’t that what Jesus spent His time on earth doing? If we’re selfless and focus on helping others instead of ourselves, then we will be living more and more like Him.

Whether you are sharing a delicious recipe, a hug, a kind word or your material blessings: *“We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”* **Winston Churchill**

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Creamy Chicken Noodle Stew

Ingredients: Serves 6-8

2 cups of chicken-cubed and cooked
1/3 cup butter, cubed
1 medium carrot, shredded
1 celery rib, chopped
1/3 cup flour
1 carton(32 oz) chicken broth
1/2 cup half and half
1/2 cup 2% milk
1 cup egg noodles
1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper



Instructions:

In a large saucepan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Sauté carrot and celery until tender, 3-5 minute. Stir in flour until blended; gradually add broth, cream and milk.

Bring to a boil, cream and milk. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir until thickened.

Stir in noodles. Reduce heat, simmer uncovered, until noodles are al dente, 7-10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the remaining ingredients and cook until chicken is heated through and cheese is melted.





“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” John 8:36

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **White Chili!**

When it comes to the origin of chili, stories and myths abound. A lot of food historians agree that chili con carne is an American dish with Mexican roots. But Mexicans are said to totally deny any connection with the dish.

It does seem that the earliest written description of chili came from J.C. Clopper, who lived near Houston. While his description never uses the word ‘chili’, this is what he wrote of his visit to San Antonio in 1828: "When they [poor families of San Antonio] have to pay for their meat in the market, very little is made to suffice for the family; it is generally cut into a kind of hash with nearly as many peppers as there are pieces of meat-this is all stewed together."

By the 20th century chili locations were launched in Texas and they became popular all over the west by the 1920s. It’s been said that chili joints meant the difference between survival and death during the Great Depression because chili was cheap and crackers were free. As far as I know, crackers are still free today.

It isn’t easy to find much that is free anymore. And with the inflation rates climbing here in the United States, less and less becomes free to anyone. The inflation rate plays an important role in determining the health of an economy. And as of right now, I would say that we are not very healthy.

What a blessing it is to know that the most important, priceless gift that can be given to anyone is and always will be completely free. Can you imagine if humans tried to sell the gift of Salvation

to others? There would be no limits on the price of setting someone free from sin and giving them eternal life. The sinful nature would be at its worst for sure. The one that has the most money wins, and those that can’t afford such a high price would be doomed.

It is remarkable that the greatest and most valuable gift that there ever was or ever will be is 100% completely free. Jesus came to earth to die for your sins and mine. He did it because of His love for us. And He did it with the highest price tag that has ever been paid...He paid for our Salvation with His very own life.

Jesus wants to set everyone free from the curse of sin and death. He gave His own life so that we could be “free indeed” and asks us simply to believe in Him. **John 8:36** says: ***“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.”***

During the Spanish-American War, Clara Barton was overseeing the work of the Red Cross in Cuba. One day Colonel Theodore Roosevelt came to her wanting to buy food for his sick and wounded Rough Riders. But she refused to sell him any. Roosevelt was perplexed. His men needed the help and he was prepared to pay out of his own funds. When he asked someone why he could not buy the supplies, he was told, "Colonel, just ask for it!" A smile broke over Roosevelt's face. Now he understood-the provisions were not for sale. All he had to do was simply ask and they would be given freely. (*Taken from Our Daily Bread*)

Ever since Jesus died and rose again to give us faith, redemption and salvation there have been people trying to buy their way into heaven. The idea that such a precious gift could be free just doesn’t resonate with our human nature. We don’t like the idea of being obligated to anyone. We want to take credit for anything good that happens in our lives. But when it comes to our Salvation it doesn’t matter how wealthy we are, we will never be able to buy our way into heaven. **John 14:6**; ***“Jesus said, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”***

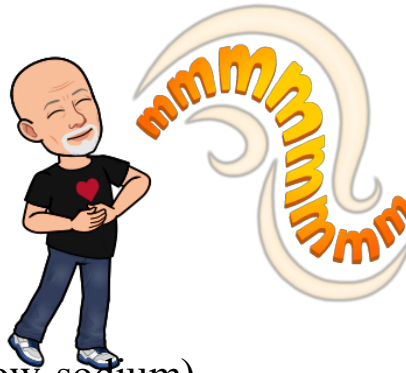
A bowl of chili and a bag of free crackers might have helped to fill one’s tummy and maybe it even saved a few lives during the Great Depression. But all the money and gold in the world cannot save our souls. Only Jesus Christ can do that. And the amazing thing is that it is absolutely 100% free. We just need to ask.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For White Chili

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

2 cans great northern beans, drained and rinsed, divided
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 lb ground chicken or turkey (sometimes I use both)
3 teaspoons salt, divided
1 medium onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 cans green chiles (optional)
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon pepper
4 cups chicken stock (try to use low-sodium)
2 cups frozen corn, thawed
shredded cheddar cheese, for serving
sour cream, for serving



Instructions:

Add 1 can of Great Northern beans to a medium bowl. Mash with a potato masher or fork until chunky and set aside. This technique really helps to build a body for your chili.

Add the oil to a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Once the oil begins to shimmer, add the chicken and season with 1 teaspoon of salt. Cook until the chicken is fully cooked.

Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until softened and golden brown, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic, green chiles, cumin, oregano, cayenne, chili powder, and black pepper and stir until the chicken is coated and the spices are aromatic, about 1 minute.

Add the mashed beans and chicken stock and stir to combine. Bring the soup to a low boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the remaining can of whole beans, corn, and remaining 2 teaspoons of salt. Cover and continue to simmer for 10 minutes, until warmed through.

Ladle the chili into bowls and top with shredded cheddar cheese and sour cream. Serve with cornbread. Yummy!

Bon Appétit, Lynda



“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Roasted Acorn Squash Soup!**

Acorn squash, also called pepper squash or Des Moines squash, is a winter squash with unique ridges that run lengthwise on its exterior and sweet, yellow-orange flesh inside.

Acorn squash are indigenous to the western hemisphere, so they were not known to Europeans until after the journeys of Columbus. However, people had been using squash as a food source for thousands of years. The acorn squash probably originated in Mexico and Central America.

Acorn squash is rich in nutrients, such as fiber, vitamin C, potassium, and magnesium. It also packs many beneficial plant compounds, including carotenoid antioxidants. As a result, acorn squash may promote overall health and protect against certain chronic conditions like heart disease and type 2 diabetes. So aside from tasting good it is also good for you. I am guessing that it is called ‘acorn squash’ because it looks like an acorn!

I hate to think how many times in my life I have met someone and just by their looks I summed them up and labeled them. We all tend to judge the character and worth of others by looking at outward appearances. If a person is tall, slender, athletic looking and well dressed, then they possess physical qualities that we humans commonly admire and respect. As long as there have been people on this earth there have been men and women labeled handsome, beautiful and attractive. But physical looks don’t show us a person’s value, their

integrity or faithfulness to God. Outward qualities are, by definition, superficial. Did you know that women who invest regularly in their appearance spend an average of \$3,756 a year, just narrowly surpassing their male counterparts who spend a comparative \$2,928 a year. Respectively, that’s \$225,360 and \$175,000 in a lifetime. From magazines and designer clothes, to make up and jewelry, beauty has blown up to be a \$532 billion industry. But looks can be deceiving. The outward appearance doesn’t disclose the true character of the person.

Always seeking approval and the world’s idea of beauty is no different for Christians and non-Christians. Vanity and searching for self worth from appearances is a sad reality that happens across the board. I am so grateful that God has the unique ability to see inside a person. God knows our true character according to the Bible: ***“But the LORD said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.’” 1 Samuel 16:7***

God looks at the heart. The heart in Scripture is referring to a person’s moral and spiritual life. The heart reveals the true character of a person. **Proverbs 4:23** says: ***“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.***

If true beauty comes from within, and it certainly should for the Christian, doesn’t it make sense to spend more time on dressing ourselves with the characters of Christ? There is nothing more beautiful that someone that is adorned in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness and self-control. The heart reveals the integrity of a person, so don’t be deceived by the world’s false viewpoint of value and beauty.

The qualities God wants in His children reveals His idea of beauty. Spend some time in The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) to find God’s standards of what beauty looks like. When we spend even a moment in the presence of Jesus we walk away with the most radiant beauty available to humankind.

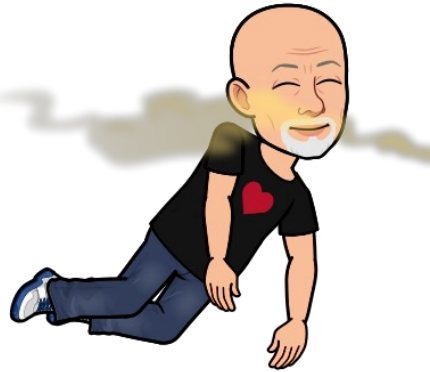
An acorn squash might look like an acorn, but it is still just a squash. So it is with worldly beauty. We can dress the part, but without Jesus it’s just filthy rags covering up the heart.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Roasted Acorn Squash Soup

Ingredients: Serves 4-6

2 acorn squash
1/4 cup olive oil, divided
1 teaspoon salt
1 medium yellow onion, diced
2 tablespoon minced garlic
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1/2 teaspoon sage
1 cup sweet potato, diced
1 cup honey crisp apple, diced
1/2 teaspoon pepper
4 cups vegetable stock, divided
1/2 cup unsweetened coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 cup roasted pine nuts, for garnish



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 400°F

Prepare a baking sheet with foil and spray it with oil.

Cut your acorn squash in half and clean out the seeds. Brush the flesh side of the squash with olive oil. Place the squash flesh side down on the baking sheet and cook in the oven for about 30 minutes.

Allow the squash to cool until it's easy to handle. Scoop out the flesh into a bowl.

In a large pot or Dutch oven, heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions, sauté until fragrant and translucent, 4 minutes.

Add garlic, thyme, and sage and sauté for 30 seconds. Add the sweet potato and apples, sauté for 5 minutes.

Add 2 cups of vegetable stock, salt and pepper. Bring soup to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cover and cook until the carrots are soft and tender, about 10 minutes. Turn off the heat.

Add the roasted acorn squash and 2 cups of vegetable stock to the soup. Using a hand immersion blender, puree the soup until smooth.

Add the coconut milk, process until very smooth. Add the ginger, cloves and nutmeg, stir to combine. Add more vegetable stock or coconut milk if needed to thin out the soup. Season the soup to taste and top with a drizzle of coconut milk and pine nuts before serving.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Celery, Apple and Fennel Slaw**

Fennel is a member of the carrot family, but it’s not a root vegetable. The base of its long stalks intertwine together to form a thick, crisp bulb that grows above ground. Sitting on top of the bulb, at the tip of the stalks, it has light, fluffy leaves that look like dill. When it goes to seed, fennel also produces small yellow flowers between the leaves. Every part of the fennel is edible, from the bulb to the flowers, and it can be eaten raw or cooked. I love it raw!

Though the stalks and leaves are edible, fennel recipes most often call for the bulb. When raw, it has a crisp texture similar to celery and a fresh licorice flavor. It scorches or caramelizes as it cooks, taking on a sweeter flavor and tender texture.

There are a lot of health benefits in eating Fennel as well. It’s low in calories, but high in nutrients like dietary fiber, potassium, and vitamin C.

Fennel is one of those vegetables that isn’t well-known by most people. Everyone knows what broccoli and zucchini are. But this crisp and delicious veggie deserve to be part of our regular vegetable cycle. Pick one up the next time you are in the produce department and try something new!

Thinking about new things reminds me of how incredibly grateful I am that God is doing new things in my character through Jesus Christ. God is always doing new things with His creation. Whether it be building character and killing sinful desires, or preparing us for an eternal life with Him. New beginnings are everywhere in His Holy Word.

When the apostle Paul was speaking to the church in Rome he said this: ***“We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just***

as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His.” Romans 6:4-5 Our new lives will be in heaven with all of those that have gone before us. Praise God!

But while we are still here living out our earthly lives, God continues to give us new life. Our old selves, full of rebellion, sin, and unbelief died with Christ, who paid the penalty for our sins on the cross. Because of our unity with Jesus in His death, we are made alive by God’s Spirit to walk in the newness of life because we have been made right with God. **Romans 8:10** says; ***“But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness.”***

As the Holy Spirit continues to transform our lives we rejoice knowing that He is growing us and making us more like Jesus Christ. What a blessing it is to know that God uses every opportunity to bring others to Him in faith. God’s intentions for changing us and transforming us to be more like His Son is so that we can bring the Gospel to those that do not know Him yet. When our lives are reflecting Jesus Christ we become like a shining light to a dark world. ***“We don’t tell people about ourselves. But we tell people that Jesus Christ is Lord, and we tell them that we are your servants for Jesus. God once said, ‘Let light shine out of the darkness!’ And this is the same God who made His light shine in our hearts to let us know that His own divine greatness is seen in the face of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 4:5-6***

Several years ago I gave the booklet ‘My Heart Christ’s Home’ to the ladies in my Bible Study. The author Robert Munger creatively portrays the Christian life as a house. When Jesus enters, He goes from room to room. In the library of our minds, Christ sorts through the trash, cleaning out the useless garbage. In the kitchen, He deals with our harmful appetites and sinful desires. At the dining room table, He serves us the Bread of Life to satisfy our starving souls and He pours Living Water for us to drink and never be thirsty again. Through dark hallways and closets, Jesus exposes all the places where sin hides. He works His way through every corner and crevice until His love, mercy, forgiveness and grace have filled every space. This allegory presents a beautiful picture of what it means to have new life in Christ.

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Celery, Apple and Fennel Slaw

Ingredients:

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 1/2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 1/2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh tarragon
2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon sugar
3 celery stalks, thinly sliced (keep the leaves)
2 small fennel bulbs, thinly sliced crosswise
1 crisp red delicious apple. Sliced like a match
Salt black pepper



Instructions:

Whisk first 5 ingredients in a medium bowl. Add celery and celery leaves, thinly sliced fennel and chopped fennel fronds, and apple; toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper. So fresh, simple and delicious!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**

AWWWWW





“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.” Luke 22:20

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today: **Arugula and Peaches**

“Arugula, also known as *Eruca vesicaria*, is a cruciferous vegetable, a cousin of broccoli, kale, and cabbage. The leaves have a peppery, spicy flavor that grows more bitter with age. You can also eat the seeds whole or pressed in an oil.

A version of this veggie called "wild arugula" tends to be more pungent. Another variety you might see in the supermarket is "baby arugula." That's just a plant that farmers harvest early.

No matter the type you get, these greens pack a nutritious punch. Arugula is full of antioxidants -- compounds that can protect against or reverse damage to your cells.

Arugula also has glucosinolates. These natural substances, which give arugula its bitter taste and strong scent, may protect you against certain cancers, including breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancers. Arugula may also fight inflammation. It has ample vitamin K, which is good for your bones and may help prevent osteoporosis.

There's little to suggest arugula is bad for you. But if you take medicine known as blood thinners, too much vitamin K could undo their effects. That's because vitamin K is important to the blood-clotting process.” (Taken from WEBMD: By Will Blair)

Most people get squeamish at the sight of blood. I have to admit that as a mother, there is nothing more disturbing than seeing my child bleed. It literally makes my stomach ache. And while blood tends to make most people uncomfortable, did you know that the word "blood" occurs 447 times in 357 verses in the Bible?

The saying “ the blood of Christ” is the expression of the sacrificial death and final atoning work of Jesus on our behalf. When Scripture is talking about the “blood of Christ” it is talking about how He literally bled on the cross, but even more importantly that He bled and died for sinners like you and me. The blood of Jesus Christ has the power to atone for an endless number of sins committed by an never-ending number of people throughout the ages, and all who are covered with that blood through faith will be saved.

The blood of Jesus is the foundation of the New Covenant. On the night before He went to the cross, Jesus offered the cup of wine to His disciples and said, ***“This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.” Luke 22:20*** The pouring of the wine in the cup signified the blood of Jesus which would be poured out for all who would ever believe in Him.

When Jesus shed His blood on the cross, He did away with the Old Covenant requirement for the repeated sacrifices of animals. The animal’s blood was not adequate to cover the sins of the people, except for on a temporary basis. Sin against a holy and infinite God requires a holy and infinite sacrifice. This is the way that God, the maker of all life, decided to forgive His people.

Not only does the blood of Christ redeem believers from sin and eternal punishment, but ***“How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!” Hebrews 9:14*** Because the blood of Christ has redeemed us, we can proclaim that ***“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Corinthians 5:17***, and by His blood we are freed from sin to serve a holy, righteous, living God. We are able to glorify Him in our lives, and best of all we are able to enjoy Him forever.

And the blood of Christ doesn’t stop at the Cross. Every time we take Holy Communion we receive in, with, and under the bread and wine the body and blood of Jesus shed on the cross. It brings forgiveness, spiritual renewal and strength.

“What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus; What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” Robert Lowry

Lynda's Recipe For Arugula and Grilled Peaches

Ingredients: Serves 4

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
2 teaspoons honey
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 large, ripe peaches, quartered
5 ounces baby arugula
1/2 cup fresh mint leaves, chopped
2 tablespoons roasted, unsalted sunflower seed
1/4 cup Feta Cheese

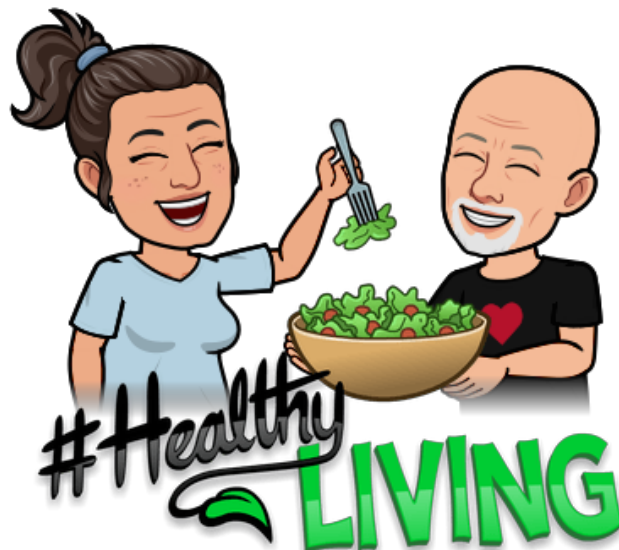


Instructions:

Whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, honey, salt, and pepper in a medium bowl and combined with peaches and set aside.

Combine arugula and mint in a medium bowl. Drizzle with remaining dressing, and toss to coat. Arrange on a platter, and top with peaches, and cheese.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all peoples on earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen.” Revelation 1:7

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Summer Fruit Salad with Burrata

How many of you have heard of burrata cheese? And just what is burrata anyway? Burrata is a smooth, velvety (no-not Velveeta!), soft, fresh Italian cheese made from cow’s milk. If you just looked at this cheese, you could easily mistaken it for fresh mozzarella cheese. And the outside (shell) of burrata is in fact made of soft mozzarella.

But break into this delicious cheese and you will be pleasantly surprised to find an oozing, soft interior made of small cheese curds and cream. In fact, the Italian word ‘burro’ translates to butter, and this alone gives you an idea of just how rich and creamy it is.

This decadent cheese created in southern Italy dates back to the early 1900s. Ever since, burrata has been a key ingredient in Italian dishes like pizza, pasta and caprese salads. But honestly, the greatest way to eat this delicate and delightful cheese is on its own with a little olive oil and Italian bread.

Burrata begins like any cheese, with cultures and rennet (enzymes are added to warm, fresh cow’s milk). As the milk starts souring (curdling), the whey breaks up, separates and is drained off. Then boiling water is poured over the curds, which are then stretched just like making mozzarella cheese.

But here’s where burrata separates itself from the traditional mozzarella cheese. The stretched curd is used to create a pouch that is then filled with a mixture of cream and fresh curds. The pouch is then closed off to create burrata’s signature dumpling-like shape. It reminds me of a soft, fluffy cloud-like pillow.

Speaking of clouds, one of mine and Jeff’s favorite pastime activities is to watch the clouds and try to spot the different formations that develop across the sky.

Most of the time we can both spot the same forms. But occasionally we actually can get a little testy with each other if one of us doesn’t see the same formation that the other one sees. It is actually quite humorous! Nonetheless, this is something that we actually started doing when we were dating as teenagers and we continue it 44 years later!

Revelation 1:7 says, ***“Look He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all peoples on earth will mourn because of Him. So shall it be! Amen.”*** I don’t know about you, but I can’t even begin to imagine what it would be like if all of a sudden of the “cloud formation game” that Jeff and I play suddenly revealed Jesus coming down from one of the clouds that we had identified in the sky. Hopefully we would both see the same thing...lol!

Revelation 1:7 isn’t the only verse that talks about Jesus riding a cloud from heaven either. In **Matthew 26:64** ***“Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.’”***

Some have tried to interpret **Revelation 1:7** as simply symbolizing various figurative meanings to the “clouds.” But honestly there is no reason to look for hidden meanings here. The Scripture means just what it says. There is nothing more to make of the statement that “He comes with the clouds.” It simply means that Jesus will appear to all people as He returns to earth out of the heavens.

After Jesus gave His disciples His the Great Commission, **Acts 1:9** tells us that ***“He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight”***. As the disciples stood there, probably with their mouths hanging wide open and their eyes bulging, two angels appeared and told them in **Acts 1:11**: ***“This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven.”*** A cloud is declared at His ascension, and the clouds are stated at His return.

I don’t know about you, but these Scriptures sure do remind me that God created the heavens and the earth, and if Jesus wants to ride the clouds, He has every right to do so! I do know that I will keep my eyes open and be ever vigilant in my faith as I await for that glorious day when He returns. Until then, Jeff and I will keep playing our “cloud formation game”, with the return of Jesus something that we both will be able to agree on!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Summer Fruit Salad with Burrata

Ingredients: Serves 4

1 cup fresh blackberries
2 yellow peaches, sliced
6 plums, sliced
2 nectarines, sliced
2 heirloom tomatoes
6-8 slices of prosciutto
1 ball burrata
1 tablespoon cherry balsamic vinegar
2-3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
salt
pepper
1/4 cup fresh basil leaves-sliced thinly



Instructions:

Cut the fruit into slices and drape the prosciutto over the fruit (don't forget that tomatoes are a fruit!). Add fresh basil over and tear the burrata over the salad.

Whisk the balsamic vinegar and olive oil together and add a large pinch of sea salt and a few grounds of black pepper. Dress the salad and serve.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





*“Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.”*

Proverbs 4:23

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace!*

On the menu today: **Summer Mango Salad**

Salads never taste as good as they do in the summer. The produce is fresh and delicious. I absolutely love salad for dinner in the summer. Last week it was so ridiculously hot (111°) and I wasn’t about to do any real cooking. So we had a Panzanella salad with cherry tomatoes, english cucumbers, avocado, fresh basil and homemade croutons. It was topped off with some salt and pepper, good olive oil and red wine vinegar. Jeff and I were completely satisfied and we even felt a little reprieve from the heat!

Tonight we are having a summer mango salad. I love putting fruit in salads mixed with fresh leafy veggies. I’m not big on a fruit salad on its own, but add it to a fresh leaf salad and it just livens it up!

Let’s talk mangos. Mangos are very versatile. You can eat them in salads like we are doing tonight; You can make a smoothie with them; You can buy mango sorbet; You can grill them; And put them in sauces and salsa. The list is endless really. They are sweet and succulent and make you feel like you are eating something very special! I didn’t always feel that way about them. But as I have matured my palette has too!

Here are some tips on how to choose a ripe mango: “When picking a mango, don’t focus on color. It is not the best indicator of ripeness. Squeeze the mango gently. A ripe mango will give slightly. Use your experience with produce such as peaches and avocados, which also become softer as they ripen. Ripe mangos will sometimes have a fruity aroma at their stems. The red color that appears on some varieties is not an indicator of ripeness. Always judge by feel.” *(Taken from mango.org)*

Okay, so we know it is good to judge the ripeness of mangos, peaches and avocados by what we are feeling when we squeeze them, but we can’t always rely on our ‘feelings’ for other things in life.

We’ve all heard this quote before: “The heart wants what the heart wants.” Hollywood throws it at us. Books are written all about it. Advertisement encourages it; “If it feels good, just do it.” But according to **Jeremiah 17:9**: *“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”*

The Bible teaches us that the heart is part of man's spiritual makeup. It is the place where emotions and desires begin; It is the place that drives our will into action. According to God’s Word the heart is the starting place for spiritual life. **Ezekiel 36:26** says: *“I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.”* Our spiritual life begins in the heart, and it always begins with God.

With good intentions (most of the time) our feelings and emotions come from our heart and we don’t want to think that they are tainted. As Christians who love the Lord, we don’t want to harbor anything in our hearts that is not from Him. So sometimes it is difficult for us to determine if our feelings are from our own desires, God’s, or maybe both. This has been the case for Jeff and me twice now in ministry. We have had to ask ourselves more than once if “this is from God or our own desires.” If we are trying to determine if our feelings are from God, we need to go straight to His Word. We need to remember that God knows what is best for us. So we need to learn to: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight.”*

Our hearts are a precious gift from God and the portal to a personal relationship with Him, so we can’t just throw caution to the wind and act on our feelings. You must *“Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”*
Proverbs 4:23

Even when our hearts do fail us, and they will, God’s grace comes through and He will prevail. He promises us this in **1 John 3:20**: *“If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and He knows everything.”*

“God sees hearts as we see faces.”
George Herbert

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Summer Mango Salad

Ingredients: Serves 4

2 fresh mangoes, peeled and chopped
2 cups fresh baby arugula
1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 avocado, diced
1/2 English cucumber, chopped
1/3 cup red onion, diced small
3 tablespoons good olive oil
1/2 lemon, juiced
Zest from the lemon
3/4 teaspoon dried thyme
salt and pepper to taste



Instructions:

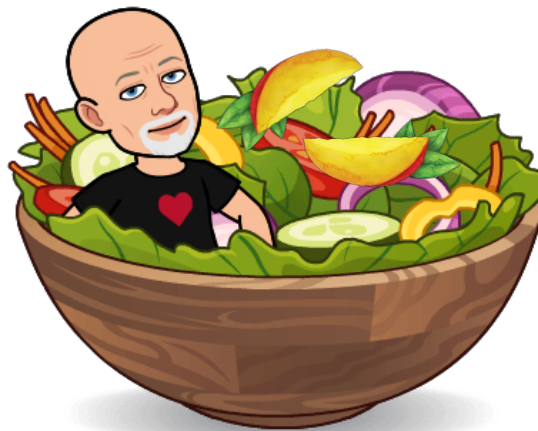
Place your washed arugula in a salad bowl and add a pinch of salt and pepper.

In a separate bowl, combine mangoes, tomatoes, avocado, cucumber, onion and lemon zest in a medium-size mixing bowl. Once mixed well, add to your arugula and toss gently.

Drizzle olive oil and lemon juice over your salad and gently toss. Sprinkle with thyme and salt and pepper to taste.

Serve with grilled salmon or on it's own. Delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Galatians 3:28

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu: Sweet Potato & Chickpea Salad

The Yam vs. The Sweet Potato-which is which and why? Like most of us, we can get these two delicious and highly nutritious potatoes mixed up.

It turns out that the sweet potato is actually a root of a vine in the Morning Glory family. Sweet potatoes originated in North America as far back as the late 1600s. In the early 1900’s, an orange version was cultivated, and to distinguish it from the white sweet potatoes, farmers used the slang phrase “yams” that slaves from West Africa had used to describe them. Sweet potatoes reminded the Africans of an African vegetable called “Nyami”. Real yams are a completely different vegetable from the Nyami.

Their scientific name is Dioscorea, and they originate in Africa and Asia. They are commonly found in the Caribbean and Latin America. Over 600 varieties of yams are known, and 95% of these are still grown in Africa. They can reach up to 100 pounds. In the US, true yams can be tough to find. They are imported and rarely found in our local grocery stores. Your best chances of finding them are in international or ethnic food stores.

So, I have learned something new from researching the yam and the sweet potato. What did I learn? The yams and the sweet potatoes as we know them here in the United States are one and the same. Just slightly different colors! Who knew?

I always cringe when I find information that is connected to the slave era of our country. I can’t begin to imagine what it was like to live during that time in history. God doesn’t show favoritism and neither should we. I am so thankful that slavery is no longer allowed in this country, but as for

racism, I am afraid as long as there are sinful human beings, there will always be some form of racism everywhere. For true followers of Christ, racism is something that we should never allow in your hearts.

In the Old Testament, God divided humanity into two groups: Jews and Gentiles. God’s reason for doing this was for the Jews to be a kingdom of priests, ministering to the Gentile nations His Truth to them. Instead, the Jews became proud of their status and despised the Gentiles, putting divisions between them. **Galatians 3:28** says: ***“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*** Racism, in varying forms and to various degrees, has been a plague on humanity for thousands of years.

Most people have struggled with understanding why we have racism, me included. But the simple truth is that as long as there is sin, there will be racism. Sin appears to make us naturally untrusting of people who look differently from us. The root of sin is pride. And pride always wants to be superior. Racism is evil according to God and His Word. **Ephesians 2:14** says: ***“For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.”*** Jesus came into the World to save all people; Love all people; And set all people free. Martin Luther King’s dream was of a nation where people are not “judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” And that was a godly dream to have!

As Christians we must start seeing all people as being created in the image of our Heavenly Father. **Genesis 1:26** says: ***“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.’”*** He didn’t say ‘let us make only one particular people group of color into our image.’ Jesus came into this world to save us all; ***“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*** **John 3:16.**

As Christians it is our responsibility to be the example. We must start seeing people for who God created them to be and not the color their skin color or language or cultural differences. When we seek to become people after God’s own heart, we will learn to love and respect people of all races and we won’t see ourselves as superior to anyone. ***“For God shows no partiality.”*** **Romans 2:11**

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Sweet Potato & Chickpea Salad

Ingredients: 4-6

2 large sweet potatoes
1/2 medium red onion
15 oz chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice
3 tablespoons garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon sweet paprika
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
3 oz mixed greens
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
dried cranberries or cherries, for garnish (I use cherries)



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 425°

Cut the sweet potatoes in small cubes and transfer on one half of a non-stick baking sheet.

Peel and slice the onion and set aside.

Add the chickpeas to the other half of the baking sheet.

In a liquid measuring cup with a pour spout, combine the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, cayenne, salt, and pepper and mix well.

Pour half of the dressing over the sweet potatoes and chickpeas and mix with your hands until well-coated. Keep the chickpeas and sweet potatoes separated as much as possible.

Move the chickpeas toward the sweet potatoes and add the onions to the baking sheet. Make sure everything is spread out evenly.

Bake for 30 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender-stir halfway through.
Let cool for 20 minutes.

Place the greens in a large bowl. Top with the roasted chickpeas, sweet potatoes, and onion.

Add the parsley, cilantro, and remaining dressing and toss to combine. Top with cherries (or cranberries) I serve this dish with a nice piece of fish.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen...” John 19:40

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today: **Sweet Potato and Black Bean Salad with a Delicious Spice Dressing!**

“Herbs and spices have been at the forefront of history since the beginning of time. Even before recorded history, ancient Egyptians preserved their mummies with herbs and spices. There are also several herb and spice references throughout the Bible; it was thought that they grew in the Garden of Eden and were therefore especially prized. By 500 B.C., Chinese and Korean junk boats traded spices; not long thereafter, the Spice Route extended from Europe to Asia and eventually the Americas. While Europe languished during the Dark Ages, Indonesian, Arab, Chinese and Indian traders were busily profiting from their trading empire.” (Marissa Brassfield of everydayhistory.com)

Today you can find herbs and spices on almost every grocery shelf. Most kitchens have a spice rack of the cook’s favorite spices. We have come a long way from just using salt and pepper!

As we enter into the third day of Passion Week, and I talk all about spices, I can’t help but think of Joseph and Nicodemus. Just who were these two men that stayed with Jesus at the foot of the Cross until His last breath?

At the crucifixion of Jesus, almost all of His followers had left Him to die and went into hiding. But not Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus. God often uses the unlikely characters to do great things. Horrible, dark and scary times can send those we thought to be a faithful friend into the shadows while bringing others out of the darkness.

We really don’t know much about Joseph. We know that he came from the Judean town of Arimathea. He was a member of the Sanhedrin. This

was the group of Jewish religious leaders who called for Jesus’ crucifixion. But we also learn in **Luke 23:50-51** that he was good and upright and against the crucifixion. **“Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea, and he himself was waiting for the kingdom of God.”** We also learn that he was a man of wealth. **“As evening approached, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who had himself become a disciple of Jesus.”** Matthew 27:57

Joseph took great risk to himself and his reputation when he went to Pilate to request Jesus’ body. **Luke 15:43: “Joseph of Arimatheawent boldly to Pilate and asked for Jesus’ body.”** Joseph of Arimathea’s presence in Scripture is short but remarkable. Once afraid to publicly identify with Jesus, he boldly goes to Pilate to ask for Jesus’ body and generously shares his own tomb for Jesus’ burial place.

Like Joseph, Nicodemus was also a member of the Sanhedrin. John reports that Nicodemus came to speak with Jesus at night. Many have speculated that Nicodemus was afraid or ashamed to visit Jesus in broad daylight, so he made a nighttime visit. **John 3:1-2: “Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs You are doing if God were not with Him.’”** Jesus goes on to tell him that he must be born again if he wants to enter into the kingdom of heaven. The next time we see Nicodemus in the Bible, he is functioning in his official ability as a member of the Sanhedrin as they consider what to do about Jesus.

What an awesome example these two men are for us today. They had nothing to gain and everything to lose by asking for the body of Jesus after He had died. They risked their reputations, their political positions and their place of privilege. It seemed that all hope was lost and Jesus was dead, but that didn’t matter to these two unexpected loyal men of faith. **“Taking Jesus’ body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen...” John 19:40** We can learn much from Joseph and Nicodemus.

We must ask ourselves: “Would I be loyal to Jesus, even if I lose everything?”

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Sweet Potato & Black Bean Salad With A Delicious Herb Dressing!

Ingredients:

2 large sweet potato, or 3 small, scrubbed
1 medium red onion
15 oz black beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup olive oil
1/4 cup lemon juice
2 tablespoons garlic, minced
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon paprika
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cayenne
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
3 oz mixed greens
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 425°F

Cut the sweet potatoes into small cubes and transfer on one half of a non-stick baking sheet. Peel and slice the onion and put on the baking sheet.

In a liquid measuring cup combine the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, cayenne, salt, and pepper and mix well.

Pour half of the dressing over the sweet potatoes and mix with your hands until well coated.

Bake for 20-25 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender. Stir halfway through. Let cool for 20 minutes.

Place the greens in a large bowl. Top with the black beans, sweet potatoes, and onion.

Add the parsley, cilantro, and remaining dressing and toss to combine. YUM!

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



***“Keep me as the apple of Your eye;
hide me in the shadow of Your wings.”***
Psalm 17:8

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace!*

On the menu: **Goopy Apple Dumplings!**

There is no other fruit that says “autumn” like apples. When we lived in California we had a few fruit trees on our property and one of them was a wonderful apple tree. I owned a private preschool at the time and I loved taking the kids out there, picking our own apples and taking them back to class to make homemade apple sauce. It was so fun to watch the kids as they ate the fruit of their labor and our classroom smelled heavenly.

Apple dumplings have been around for hundreds of years. It’s believed that apple dumplings were invented sometime during the 17th century with the creation of certain fruit puddings. It was one of the earliest fruit puddings and it was eaten by people of just about every social status during the 18th century. People in the lower classes enjoyed them as much as people in the upper classes, so it was kind of a dessert that could be enjoyed by just about anyone. This was mainly due to the fact that despite its low cost, it was still a dish that was delicious.

Confession time-I don’t like cooked apples at all. I love a fresh, crisp, sweet and tart apple, but I just really don’t like them cooked. So making this recipe is great for me because I won’t eat the dumplings (I don’t need the calories). But no worries, I have plenty of people around me that will!

Did you know that there are several Bible verses about being the apple of God’s eye? **Psalm 17:8** says ***“Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me in the shadow of Your wings.”*** This ancient metaphor is a reference to the pupil of the eye. I have enjoyed researching just what exactly this means.

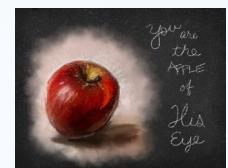
We know the phrase “apple of your eye” is saying that you are special to someone. But what does it mean when it comes to our relationship with a holy and righteous God? Let’s start by looking at some of the Hebrew behind the phrase. The “apple” in the apple of the eye is a translation of the Hebrew word for apple, “ishon”, which is related to the word ish, meaning “man.” So the root translation of the ishon of the eye is “the little man of the eye.” When we are looking someone in the eye and we see our own reflection in their pupil we are seeing the “little man,” right in the center of the eye.

To be the apple of one’s eye is a very delicate and special place and therefore very protected. Think about your own eye for a moment. What happens if something flies in it or toward it? Your eyelids automatically close, your head turns, and your hands try to ward off the intruder. Our eyesight is very valuable, and our body naturally protects that vulnerable spot to prevent injury.

God held the Israelites (His chosen people) as the apple of His eye. As disobedient and stubborn as they could be, He still called them His children. Being the apple of His eye, they were most cherished. And God’s love and care for His children has not changed. Christians are the new Israel (God’s chosen) and He holds us close, and He can protect us as easily as our eyelids protect our pupils. He does this out of His love for us because we have Jesus as our Savior and we are protected through Him. He has a Fatherly, protective love for us, and when we receive Christ, we become the apple of God’s eye.

To be the apple of God’s eye means that we are at the very center and the focus of His attention. He loves us and protects us even when we are pig-headed and disobedient. He is faithful in His care for us. In a similar fashion, we are to keep God and His instructions as the apple of our eye. **Proverbs 7:1-2** says; ***“My son, keep My words and store up My commands within you. Keep My commands and you will live; guard My teachings as the apple of your eye.”*** When we keep our focus on God, our own rebellion and fears melt away and we begin to see that we really are protected as the apple of God’s eye.

In His Grace, Lynda



Lynda's Recipe for Goopy Apple Dumplings

Ingredients:

2 gala apples
2 cans crescent dough
1 1/2 sticks of butter, plus more for pan
1 cup brown sugar
1 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Pinch of salt
8 oz. Ginger Ale



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Grease a large baking dish with butter. Peel and core apples then cut each apple into eighths.

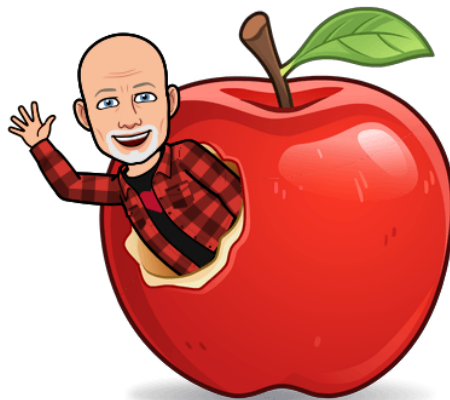
Separate crescent dough into triangles. Starting at the wider end, roll one apple slice up in a crescent triangle. Repeat with remaining apple slices and crescents. Place into prepared pan.

In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt butter, brown sugar, cinnamon, vanilla and salt together. Pour mixture over apples.

Pour soda around edge of pan, trying to avoid pouring on top of dumplings. Bake dumplings until golden, 30 minutes.

Serve warm with ice cream and spoon sauce from pan over dumplings.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.” Ephesians 1:4-5

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God's love and grace! On the menu: **Kladdkaka (Swedish Chocolate Sticky Cake)**

Kladdkaka is a chocolate, gooey, sticky, delicious Swedish cake. In Swedish, kladdkaka literally means “sticky cake” or “messy”. The noun stems from the Swedish adjective kladdig which means “sticky” or “messy”, and “kaka” means cake.

Kladdkaka is a dense and small chocolate cake similar to a chocolate brownie or half-baked chocolate cake. The main difference between kladdkaka and other sponge-like cakes is the lack of baking soda or baking powder, which makes it sticky due to the absence of air bubbles in the dough.

The beginning of this cake is unknown. One theory is that it was created during World War II, when baking powder was difficult to get hold of in Sweden. Kladdkaka has its own designated date in Sweden which is on November 7th of every year since 2008. You can find kladdkaka in almost every café and restaurant all around Sweden. There are hundreds of versions and some are better than others, but one thing for sure, this is a failproof, easy and delicious cake to make!

Do you know what else is failproof? God's love! It doesn't matter what you have done or where you have been either. God's love is not based on our behavior or our good works.

Ephesians 1:4-5 says; ***“For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and***

blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.” God's love for us is most evident in the Gospels. The Gospel message is basically God intervening and rescuing us from sin, death and the devil. As God reflected on the dilemma of His rebellious people, you, me and all humankind, He determined that He had to save us from our sins. God's gracious act was based on His love for us.

God's compassionate rescue was based on His unconditional love and it resulted in a merciful act of self-sacrifice. Jesus said; ***“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.” John 15:13*** And that is exactly what our Holy and Righteous God did; He came down as Jesus Christ and suffered, died and rose again all because of His failproof love for you and me.

1 John 4:9-10 makes it very clear about what God's love looks like; ***“This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”*** We can trust God's love for us because He was willing to sacrifice all that He had to make sure that He could continue to love us.

I think sometimes we have this underlining belief that, “if God loves us, then why is there suffering in the World?” And while many people struggle with that question they are missing the truth, “Because of the suffer in this World, God sent Jesus to atone for our sins and show us that He loves us.” God never planned for there to be suffering in this world. But after the fall of Adam and Eve, He knew that it was going to take the most extravert, priceless, merciful love possible for us to grasp just how much He loves us and wants a relationship with us. God loves all of His children, you and me, unconditionally!

“The sin underneath all our sins is to trust the lie of the serpent that we cannot trust the love and grace of Christ and must take matters into our own hands.” ~ Martin Luther

God's love is 100% failproof!

In His Grace, Lynda



Lynda's Recipe for Kladdkaka (Swedish Chocolate Sticky Cake)

Ingredients:

1 1/3 cups sugar
2 egg
1/2 cup flour
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (I use dark chocolate)
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter, melted
1 tablespoon vanilla extract
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon cocoa powder
Powdered sugar for dusting



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Lightly grease an 8-inch pie plate and sprinkle with cocoa.

In a medium bowl, whisk the sugar and eggs until the mixture is pale yellow in color.

Add the flour, cocoa powder, and the salt. Fold gently until incorporated. Mix in the butter and vanilla.

Pour in batter and smooth out. Batter will be very thick.

Bake for 20 minutes or until the top has hardened. The center should still be soft. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve with vanilla ice cream. YUM!!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.”
2 Corinthians 11:14

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Hazelnut Chiffon Cake!**

In 1927 Harry Baker, a Los Angeles insurance agent, invented the original Chiffon cake. As word spread of this wonderfully light and airy cake, Harry was repeatedly asked for the recipe. But for twenty years he carefully guarded his precious recipe, making his special cake only for the leading royalty of Hollywood. Harry would sell his cakes to Hollywood stars and he also made it for the famous Brown Derby Restaurant.

The secret to Harry Baker’s light and fluffy Chiffon cake is that the egg whites are beaten separately from the yolks, and he used vegetable oil instead of butter, or the standard shortening of his time.

Chiffon cake is comparable to Angel Food cake in a lot of ways. Both cakes rely on stiffly beaten egg whites for rising, and both have an airy texture. Chiffon cake is often baked in an Angel Food cake pan and inverted during cooling to keep the full height of its rise. Sitting side by side and before you slice into either of these cakes they look practically identical. But once you slice into the cake you realize very quickly that the Chiffon cake is yellow and uses the yolks as well as the egg whites, whereas the Angel Food cake is pure white and doesn’t use the yolks of the eggs. But hey, don’t sweat the differences because they both are just heavenly!

Just like looking at a fresh baked Angel Food cake and a Chiffon cake and not being able to tell the difference until you open them up, so it is sometimes with angels and demons. Satan is always finding ways to disguise himself and his evil demons in order to confuse us and

cause us to be deceived. We must always be on guard and aware of his evilness in this fallen broken world. **2 Corinthians 11:14** says; *“And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.”* There are several reasons why we Christians can let our guard down and be deceived. One in particular is because Satan and his demons are spiritual beings. As spirit beings, demons do not have noses, eyes, hands, feet, tails, or anything else that we might look for in sketching out a description.

Because there is no way to know what Satan or demons look like, Scripture makes it very clear that we are to be on guard. Even some things that seems to be harmless can in actuality be dangerous to our spiritual health and ultimately impact our relationship with Jesus. God’s Word give us clear instruction to protect our precious relationship with our Savior and to keep us safe. *“Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”*
Ephesians 6:11-12

It really doesn’t matter what Satan looks like or what he wants us to think about him. We know the Truth from God’s Word. **1 Peter 5:8** says; *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”* Just like cutting into two identical looking pieces of cake with a knife, we must use the Sword of the Spirit (God’s Word) to cut into Satan’s lies and deceptions.

It is crucial that every Christian understands that they are in a spiritual battle. There is no way to get out of it while we are living here on this Earth. **1 John 5:19** says; *“We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one.”* Awareness of the spiritual battle around us is of the upmost importance. We must be vigilant; Be prepared; Have courage; Clothe ourselves with God’s Holy Word; And trust that the Holy Spirit will help us fight our spiritual battles.

We need to be careful about whom or what we are putting our trust in. We can’t forget that the devil was once an angel. He can appear as tempting as a piece of cake, and if we aren’t prepared, we just might bite into a world of trouble!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Hazelnut Chiffon Cake

Ingredients:

1/2 cup milk
2 cups cake flour
1-1/2 cups sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup canola oil
8 Eggs-Separate the whites from the yolks
1 teaspoon Vanilla
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 cup chocolate Nutella (divided 2x1/2 cups)
1/2 cup toasted chopped hazelnuts



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 325°F

You will need a 9 x 4 Angel Food Cake Pan (I don't have one-so I used a Bundt cake pan)

Heat up 1/2 cup of milk and add it to your blender. Add the 1/2 cup Nutella and blend until well combined.

In large bowl, sift together flour, sugar, baking powder and salt.

Add oil, egg yolks, vanilla and the Nutella milk and whisk until well combined.

In a large bowl, beat egg whites and cream of tartar with electric mixer to stiff peaks.

Fold 1/3 of whipped whites into the batter to lighten. Gently fold in the remaining whites until mixture is combined; do not overmix or batter will deflate.

Pour into ungreased pan; tap gently on counter to release air pockets. Bake 50-60 minutes or until cake springs back when touched. Invert pan immediately onto cooling grid after removing from oven; cool completely (about 2 hours). Run knife around the sides and center of cake to loosen.

In a small bowl heat the 1/2 cup of Nutella for about 30 seconds until it is pourable.

Pour it over your cake and top with hazelnuts.

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“His talk is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart; his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.” Psalm 55:21

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu: **Yellow Cake & Chocolate Cream Cheese Frosting***

Baking can be ‘a piece of cake’ if you know what you are baking. I had the pleasure of hosting my brother and sister in-law this week. It was also my sister in-law Tracy’s birthday. When I asked her what her favorite birthday cake was she said “yellow cake with chocolate frosting”. That was a first for me. I don’t think anyone has ever requested a yellow cake from me before. So this was a fun challenge as I have never made a ‘yellow cake’ from scratch. And then I started thinking, “What is in a yellow cake and how is it different than a white cake?”

Let’s start off with the obvious...the colors of the two types of cake I mentioned above are different. One is white and the other is yellow. Ok, now that we have that out of the way, I discovered that there is more to it than just the color differences.

The yellow option is a type of plain cake mixture that does not contain any extra flavor. Its yellow tint comes from distinctive ingredients, namely butter and egg yolks. Some versions use only egg yolks, and others put in the entire egg. The egg yolk element makes it more dense, while the butter locks in the flavors resulting from other creamy and fragrant ingredients. Yellow cake recipes also use a different type of flour called whole-wheat pastry flour. The white variant uses ordinary flour and only egg whites, and usually oil instead of butter.

So I made my first ‘yellow cake’ from scratch. It was sure yummy...because everything taste better with butter! Or does it?

If we could ask King David in the Bible what he thought about butter this is what he would say;

“His talk is smooth as butter, yet war is in his heart; his words are more soothing than oil, yet they are drawn swords.” Psalm 55:21 David’s so-called friend was smooth and charming and yet in the end, he turned out to be a murderous hypocrite. David’s cry of anguish was due to a backstabbing friend. He had enemies enough, but this betrayal hurt the most because it was done by someone he had been close to. The English poet William Blake said “It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend.” For David, this is exactly what was going on in his heart. He had been betrayed by a close personal friend and confidant and he was heart broken.

Merriam-Webster’s definition of backstabbing is “Betrayal (as by a verbal attack against one not present) especially by a false friend.” How about you? Haven’t we all been betrayed in our lives? I know I have and it hurts. And I also am ashamed to admit that I have probably been the betrayer. I don’t think that I have ever deliberately back stabbed a close friend, but unintentionally...yes!

I learned at an early age just how painful backstabbing can be. My parents had a hobby using CB radios, remember those? We all kind of joined in on this family fun back in the 1970’s. My radio name was “Freckl Face”....go figure! One night as I was sitting at our dining room table doing my homework I over heard a voice on the CB radio sitting on the counter. It caught my attention because I heard my call name. As I listened I realized that a classmate of mine was using her parent’s radio and talking trash about me to someone out there in CB air land. She was using very choice words and for lack of a better term, she was backstabbing me. I was deeply wounded from this experience and felt betrayed.

I was so affected by being betrayed publicly by a classmate that from that moment on I have tried to be very careful about my words. One Scripture that I have written upon my heart a long time ago is **Psalm 19:14** which says ***“May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in Your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”*** As Christians, whether it be gossip or backstabbing, we should always strive to keep our words about anyone loving and kind or just keep our mouths shut!

In closing, have you heard the joke about butter?

I don't want to spread it.

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Yellow Cake and Chocolate Cream Cheese Frosting

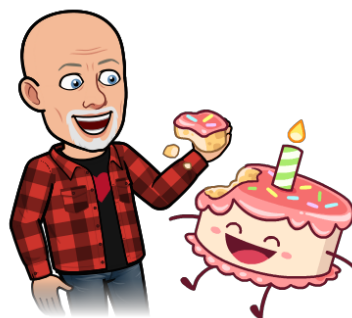
Ingredients:

1 cup butter, room temperature
2 cups white sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 eggs, separated, room temperature
3 teaspoons baking powder
3 cups whole-wheat pastry flour
1 cup milk, room temperature
1 pinch salt



Frosting:

1-8 ounce package cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup butter, softened
2 cups powdered sugar
1/3 cup baking cocoa
1 dash salt
3 tablespoons whipping cream
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Grease and flour a 9x13 baking dish. This cake is bigger than some, so if you are using round pans make sure you use 3 of them.

Cream the butter and sugar together until smooth and fluffy, about 5 minutes. Add the egg yolks one at a time, beating after each one. Mix in the vanilla extract.

Sift together the baking powder, flour and salt. Add the flour mixture to the creamed mixture in three batches, alternating with the milk. Blend after each addition. Scrape down the sides and bottom of the bowl and beat an additional minute.

In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites with a dash of salt until stiff peaks form. Fold one third of the egg whites into the cake batter to lighten it; gently fold in the remaining egg whites. Pour batter into prepared pan.

Bake in oven for 35 minutes if you are using a 9x13 pan. Bake for 25 minutes if you are using round cake pans. Let cake completely cool before frosting.

In a mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and butter until smooth. Add powdered sugar, cocoa, salt, milk or whipping cream, and vanilla. Mix well.

Bon Appétit, Lynda



***“Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting... thanks be
to God! He gives us the victory through our
Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:55***

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace!*

On the menu today: **Apple Cinnamon Bread**

Apple and cinnamon are the perfect pair! The taste and smell makes you feel all warm and loved on the inside. Did you know that there are four major types of cinnamon? But the two most used around the world are ‘cassia’ and ‘ceylon’ cinnamon. Dark colored cassia cinnamon is the one most commonly sold in the United States. It’s grown in southeastern Asia. Ceylon cinnamon, also known as the ‘true cinnamon’, is frequently used in other countries. The cinnamon you buy at the store could be one of the two main types, ceylon or cassia, or a mixture of both.

Today is “Holy Saturday”. This day must have brought a ‘mixture’ of emotions for His faithful followers. Jesus’ body is still in the tomb and all seems lost for His heartbroken followers. But they had no idea what was really going on with their precious savior on that Saturday.

Jesus had predicted that this day would come when He said, ***“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Matthew 12:40***

Have you ever put much thought into what it was Jesus was doing while lying in the tomb? Scripture gives us a glimpse in **1 Peter 3:18-19**: ***“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, He went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits.”***

This whole concept of Jesus going into hell has been interpreted in many different ways. I don’t want to get into the different view points of all of the denominations of the Christian Faith. UGH! That would be a book in and of itself. But it is important to point out that whatever it was that He was doing, we know for sure according to Scripture that He was proclaiming His victory over sin, death and the devil.

While Jesus’ descent into hell is really beyond our human understanding, we can receive great comfort from these words of Scripture: ***“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: ‘When He ascended on high, He took many captives and gave gifts to His people. (What does “He ascended” mean except that He also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)” Ephesians 4:7-10*** If we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then we can be confident and sure that neither hell nor the devil can take us captive or harm us. I can only imagine what a “victory party” that must have been.

We claim this victory every time we say the Apostles' Creed. Though not actually written by the apostles, it is the oldest creed of the Christian church based on the teachings of the Apostles. ***“I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”***

God's victory over death and the devil was won through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is a victory worth shouting about! **1 Corinthians 15:55 & 57**: ***“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? ...thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”***

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Apple Cinnamon Bread!

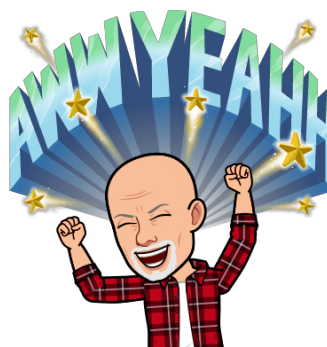
Ingredients:

2/3 cup sugar
1/3 cup light brown sugar
8 ounces Sour Cream
2 eggs
2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 large granny smith apple, peeled and small dice (about 1 1/3 cup)



Cream Cheese Filling:

1 egg
8 ounces brick-style cream cheese, softened
1/3 cup light brown sugar
3 tablespoons of flour



Topping:

1 tablespoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan. Prepare the cream cheese filling: Add all the ingredients for the cream cheese filling to a medium bowl. Whisk or use a hand-held mixer and beat until completely combined. Set aside in the refrigerator.

Prepare the topping: In a small bowl stir together sugar and cinnamon. Set aside. In a large bowl, whisk together the granulated sugar, brown sugar, yogurt, eggs and vanilla until well combined.

In a separate medium sized bowl, whisk together the flour, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients. Whisk together until roughly combined and then switch to a spatula and fold until ingredients are well combined. The mixture should be thick. Add the apples. Add the apples to the bowl by folding gently. Set aside.

Add batter to prepared pan in layers. Pour about 2/3 of the batter into prepared loaf pan. Use a spatula to lightly smooth the top and push batter into corners and sides. Evenly pour all of the cream cheese filling mixture over the bread, lightly smoothing the top and pushing the filling into the corners and sides. Top with the remaining batter, smoothing the top lightly and try not to disturb the cream cheese layer. Sprinkle the top with cinnamon sugar mixture.

Bake in for 45-50 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Cool and Serve: Yummy!

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”

Luke 2:52

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Butterscotch Monkey Bread**

Butterscotch hard candies were one of my favorite treats as a kid. I loved Brach’s Butterscotch hard candies and I was always a sucker for the creamy, buttery taste of them.

The origin of the name ‘butterscotch’ is uncertain as to whether it signifies that the candy came from Scotland or from an original ingredient of “scotched,” or scorched, butter.

Butterscotch is often thought to be the same as caramel, but it is not. Butterscotch is sweeter, richer and softer than caramel.

When Jeff and I were first married I use to make butterscotch pudding for him all the time. It was his favorite pudding. 42 years ago I knew absolutely nothing about baking (or cooking), so I used the instant pudding box! I really couldn’t stand the taste of it either. But Jeff loved it, so I made it for him. I was quite proud of myself too, because I actually felt like I was making something special. I haven’t made butterscotch pudding for him in probably 35 years. I guess it is about time I do it again. But this time I won’t use a box!

We all have favorites. The categories are endless as to what favorites you might have. Have you ever wondered if God has favorites? When we think of favoritism, we envision a place of higher position and less obligation or responsibility. Jesus was the example of everything God favors. Many times in Scripture Jesus is the ultimate example of where God finds favor: ***“And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”***

Luke 2:52

I don’t believe that God is limited in His favor. He does not position us in order of importance, and we don’t have to earn His favor. That has already been done on the Cross. Once we receive Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we are covered by His blood. We become favored by God. We are acceptable and pleasing to Him because of Jesus.

The dictionary defines favoritism as “the practice of giving unfair preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of another.” This is certainly the world’s characterization of favoritism. And no, our God does not show ‘favoritism’.

But while God is not partial in sharing His love to us, He does show ‘favor’ to some. For an example, God showed favor to Mary, the mother of Jesus, in **Luke 1:28: “The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”** Scripture never tells us why God chose Mary to be the one that He found favor with to bring His Son into the world, but as a result of it, she endured more hardship as the mother of Jesus than any of us ever will. During the Biblical days kings and prophets were chosen by God for reasons that only He knows. From Abraham to Solomon, and all those in-between that God showed His favor. Scripture does teach us that when favor has been shown by God there is usually a high price to be paid. But like Mary and Moses, and many others who didn’t think they were worthy or equipped, God provided what was needed to have His plans fulfilled.

The Bible is clear that God does not demonstrate favoritism: ***“God will repay each person according to what they have done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, He will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the Truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.”*** Romans 2:6-8

According to **John 1:12; “But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.”** If we confess Jesus as our Lord and Savior, we have received ‘favor’ from God. That favor may look different for each person, but we know that it will bring glory to our heavenly Father.

No, God does not show favoritism, but He does give us His favor. ***“Grace means undeserved kindness. It is the gift of God to man the moment he sees he is unworthy of God’s favor.”***

Dwight L. Moody

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Butterscotch Monkey Bread

Ingredients:

2 16 oz cans of Pillsbury Grands Biscuits
1/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cinnamon
1/4 cup salted butter melted & cooled
1/3 cup butterscotch chips



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Lightly spray a Bundt pan with non-stick spray. Set aside.

In a microwave safe bowl, melt your butter and allow it to cool.

In another bowl, mix together the sugar and cinnamon.

Open your first can of biscuits. Lightly flatten a biscuit and add 4-6 butterscotch chips to the center. Pinch the dough to close the dough into a ball.

Roll in the butter then immediately in the cinnamon/sugar mixture.

Add to the prepared pan - add one roll to each "large" crevice of the Bundt pan. Repeat until you've finished the first layer.

Repeat the process with your second can of biscuits by placing the second layer on top of-in-between the first layer. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden and set.

Let cool in the pan for about 10 minutes then flip out onto a plate and enjoy!

Bon Appétit, Lynda

AWWWWW





“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” John 13:34

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today: **Citrus Cream Cheese Coffee Cake***

I love adding citrus to my food preparation. Whether it be a zest of lemon, orange or lime, a zesty tablespoon can perk up any dish. It smells and tastes so bright and cheery. Does that make any sense to you? It works for me anyway!

Today’s citrus of choice is lemons! Unlike many fruit, lemons do not ripen or improve in quality after picking. People should harvest lemons when they are ripe and store them at room temperature away from direct sunlight. Lemons pair well with both savory and sweet dishes.

Lemons are an excellent source of vitamin C and flavonoids, which are antioxidants. Antioxidants help remove free radicals that can damage cells from the body. These nutrients can help prevent diseases and boost health and well-being.

Here are some of the possible benefits of consuming lemons: Lowering stroke risk; Lowering blood pressure; Help with cancer prevention; Help in maintaining a healthy complexion; Help in preventing Asthma; Increases iron absorption; Boosts the immune system; Impacts weight loss; And fights against scurvy due to the high levels of vitamin C. Lemons are simply amazing. They are the zest!

Speaking of lemons, let’s talk about my “main squeeze”, Jesus! When He was in the upper room with His disciples, He gave them this new commandment: ***“Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” John 13:34***

So the question that we must ask ourselves as His followers today, just like the disciples did back then, is “How do we do this? What does it mean to love one another?”

Jesus goes on to say in **John 13:35**: ***“By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”*** The “one another” in both of these verses is in reference to fellow believers. A distinct characteristic of being a follower of Christ is a deep, sincere love for our brothers and sisters in the Faith.

In giving this command, Jesus did something the world had never seen before. He created a group classified by one thing: love. Followers of Christ are identified by their love for each other. Why is this? **Romans 5:8** makes it very clear: ***“But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***

God’s Word makes it clear that we are commanded to love one another. Love is the driving force behind our entire faith after all. Every Christian knows that they should love. But sometimes it can be hard to distinguish just how to love others. How can we fulfill this commandment in our everyday lives?

We must start by looking to the example of Christ and love others as He has loved us. So how can we imitate Jesus in the ways that we love each other? The love that God shows us is unconditional. It never leaves us no matter how far we stray from Him. In the same manner, we are meant to love those around us.

We are all imperfect, bound to make mistakes and hurt each other in the process. But **1 Peter 4:8** tells us: ***“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”*** God’s love in us is strong enough to cover those sins. Love can overcome any transgression. Instead of holding grudges or harboring your anger, we should be asking for God’s grace and mercy to help us look past the flaws of others.

1st John 4:19-21 sums it up very well: ***“We love because He first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And He has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.”***

When you find it difficult to love your brother or sister in Christ, ask God to show you who He intended for them to be and then you won’t be able to help but love them.

And finally ***“When life gives you lemons, use the opportunity to add some zest to your life!”***

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Citrus Cream Cheese Coffee Cake

Ingredients:

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 1/4 cups sugar
3 eggs
2 1/4 cups flour
1 cup milk
3 tablespoons grated lemon zest (reserve juice)
3 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt



Glaze:

1/3 cup white sugar
1/4 cup fresh squeezed lemon juice



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Spray your loaf pan and set aside.

Blend cream cheese and butter in a large mixing bowl with an electric mixer until creamy. Beat in sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add flour, milk, lemon zest, baking powder, and salt. Mix on low speed just until thoroughly blended, scraping down the sides of the bowl occasionally. Pour into the prepared pan.

Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes.

While the cake is baking, mix sugar and lemon juice until sugar is dissolved.

Remove the cake from the oven. Pour the lemon glaze over the hot cake, allowing it to run down the edges between the cake and the pan. Cool in the pan for 30 minutes. Remove from the pan and cool completely.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



Seriously, it's 110 degrees outside.
I am not firing up my oven!

“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead.”

Philippians 3:23

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God's love and grace!

On the menu: **Creamy Strawberry Pound Cake**

The pound cake is a pleasant cake typically made in a Bundt or loaf pan, and is very popular, especially in the summer with fresh local berries poured on top of it-yum!

The name for this delicious cake doesn't stem from the weight of the completed dessert itself. It is actually more about the ingredient list, a remnant of a time when recipes were largely passed along verbally.

Pound cake first came about during the early 1700s. At that time, most people were unable to read or write, so recipes that could easily be shared by word of mouth were inclined to be the most popular. The recipe for pound cake also called for humble ingredients that most households could afford, a reason that remains a part of its popularity. The oldest recipes for pound cake call for a pound each of sugar, eggs, butter and flour. This made it easy to remember. And a true pound cake would weigh about four pounds total. That would be a pretty heavy cake!

Speaking of heavy, no I am not going to talk about my weight with you. Don't worry, I won't ever do that! I am going to talk about the heavy weight of our sins, and how we all need to go on a “spiritual cleansing diet” from time to time. We need to shed the weight of sin from our souls!

Now pay attention because I am going to tell you a huge secret. Are you ready? EVERYONE SINS.

That's right. Every single person that walks on this earth sins. If you don't believe me, then you will have to take it up with God Himself. **Romans 3:23** says: ***“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”*** That's right, you are a sinner. Like it or not, you are not perfect. None of us are.

We all sin. And a nasty result of sin is the feeling of guilt. At first it is a blessing for us to experience guilt when we sin, because the guilt we feel reminds us that we have broken one of God's laws and we are in need for a Savior. Jesus died on the cross for those sins. And if we didn't feel guilt for sinning, then we wouldn't be acknowledging what His death on the cross paid for. Paul talks about this kind of guilt in **2 Corinthians 7:9-10**: ***“Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”*** So the guilt that we experience when we sin is a good guilt.

But this is where the weight problem begins. We hold onto our guilt! Our brother “Pastor Paul” has something to say about us holding onto our guilt over sin: ***“Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead...”*** **Philippians 3:23** Paul is saying, “Listen, don't forget why Christ died on the cross. Ask for forgiveness, repent and move forward. Don't forget why you are here to begin with, that is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And you can't do that if you keep holding onto sin. You can't share the freedom in Him if we keep looking in the past.”

1 Corinthians 6:11 says ***“...But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”*** Once we've dealt with our sin, we must move on. ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*** **2 Corinthians 5:17**. When the Lord forgives us this is what happens: ***“As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”*** **Psalm 103:12** They are nailed to the cross, dead and buried and gone. If God forgives us, we need to forgive ourselves.

So shed the weight of unforgiveness (guilt) in yourself and with others....you will feel light and free!

Lynda's Recipe Creamy Strawberry Pound Cake

Ingredients:

1 3/4 cake flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/8 teaspoon salt
1 cup fresh strawberries- diced
2/3 cup white chocolate chips
1/2 cup unsalted butter-room temperature
1 1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup cream cheese
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 tablespoons browned butter (see below)
Flour to toss the strawberries and chocolate chips



For Cream Cheese Frosting:

1/4 cup butter-softened (room temperature)
4 oz. cream cheese
1 1/2 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

For Garnish:

5 strawberries-diced
1 tablespoon canola oil
1/2 cup white chocolate chips



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°

Butter and flour a loaf pan, then line it with parchment paper and set aside.
Combine cake flour with baking powder and salt in a bowl and set aside.

In a small sauce pan brown 2 tablespoon butter over medium heat to get nice brownish-yellow color and set aside to cool.

Whisk eggs and vanilla in a separate bowl, set aside.

Cream the butter on medium speed, slowly add sugar and continue mixing until smooth. Add heavy cream and cream cheese, and beat on medium speed to combine, then turn the mixer on low speed and gradually add dry ingredients alternately with eggs.

Add one tablespoon flour over chocolate chips and toss them to cover evenly. Toss diced strawberries with a handful flour to cover them completely.

Using a spatula stir chocolate chips in the batter, then gently stir in strawberries and pour the batter into prepared pan, smooth the top and gently tap it onto working surface to remove the air bubbles.

With a butter knife draw a line down the center of the cake and pour browned butter into the line. Bake until the top of the cake is golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean (about 60 to 70 minutes). Cool the cake in the pan for 15 minutes, then remove from the pan on the rack and cool completely.

Bon Appétit, Lynda



“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”
Romans 8:28

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Lemon Blueberry Loaf!**

Lemons and blueberries are one of my favorite combinations. I love the tartness of the lemon and the sweet pop of the blueberries in my mouth. I love the colors of blue and yellow together as well. It is such a cheerful combination! Did you know that there is even a website called “Lemons are Blue” where you can order personalized gifts that are all made in America?

Blueberries were ranked number one in antioxidant health benefits in a comparison with more than 40 fresh fruits and vegetables. The blueberry is one of the only foods that is naturally blue in color. And a single blueberry bush can produce as many as 6,000 blueberries per year.

Lemons are very rich in vitamin C. In addition, they’re a great source of potassium and vitamin B6. Drinking lemon water may decrease stress, enhance immune function, help prevent anemia, reduce your risk of kidney stones and protect against several diseases.

Not only are blueberries and lemons delicious and pretty together, they are also very good for you. So if life gives you lemons, just add blueberries and you will have a little taste of heaven!

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade” is a longtime motto used to encourage optimism in the face of difficulty. Lemons are sour and represent life’s challenges, whereas lemonade is sweet and represents facing life’s challenges and turning them

into something positive. In other words, turning a negativize into a positivize. The adage also is indicative of changing focus in times of difficulty. Instead of focusing on the problem, one needs to focus on finding a solution.

I don’t believe that we can always make lemonade out of lemons. Sometimes the sour squeeze of life just can’t be sweetened with sugar. But I do believe that if God is on our side, we will come through those acidic times and grow closer to Him during them. God promises us in His Word that if we trust in Him, we will come out stronger! **Romans 8:28** says; ***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”*** Basically what this verse is saying to us as Christians is that perspective matters. How we choose to view a situation that brings us hardship and adversity is of the utmost importance. Do we keep our eyes on our Lord or do we allow the devil to deceive us into thinking that God doesn’t care about the difficulties in our lives?

If there is one thing that I have learned about the troubles of life, it is that they either draw us closer to God or Satan uses it as a distraction to draw us away. In our relationship with Jesus we are either moving toward the Lord or we are moving away from Him. Every new day that He gives to us we are faced with a decision. Do we make choices to draw closer to Him or do we allow difficulties to draw us away from Him? God’s desire is that we would pursue Him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. Satan has filled the world with distractions and lies so we must set our hearts and minds upon God.

As Christians we know, but often forget, that we live in a fallen world; A world full of heartache, pain, suffering and death. “Life’s Lemons” are inevitable! And yet we often are completely surprised when suffering comes our way. **1 Peter 2:21** says; ***“For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in His steps.”***

When life starts to get sour, and it will, sweeten it with gratitude and praise to our Lord. He will carry you through whatever lemons come your way! He promises: ***“Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*** **Isaiah 41:10**

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Lemon Blueberry Loaf!

Ingredients:

1 3/4 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup canola oil
1/4 cup buttermilk
1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
Zest of one lemon
2 large eggs
1 1/2 cups fresh blueberries



Topping:

1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup white sugar
1/2 cup unsalted butter-melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Instructions: Preheat oven to 350 degrees F

Combine the ingredients for the topping in a small bowl and set aside.

In a mixing bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt until well combined and set aside.

In a separate large mixing bowl mix together 1 cup sugar, canola oil, buttermilk, yogurt and eggs until well blended and creamy. Add lemon zest of one lemon. Using a rubber spatula, fold in flour mixture until combine. Don't over mix.

Gently fold in blueberries. Pour into a greased loaf pan. Sprinkle top with the sugar mixture.

Bake for 60 minutes or when toothpick comes out clean. Let cool before serving. Yummy!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’” Matthew 27:29

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Blackberry Sorbet**

Jeff and I love blackberries and we now have them coming out of our ears! I’m not complaining of course, but we have more blackberry bushes than we could possibly keep up with.

“Pacific Blackberry is a species in the Rosaceae (Rose) family that is native to a large part of western North America from Baja to Canada and from the coast to the Rocky Mountains. This is a wide, spreading shrub or vine-bearing bush with prickly branches, white flowers and edible fruits. This species is one of the original parents of the hybrids Loganberry and Boysenberry. Pacific Blackberry typically does not set fruit until the second year after planting, and it is typically dioecious so that only the female plants produce fruit. The sweet-tart fruits are dark purple to black and up to 2 centimeters in length. They can be eaten raw, baked in pie or cobbler, or frozen. Seed size seems to be related to fruit “cell” size, and the smallest (1 centimeter) fully formed berries are most highly prized. The plant is a vigorous spreader that needs cool temperatures and high amounts of moisture to set large fruit. For this reason fruit production and flavor is generally inferior in the southernmost part of its range.

Growing Pacific Blackberry requires some thought and care because its numerous prickles can make harvesting the fruits, weeding, pruning and other maintenance activities unpleasant.” (Taken from calscape.org)

Whether you call them prickles or thorns, picking blackberries can be hard on the fingers and make sure you want wear proper shoes to protect your toes! But it is worth the risk to retrieve such delicious juicy and sweet berries off the vine.

The Bible speaks of thorns over 50 times. But none of the verses is more precious than **Matthew 27:29**; ***“When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’”***

As if the trials, beatings and the flogging was not enough, before He was crucified, the Roman soldiers contemptuously made a crown out of thorns to place upon His head. A crown of thorns would have been extremely painful, but the crown was meant more for mockery than it was about pain. Here was the “King of the Jews” being brutally beaten, spit upon and insulted by what I would imagine to be the lowest rank of Roman soldiers that there was. The crown of thorns was the final crescendo of their mockery, taking the symbol of royalty and majesty of a crown, and turning it into something painful and humiliating. This scene that played out in the Gospels of Matthew and John had to be the epitome of how sinfully demonic humans can become.

While these vicious soldiers might have thought that they were in control and that they were mocking Jesus, they were actually fulfilling the Scripture in Isaiah 53 that prophesied the suffering of Jesus and the victory of the cross and the empty tomb.

The thorny crowns, and the anguish that went with it, are no longer crushed on our Savior’s head. Jesus has now received the only crown that matters, because He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Like everything else that He does, even that horrific thorny crown was worn because of love. ***“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone.”*** Hebrews 2:9 Jesus wore His crown of thorns because He loved us, and He wanted us to know what love really looked like.

“The path of those who preach love, and not hatred, is not easy. They often have to wear a crown of thorns.” Nelson Mandela

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Blackberry Sorbet

Ingredients: Serves 4

2 lbs frozen blackberries

1/2 cup desired sweetener (I used honey)



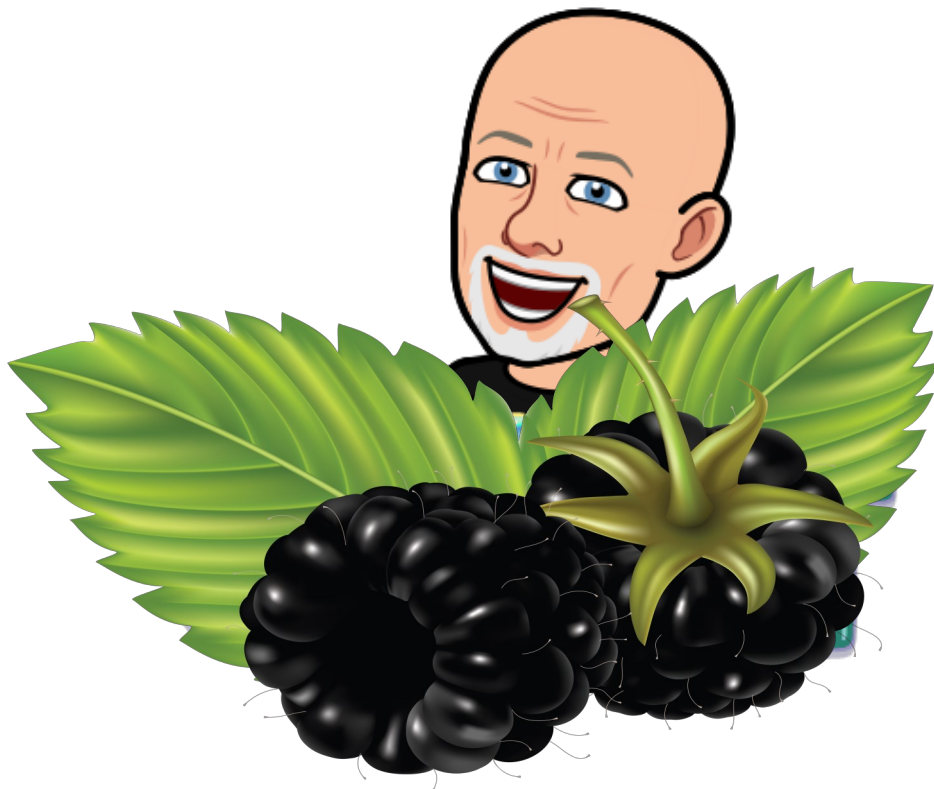
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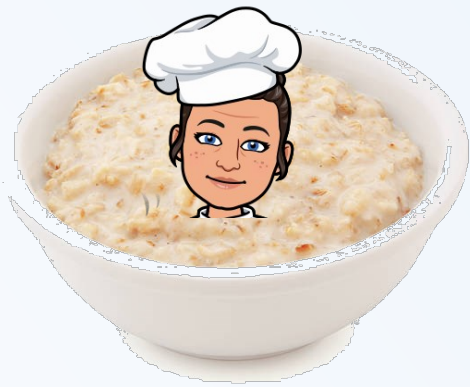
Using a food processor or high-speed blender, blend the blackberries and your sweetener until completely combined. Pour into a rectangular loaf pan and smooth into an even layer.

Freeze for 2-3 hours, or until frozen, but still soft enough for scooping. If you plan to freeze your sorbet for longer you will need to cover it with a lid or plastic wrap, and let it sit out at room temperature for 5-10 minutes before serving.

So simple and delish!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





I had full intentions of making these delicious bars, but NOT in 99 degree weather!

“Forget that I sowed wild oats; Mark me with Your sign of love. Plan only the best for me, God.” Psalm 25:7

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today: **Oatmeal Blondie Bars**

I absolutely love oats in my cookies and brownies! The chewy goodness is just fabulous.

“Oats, formally named *Avena sativa*, is a type of cereal grain from the Poaceae grass family of plants. The grain refers specifically to the edible seeds of oat grass, which is what ends up in our breakfast bowls. Whether loved or hated for their mushy yet hearty texture when cooked, oats are most prized for their nutritional value and health benefits. The Food and Drug Administration allows the use of a health claim on food labels associating a reduced risk of coronary heart disease with the consumption of beta-glucan soluble fiber from whole grain oats.

Oatmeal is also a desired asset to those trying to lose weight and control hunger levels due to its high water and soluble fiber content. Oats contain several components that have been proposed to exert health benefits. The primary type of soluble fiber in oats is beta-glucan, which has been researched to help slow digestion, increase satiety, and suppress appetite. Beta-glucan can bind with cholesterol-rich bile acids in the intestine and transport them through the digestive tract and eventually out of the body. Whole oats also contain plant chemicals called phenolic compounds and phytoestrogens that act as antioxidants to reduce the damaging effects of chronic inflammation that is associated with various diseases like cardiovascular disease and diabetes.” (Taken from www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/food-features/oats/)

Scripture talks about “Oats”, but it’s not the kind

that are good for our health. **Psalm 25:7** says: **“Forget that I sowed wild oats; Mark me with Your sign of love. Plan only the best for me, God.”** The idiom “Sowing wild oats” can easily be translated as “sin”. The NIV translation of **Psalm 25:7** actually says **“Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to Your love remember me, for You, Lord, are good.”**

The actual definition of this term is: “Someone who is sowing wild oats is engaging in frivolous and potentially damaging pursuits.” While this phrase has been used mostly to talk about promiscuous behavior, it most definitely pertains to our spiritual life as well.

We all have sown wild oats in our lives. If you need a little fact checking, just go to **Romans 3:23** for a dose of truth: **“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”** We all are rebellious by nature and you can blame that on Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden! Our sinful nature is the whole reason we need a Savior. And while we can point to the beginning of sin with Adam and Eve, we can’t blame them for our own “oat sowing”.

All of us are swimming in a bowl of “oatmeal”. There is no one who is better or worse off when it comes to sin. Some of our sins may hurt more and cause damaging consequences, but we would all drown in a bowl full of gooey, sticky oatmeal were it not for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Thank goodness that ‘truth checking’ doesn’t stop there. We don’t have to stay emersed in our “oats”. While **Romans 3:23** reminds us that we are all sinners, the Scriptures go on to tell us that **“All are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.... So it is that we are saved by faith in Christ and not by the good things we do.” Romans 3:24, 28**

God in His goodness and mercy accepts us as we are because He chose to send His Son to die on the Cross for our sins, so that we could be justified freely by His grace! We have been marked with the blood of Jesus, our debt has been paid in full. We don’t have to stay emersed in our sticky, gooey bowl of mush (sin) any longer!

The saying “God loves you just the way you are, but He loves you to much to keep you there” is so true! Get into His Word and meditate on His precious Truth. He has great things planned for you! And they don’t include oatmeal baths!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Oatmeal Blondie Bars

Ingredients: Makes 12 bars

1 cup butter at room temperature
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1/2 cup white sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 1/2 cups flour
2 cups oats
1/2 cup chocolate chips
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup chopped walnuts



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°

In a large bowl, beat the butter, brown sugar, and white sugar until thoroughly mixed and creamy. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, mixing completely after each ingredient.

Stir in the vanilla extract until well mixed. Add salt, baking soda, baking powder, flour, rolled oats, plus chocolate chips, raisins, and chopped pecans.

Mix well and make sure all ingredients are wet, and spread into the prepared baking pan.

Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool in the pan for about 5 minutes before cutting into bars. YUM!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.” 1 Peter 2:2-3

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **White Chocolate Raspberry Bundt Cake**

Most people either love white chocolate or they hate it. Some even debate as to whether or not you can even call it chocolate and this debate has been going on since the 1930’s.

In its purest form, it’s made up of cacao butter, sugar and milk powder. And while white chocolate doesn’t have any cocoa solids, it does contain cacao butter which comes from the cocoa bean. In reality, 55% of the weight of a cocoa bean is cacao butter.

“White chocolate was first created in the 1930s by Nestlé. Like many other brilliant inventions, this type of chocolate was actually created by accident.

At the time, Nestlé was manufacturing a dietary supplement for children and adults called Nestrovit. This was a milk powder that was enriched with minerals and vitamins.

In an attempt to create their milk in the form of a solid bar, Nestlé mixed the enriched milk powder with cacao butter. Mixing the sweetened milk powder with the cacao butter produced white chocolate.” (*readcacao.com*)

Speaking of milk; I miss it! I have been lactose intolerant for several years now. When I do decide to indulge in something with a milk base, I always end up regretting it sooner or later. And once in a while I think it was worth it, but most of the time I just think “Why did I do that?” I am sure that whether it be milk or something else that doesn’t agree with your body, most of you know what it feels like to indulge in something that isn’t going to have a good outcome and you end up having to live with the consequences of your decision. UGH!

Our spiritual lives often parallel our physical lives don’t they? We know that something isn’t going to be good for us spiritually and it certainly isn’t going to edify our Lord, but we go ahead and indulge anyway. And we reap the consequences sooner or later.

One of the things I most dislike is when I catch myself saying something negative about someone to another person. I seriously cringe on the inside when my ears hear gossip or slander coming from anyone’s mouth, especially mine! I wish I could say that it never happens, but occasional I do slip up and find myself having to ask for forgiveness. It is in these times that I realize that the best thing for me to do is to drink “spiritual milk”. **1 Peter 2:1-3** says: ***“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”*** The more we crave “spiritual milk” and drink of God’s Holy Word, the more we will become like Him and our mouths will be tamed.

The Hebrew word translated “gossip” in the Old Testament is defined as “one who reveals secrets, one who goes about as a talebearer or scandal-monger.” A gossip is a person who has privileged information about people and proceeds to reveal that information to those who have no business knowing it. Slander on the other hand is malicious lying, and God hates lying. Gossip collects someone’s secrets and passes them to others; slander makes up its own secrets and broadcasts them wherever they will do the most harm. Often we do this without even thinking about it. And it can become as smooth and as satisfying as a piece of chocolate if we aren’t careful.

God gives us the guidelines to know if what we are saying is right or wrong in **Philippians 4:8-9**.

“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”

I wish I wasn’t lactose intolerant, but being “tolerant” of gossip, and slander is something I never want to be. In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for White Chocolate Raspberry Bundt Cake

Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup white chocolate chips
- 3 eggs, at room temperature
- 1 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- lemon zest from 1/2 a lemon
- 3/4 cup fresh or frozen raspberries plus 1/4 cup



For the Ganache:

- 1 cup white chocolate chips
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream



Instructions: Preheat oven to 350°F

Spray (or grease with butter) your Bundt pan and then lightly flour it.

Add flour, baking powder and salt to a bowl. Set aside.

In a large bowl, beat butter until creamy. Slowly add sugar and beat 2 minutes.

Add eggs one at a time, after adding last egg continue to beat for one minute. Add buttermilk and vanilla and beat until combined. Add dry ingredients to the mixture. Beat until well combined.

Add raspberries. Gently fold in the lemon zest and white chocolate and mix with a spatula a few turns. Pour batter into prepared pan, spreading evenly.

Bake about 45-50 minutes, or until a tester inserted in center comes out clean.

Let cook for 10 minutes. Once you make sure it can be unmolded, do so over a wire rack and let cool completely.

To make the ganache, first heat the 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream in a sauce pan until almost boiling. Pour white chocolate chips into a bowl and slowly incorporate the heavy cream. Mix with a spoon or spatula until smooth. Pour over the top of your Bundt cake. Top with 1/4 cup crushed raspberries. YUMMY!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



“Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.”

Proverbs 27:9

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Friendship Cinnamon Bread**

I like to call this my “Friendship Cinnamon Bread” simply because it is a very easy and delicious bread to have available for friends and family when they just happen to stop by. And if you don’t have it on hand, it is super easy to whip up and serve fresh out of the oven!

There is nothing quite like having a true friend that knows everything about you. They know the good, the bad and the out right shameful. But they love you regardless. **Proverbs 27:9** says: *“Perfume and incense bring joy to the heart, and the pleasantness of a friend springs from their heartfelt advice.”*

Absolutely nothing can replace a godly friend that is willing to give you Christ-centered advice when you need it, and push you the right direction!

There are many different seasons in Christian friendships. A friendship that is centered on Jesus begins with mentoring. In a mentoring relationship we educate, advise and disciple other Christian friends. Jesus modeled this kind of a friendship with His disciples. The disciples were on the receiving end, being taught by Jesus Himself. In their relationship with Him, they received all of the wisdom, love and direction that He had to offer to them. They were so blessed!

Another greatly valued and blessed Christian friendship would be when the two individuals are usually more aligned on a spiritual level, harmonizing with each other and giving and receiving equally. They truly understand the desire for their friend to grow closer to Jesus and their love for their Savior has grown a beautiful life-long

friendship between the two of them that will last into eternity.

Our place of worship can be a place where we also find friends. We enjoy their company in and out of worship on a social level. God created us to relate to Him and to others. What better way to build a relationship with someone, then to find them in the house where you both confess the same faith.

In **John 15:13-15** Jesus gave us the perfect definition of an ideal friend: *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”* Jesus is the truest and purest example of a real friend, for He laid down His life for His friends, you and me.

There are many friendships in the Bible that remind us of what a true, godly friendship looks like. Abraham and Lot-Abraham reminds us of loyalty and going above and beyond for friends. Read Genesis 14. Ruth and Naomi-These two women became family and enjoyed looking after each other for their whole lives. Read Ruth 1-2. Sometimes friendships happen instantaneously. Have you ever met anyone that you just knew immediately was going to be a good friend? David and Jonathan were just like that. Read 1 Samuel 18. How about Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? God guides us to help our friends so they can help others. We look out for each other. Read Daniel 2. There are many more examples of godly relationships in the Bible. Even Jesus had a close intimate relationship with Lazarus, Mary and Martha.

Obviously friendships are important as we trek along this journey called life. And there are all different kinds of friendships that cross our path. The truest friend we could ever have is Jesus Christ. A true friendship is characterized by love. And no one could ever love us more than Jesus.

A true friendship loves, gives godly counsel, remains loyal, forgives, and helps to bring each other closer to their Savior Jesus. C.S. Lewis said: *“True friends face in the same direction, toward common projects, interests, goals.”* I pray that the true intimate friendships in your life always point you in the direction of your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Now pass that cinnamon bread!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Friendship Cinnamon Bread

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup white sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup buttermilk
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 eggs
2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Topping:

2 tablespoons white sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons margarine



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350^o

Grease one 9x5 inch loaf pan.

Measure flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder, baking soda, 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon, salt, buttermilk, oil, eggs and vanilla into large mixing bowl. Beat 3 minutes. Pour into prepared loaf pan. Smooth top.

Combine 2 tablespoons white sugar, 1 teaspoon cinnamon and butter, mixing until crumbly. Sprinkle topping over smoothed batter. Using knife, cut in a light swirling motion to give a marbled effect.

Bake for about 50 minutes. Test with toothpick. When inserted it should come out clean. Remove bread from pan to rack to cool.

This is a great bread to make in no-time. You can have it available when friends drop in. It goes great with coffee or tea!

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Peach Coffee Cake**

There is nothing as delicious and mouth-watering as Oregon peaches. Well maybe except for juicy warm Oregon strawberries right off the vine. But today is all about peaches!

Did you know that peaches are related to almonds? Often family members do not look alike at all. Such is the case with the odd looking ‘prunus’ family. In it are the peach and the apricot, two similar-looking and tasting fruits. However, in it is also the almond, which looks, tastes, and feels nothing like the other two members of the family. Making things even weirder is the fact that roses and almonds are also related, making peaches, roses, and almonds all related. So the next time you think someone in your family looks different from everybody else, just think about the poor almond and all of its weird relatives.

Speaking of peaches, how many of us actually practice what we preach? Ok, seriously, how many of us actually ‘practice what we preach’? Why is it that we so often fail to live out the Christian life the way the Bible teaches us too, and why can’t we seem to follow God’s commands?

To get the above answer let’s first look at **Luke 6:43**: ***“For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit.”*** So, clearly not all who confess to be Christians really belong to Christ. Just saying “I am a Christian” doesn’t make someone a Christian. We know that Satan tries to destroy the work of Jesus by placing false believers and teachers in the world who lead many astray. So, the first part of understanding why Christians don’t “practice what they preach” is because not everyone

is a Christian, just because they say they are. Praise God He knows the truth and He is the only one to judge a person’s soul.

But the biggest reason why Christians don’t “practice what they preach” is because quiet simply, we are not perfect. We are still sinful beings trying to find our way in a corrupt and broken world.

Let’s face it, the Christian faith preaches a message that is ultimately impossible to live up to. While sinlessness is to be our goal, it is not achievable in this lifetime. **1 John 1:8** says: ***“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”*** The Christian’s faith and it’s message that is difficult for us to live up to, wasn’t created by man, but God Himself.

Knowing that we fail to live up to God’s perfect standard does not change the fact that it is to be our goal and message. Unfortunately for unbelievers, when they look at Christians and all of their imperfections, they see hypocrites that don’t ‘practice what they preach.’

Another reason that the world tends to judge us as Christians is because we are all at different stages in our faith walks. Christianity is all about having a growing, intimate, loving relationship with our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross and in the tomb, we have been justified and receive God’s embrace of love, grace and mercy. But we never stop learning and growing. It seems as though every day the Holy Spirit is revealing another weakness in my life that I need to surrender to Him. And people I know and engage in life with see those imperfections in me. But praise God, He isn’t through with me yet, and won’t be until I reach heaven!

While it is true as Christians we don’t always ‘practice what we preach’, we also need to remember that we are not saved by our behavior. Scripture is really clear that it isn’t about us: ***“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9*** So the next time you are accused of not ‘practicing what you preach’, agree with them, and tell them how Jesus is transforming your behavior day by day, and add to it “Praise God, He isn’t through with me yet!” And remind them that “everything is peachy because of Him!”

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Peach Coffee Cake

Ingredients:

1 (29 ounce) can sliced peaches, drained and chopped
1/4 cup light brown sugar
1/2 tablespoon cornstarch
3 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup white sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder
2 lemons, zested
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup fresh squeezed orange juice



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

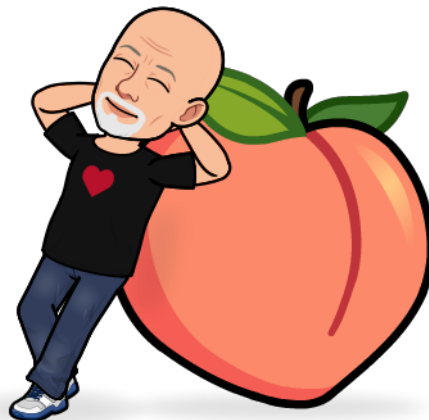
Spray a 8x8 baking dish.

In a saucepan over low heat, mix the peaches, brown sugar, cornstarch, and butter. Cook and stir until sugar is melted and mixture is slightly thickened.

In a large bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, and lemon zest. Stir in eggs, vanilla, 1/2 cup oil, and orange juice. Mix until smooth. Pour 1/2 the batter into the prepared pan. Layer with 1/2 the peach mixture, then with remaining batter. Top with remaining peach mixture.

Bake 45 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one Man the many will be made righteous.” Romans 5: 19

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Strawberry Mille-Feuille**

Just what is a Mille-Feuille? I know that is what you are wondering. Simply put, it is a rich dessert consisting of many very thin layers of puff pastry and such fillings as whipped cream, custard, fruit, etc...

“Flaky, crumbly and creamy all at once, the decadent French dessert the mille-feuille, which translates as “a thousand leaves” - is one of the most delectable pastries out there. Known in the English-speaking world as a custard slice, a Napoleon or a vanilla slice, the millefeuille is sweet without being overly sugary, complex without being overwhelming, and somehow paradoxically light and rich at the same time.

Crafted from thin layers of pastry, cream and a topping of cocoa, vanilla icing or almond fondant, the concoction is a staple in all good pâtisseries, and a favorite of the discerning French. Despite its widespread popularity, we know very little about the millefeuille’s background, and its exact origins are unknown.” (Taken from epicureandculture.com)

Who’s responsible for our obsession with summertime strawberries and cream? Who knows, there are many different theories. But the bottom line is that they are absolutely the most perfect couple together. Whether it be in ice cream, custards, or just homemade whipping cream and a bowl of fresh picked strawberries. They are the perfect sweet couple!

Adam and Eve were the perfect couple in God’s plan for human life and for enjoying intimate relationship with Him. The story of Adam and Eve had a perfect beginning, didn’t it? God had created male and female in His image. They were His perfect design.

Nonetheless, the ending was tragic and very sad. We

all know the story. God created them and gave them everything good and pleasing to the eye in the Garden of Eden. They could have it all! The only stipulation was for them not to eat from one specific tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We know what happens next. Satan enters into the picture, and the temptation is too much for them to bare. They chose to disobey God and eat the fruit from the one tree that was not theirs.

The story ends with Adam and Eve losing everything, for themselves and for everyone else in the future. The consequences for Adam and Eve are a powerful example of the cost of sin for all of us.

God wasn’t being a selfish, dictating, controlling Master over Adam and Eve. He was trying to protect them. He created them to be pure and blameless. They had not known anything about evil. **Genesis 3:5** says ***“For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*** He forbade them from eating of just one tree, all because He loved them and didn’t want them to be filled with sin. Love was His motivation for His one command.

God is the same today as He was when He first created Adam and Eve. He forbids things of His children to protect them, just like He wanted to protect Adam and Eve. Why? Because sin always has consequences. Once Adam and Eve sinned against God, death entered into the picture.

Romans 5:12 says ***“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.”***

When God forbids something, it is for our own good. Disobeying Him and going our own way will always lead to disaster. Our heavenly Father who created us knows what is best for us, and when He prohibits something, it is because He loves us and He wants to spare us the consequences of our sin.

Praise be to God that He knows our weaknesses. He knows we all fall short of His glory. And because of His love for us, He sent His Grace into the world. **Romans 5:19** goes on to say ***“For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one Man the many will be made righteous.”*** Jesus Christ is our saving Grace from sin, death and the devil himself. God gives us undeserved favor through Jesus Christ, and since the time the perfect couple broke the bond with Him, our lives have utterly depended on it. And that is far sweeter than strawberries and cream.

In His grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Strawberry Mille-Feuille

Ingredients: 4-6

1 sheet puff pastry, thawed
3 teaspoons sugar

Custard

2 egg yolk
1/3 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup milk
6 strawberry, sliced



Instructions:

Whisk the yolks and sugar until pale in color in a microwave-safe bowl. Add the cornstarch and whisk well. Add the vanilla extract and milk. Whisk until well combined.

Loosely cover the bowl with plastic wrap and microwave for 4 minutes, stirring halfway through. Remove plastic and stir.

Cover with a plastic wrap and chill at least 30 minutes.

Cut the thawed puff pastry dough into three equal-sized rectangles.

Pierce each piece of puff pastry with a fork. Heat a nonstick pan over low heat. Place the puff pastry in the pan and cook for 10 minutes. Flip the puff pastry sheets, and place a lid on the top of the pan. Cook for 10 minutes.

Remove the lid and sprinkle 1 teaspoon of sugar on sheet of puff pastry. Flip the pastry over so that the sugared side is on the bottom.

Bring the heat up to high. Place a piece of parchment paper over the puff pastry and weigh it down with another pan. Once the surface is caramelized, about 1-2 minutes, remove from the heat and let cool to room temperature on a cooling rack.

Place the custard in a piping bag fitting with an large round tip.

Pipe the custard on one sheet of puff pastry. Top with a layer of sliced strawberries, then pipe another row of custard. Top with another sheet of puff pastry, custard, sliced strawberries, custard, and the remaining puff pastry sheet. Dust the top with powdered sugar.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



***“All the days ordained for me
were written in Your book
before one of them came to be.”
Psalm 139:16***

*Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste,
but most of all God’s love and grace!*

On the menu today: **German Chocolate Cake**

We celebrating my sister in-law Anna’s birthday recently and it was a wonderful time! She had requested her favorite cake which happens to be German Chocolate Cake. I insisted on making it from scratch and I am so glad I did. It was delicious and she was very blessed.

I bet you didn't know that June 11th is officially “German Chocolate Cake Day”, did you? I certainly did not know this, nor would I care. But heh, if people can find a reason to celebrate their favorite desserts, then go for it!

Contrary to what most of us would assume, German Chocolate Cake is an American creation that contains the key ingredients of sweet baking chocolate, coconut, and pecans. This cake was not brought to the American Midwest by German immigrants. The cake took its name from an American with the last name of “German.” In most recipes and products today, the apostrophe and the “s” have been dropped. Originally it was read: “German’s Chocolate Cake”. According to Patricia Riso, a spokeswoman for Kraft foods, the recipe used a brand of chocolate bar called "German's" which had been developed in 1852, by an English Confectioner named Sam German, who was employed by Baker's Chocolate Company. The cake soon took on a name for it’s self and became one of the most loved “American” cakes ever!

Years ago I bought a hat for my father in-law that said “Made in 1926”, which was the year he was born. This always annoyed my husband just a little

bit because technically his dad was “made” in 1925 and born in 1926. So Jeff (hubby) replaced the original hat with one that said “Made in 1925”. As I looked at the sweet picture of my wonderful sister in-law I was reminded of **Psalm 139:16**: ***“All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be.”*** The reality of Psalm 139 always blows my mind. Each of us has always existed in the mind of God. Long before He knew what we would be like and what we would do, He had already placed us in His mind for His great purpose.

Many places in Scripture point to God having a specific plan for each one of us. It starts before we are conceived. **Jeremiah 1:5** says; ***“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”***

One thing for sure, God’s plan for every human being is that each one comes to know Him and receive Him as their Lord and Savior. That doesn’t mean that we all do, of course. We were also created with free will. God wants us to love Him freely, not be forced. He created us for fellowship with Him.

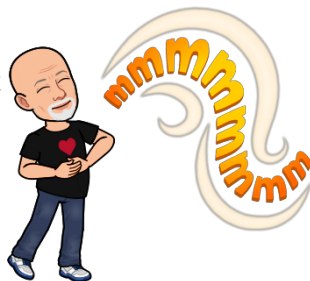
People spend years contemplating what God’s will is for them. Which honestly is a waste of precious time. Scripture makes it very clear what God’s plan is for each one of us. **Micah 6:8** gives us the foundation of what all other choices about our life should flow from: ***“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”*** And if that wasn’t clear enough, Jesus then stated it even more clearly in **Mark 12:30-31**; ***“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.”***

God’s plan is usually never a straight shot to an obvious goal. His plan requires of us a journey, illustrated so well in John Bunyan’s book “The Pilgrim’s Progress” (which I highly recommend reading if you haven’t), and that journey may be filled with an indirect route, unexpected stops, and baffling turns, but if our hearts are set on obeying Him in all that we do, then we will be in the center of His will every step of the way. If we submit all that we do to the Creator Himself, it may not be a piece of cake all the time, but the end results are more satisfying than chocolate!

Lynda's Recipe for German Chocolate Cake

Cake Ingredients:

2 cups granulated sugar
1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
1 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup canola oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 cup boiling water



For the Coconut Frosting:

1/2 cup light brown sugar
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup butter
3 large egg yolks
3/4 cup evaporated milk
1 Tablespoon vanilla extract
1 cup chopped pecans
1 cup shredded sweetened coconut

For the Chocolate Frosting:

1/2 cup butter
2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
3 cups powdered sugar
1/3 cup evaporated milk

Instructions: Preheat Oven to 375°F

Grease two 8 or 9-inch round (mine are square) baking pans. Stir together sugar, flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda and salt in large bowl. In a separate bowl combine the eggs, buttermilk, oil and vanilla and mix well. Add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix to combine. Stir in boiling water (batter will be very thin). Pour batter into prepared pans.

Bake for 25 - 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes in the pan and then invert onto wire racks to cool completely.

For the coconut frosting: In a medium saucepan add brown sugar, granulated sugar, butter, egg yolks, and evaporated milk. Stir to combine and bring the mixture to a low boil over medium heat. Stir constantly for several minutes until the mixture begins to thicken.

Remove from heat and stir in vanilla, nuts and coconut. Allow to cool completely before layering it on the cake.

For the Chocolate Frosting: Melt butter. Stir in cocoa powder. Alternately add powdered sugar and milk, beating to spreading consistency. Add small amount additional milk, if needed to thin the frosting, or a little extra powder, until you reach your desired consistency. Stir in vanilla.

Assemble the cake: Place one of the cake rounds on your serving stand or plate. Smooth a thin layer of chocolate frosting over the cake layer, and then spoon half of the coconut frosting on top, spreading it into a smooth layer. Leave about 1/2 inch between the filling and edge of cake.

Stack the second cake round on top. Smooth chocolate frosting over the entire cake.

Spoon remaining coconut frosting on top of the cake.

I found this recipe on www.uniquegiftstips.com **It is the best ever!**

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.” Isaiah 55:12

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu today: **Fall Season Bundt Cake**

Autumn officially enters when the trees and plants start to shed their leaves in preparation for the colder months. It is nature’s way of preparing for slumber. Fall (Autumn) is and always has been my favorite time of the year.

The French philosopher Albert Camus said “Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.” And I have to agree with him. I get so excited when the leaves turn their vibrant colors of yellow, orange and red. I so enjoy late September evenings outside when you can feel that Autumn is just around the corner. I love those moments when a soft breeze drifts past you and whispers that it is almost time to say goodbye until we meet in the Spring. Maybe it is because I arrived into this world in early November that I connect with it as such a sweet time. I don’t know for sure why I have always been drawn to Autumn, but I do know that I agree with the English poet John Donne who said “No spring nor summer beauty hath such a grace as I have seen in one autumnal face.”

Isaiah 55:12 says ***“You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.”*** I always envision this as a perfect symbol of Fall time. Spring has come and brought forth new life. The summer months brought healthy growth for the harvest. And now it is time for the mountains and hills to rejoice and the trees to clap their hands and shout “Bravo Lord. Bravo!” Once again it is time to reap the harvest that the Lord has graced this earth with.

All through the Bible, the harvest conveys spiritual meaning. Jesus used it in His parables. It has been used as a metaphor for spiritual growth and health in **2 Corinthians 9:10**; ***“Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.”*** And also in **James 3:18**; ***“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”*** Since the beginning of time God has graced us with the beauty of harvest time and it carries a very important role here on earth. It’s the time of year when hard work bears fruit and the people are fed. When Fall arrives and the harvest is ready it reminds us of abundance, strength and the richness provided by our Heavenly Father. It is a time of reflection and gratitude.

Just like crops grow in a field, the spiritual growth of a Christian is a natural process, supervised by God Himself. He is the Gardener of our souls. But it doesn’t stop there. We are to be the workers of His harvest. God is counting on us, His first fruits, believers in Jesus Christ, to sow good seed in this world.

Let’s be honest here. Planting seeds of God’s Truth can seem frustrating. Especially when it takes a long time to reap a harvest. **Galatians 6:9** says; ***“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*** We have to always remember that the growth begins in God’s timing. Our job is to be the sowers. We plant God’s Truth with love, patience and peace. **James 3:17** says: ***“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”***

Whether it be the spiritual harvesting of our own lives, or those of others we pray and minister to, God is ultimately the perfect Gardener and He makes all things beautiful in His time. As long as we are willing to surrender our lives to God, He will use us in His fields. The fertilizing, the weeding, and the harvesting are all up to Him. We just need to be ready and willing to do the planting.

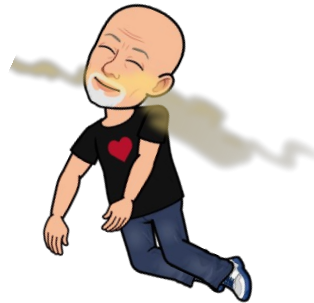
It truly will be a glorious, spectacular day when our work is finished here on earth and it will be our heavenly Father’s turn to clap His hands and say ‘Bravo sweet child of Mine. Bravo!’

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Fall Season Bundt Cake

Ingredients:

1 1/2 cups butter, softened
1 (8 oz.) package cream cheese, softened
2 cups white sugar
1 1/3 cups packed brown sugar, divided
1 teaspoon salt
5 eggs
1 tablespoon vanilla
3 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon all-spice, divided
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
Caramel sauce, for serving



Instructions: Do not preheat oven

Generously grease and flour your Bundt pan.

In a large bowl, beat butter and cream cheese until fluffy. Add white sugar, 1 cup brown sugar, and salt. Beat on high speed for 8-10 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of the bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

Mix in vanilla, flour, 1 teaspoon all-spice, cinnamon and baking powder until smooth.

In a small bowl, stir together pecans, remaining 1/3 cup brown sugar, and remaining 2 tablespoons of all-spice.

Spoon half of the batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle pecan mixture over batter. Top with remaining batter.

Using a knife, run it through batter to swirl. Smooth the top of the batter.

Place the cake in a cold oven. Set temperature to 300 degrees and bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Let cool in pan 10 minutes before turning on to a wire rack to cool completely. Slice and serve with caramel sauce, if desired. Seriously yummy!

Bon Appétit,

Lynda



“He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.” Psalm 40:2

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace! On the menu today:
Cherry and Coconut Bread

“Maraschino cherries (pronounced mare-uh-SHEE-no) get their name from the traditional manufacturing process used to preserve them. Originally, sour marasca cherries from the Dalmatian Coast were soaked in maraschino liqueur, an Italian spirit distilled from the pits, stems, leaves, and flesh of the same cherry. In the United States, most commercially available maraschino cherries are cured in brine, preserved in a sugar syrup, and dyed a vivid red.

Italian-style maraschino cherries made their way to America around the turn of the century but then Prohibition prevented the sale of those liquor-soaked cherries. The modern maraschino cherry, developed by Oregon Agricultural College professor Ernest H. Wiegand in the 1920s, gave cherry farmers a way to preserve their sweet Royal Anne cherries without alcohol. Wiegand devised a process to brine the fruit with calcium salts, which removed the flavor and color from the cherries. He then poached them in sugar syrup and injected them with red dye, creating the candied cherry best known for its use in the Shirley Temple mock cocktail.

The modern maraschino tastes more like candy than fruit. While it adds intense sweetness, it does not add much depth of flavor to a cocktail or dessert. Classic maraschino cherries preserved in maraschino liqueur retain more of a true cherry flavor with a hint of almond flavor from the cherry pits used during distillation.” (Taken from hesspruceeats.com and written by Colleen Graham.)

Speaking of pits...how many times have you said or

thought “This is the pits!” about something that has happened? This is usually when something very unpleasant or unfortunate happens to you or someone you know. A “pit” could be any number of problems or obstacles that life throws at us.

No one knew what it was like to live in the pits more than King David. In **Psalm 40:1-2** David says; ***“I waited patiently for the Lord; He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.”***

David was more than likely speaking of being lifted out of a slimy pit in a figurative way, proclaiming that whatever struggles or hardships he had endured seemed as impossible to escape as digging one's way out of a cesspool. But the fact that God had delivered him out of the muck, and had also placed him in a condition where he was once again on firm ground, gives us all hope. David had learned a very valuable discipline in his life struggles. He had learned to ‘wait upon the Lord’.

Waiting on the Lord requires the sure hope of a positive result in which we place a great confidence. This expectation is based on the wisdom of and trust in God. We must be confident of who God is and what He is capable of doing.

1 John 5:14 says ***“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.”*** The importance of being in God’s Holy Word daily is so that we will know what His will is for us. Waiting on the Lord, trusting His plan for our lives and putting our hope in Him will only bless us: **Isaiah 40:31** ***“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”***

While we wait, and yes, sometimes it is the pits, God still works. What we see is only a tiny fraction of what God is doing in our lives. And the part we see may not even make sense to us! But our job isn’t to make sense out of divine providence. Our job isn’t to know the in’s and out’s of heavenly wisdom. Our job is to just believe in Godly wisdom – to trust that God is working out good things despite the pits that may come our way!

And remember, faith in Christ is a lifetime commitment, not just a weekly pitstop!

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe For Cherry and Coconut Bread

Ingredients: Makes 1 loaf

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1 stick of butter
3/4 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 cups milk
1 1/2 teaspoons of vanilla
1 cups shredded coconut
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup maraschino cherries, cut into quarters



Instructions: Preheat Oven to 350°F

Add flour, baking powder and dry spices together into a large bowl.

Using a hand mixer, cream the butter and sugar together in another bowl until light-colored and fluffy. Add the eggs one at a time and beat after each addition. Add the vanilla and beat again.

Fold a small portion of the flour into the creamed mixture, then add some of the milk. Continue this way, alternating until all the flour and milk is incorporated.

Stir the cherries, raisins and the coconut into the batter.

Pour into 1 large greased loaf pan. Sprinkle with a little more shredded coconut, and bake for 1 hour or until a fork comes out cleanly when inserted.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**





“In everything give thanks. This is what God wants you to do because of Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18

Welcome to my kitchen filled with aroma and taste, but most of all God’s love and grace!

On the menu: **Pumpkin Crumble Cake!**

Pumpkin is a type of winter squash that, believe it or not, is in the same family as melons and cucumbers. It’s technically a fruit since it contains seeds but in terms of nutrition, it’s more like a vegetable.

Pumpkins are loaded with a variety of nutrients, including fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Most of a pumpkin’s health benefits come from its vitamins and minerals, along with its low sugar and high fiber content.

There are many ways to eat pumpkin. For the healthiest types, try using it in savory dishes like soup or as a roasted vegetable and avoid the sugars.

As I prepare this recipe for Thanksgiving I find myself reflecting on all of the things I have in my life to be thankful for even though this hasn’t been the easiest year.

This year Jeff and I said goodbye to three precious family members. My mom passed away suddenly in July. Jeff’s aunt/godmother passed away in July as well. And Jeff also lost another beloved aunt the first week of November. Jeff’s 95 year old father had a cancerous tumor removed in March and now his cancer is back. So it has been a year of really needing to call upon our faith.

Even with all of the loss and challenges we have endured this year we have so much to be thankful for. I am so thankful that my mom knew Jesus and there is no doubt in our minds that she is in heaven celebrating with Him. Both of Jeff’s aunts lived to be in their 90’s and loved the Lord very much. His

dad is almost 96 years old and has an amazing attitude about life here on earth. When Jeff’s dad had surgery in March to remove the first tumor, as the surgeon was wheeling him into the operating room he asked him “Are you doing ok?” Dad said “As I see it there are two ways to look at this right now. The first, which is the best, would be to wake up in the arms of Jesus. The second would be to wake up seeing your face.” What an amazing faith my father in-law has. We have so much to be thankful for!

Giving thanks reminds us of how much we have. We humans are prone to never being satisfied. We tend to focus on what we don’t have. By giving thanks continually we are reminded of how much we do have. When we focus on blessings rather than wants, we are actually happier people. When we start thanking God for the things we usually take for granted, our perspective changes.

1 Thessalonians 5:18 says: ***“In everything give thanks. This is what God wants you to do because of Christ Jesus.”*** We can have thankful hearts toward God even when we don’t feel thankful for our circumstances. We can lose loved ones and grieve and still be thankful. We can be angry or hurt and still be thankful toward God.

Being thankful to God is all about the attitude of our hearts. We don’t have to like things that are difficult to deal with in this lifetime, but we do need to keep the right perspective.

When we are thankful, our heart moves away from the struggles and pain of difficult times. Showing God our thankfulness helps us remember that He is in control. Thankfulness is not only right, but it is actually healthy and helpful for us. It reminds us that Heaven is our real home, that we belong to God, and that we have been blessed beyond measure with His grace and mercy. It reminds us that Jesus + nothing = everything!

For the Christian being thankful isn’t something that should only be proclaimed once a year around an abundant feast with family and friends. For the Christian, Thanksgiving is a daily attitude of gratitude regardless of circumstances because we know who we are in Christ and where our true home is.

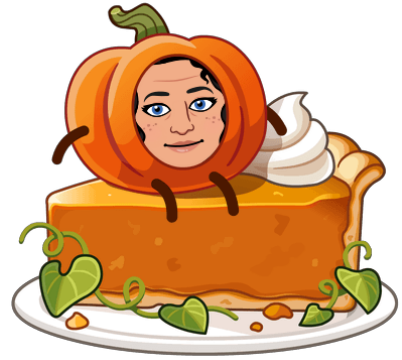
“Gratitude is an offering precious in the sight of God, and it is one that the poorest of us can make and be not poorer but richer for having made it.” – AW Tozer

In His Grace, Lynda

Lynda's Recipe for Pumpkin Crumble Cake

Ingredients

15 oz can pumpkin puree
12 oz can evaporated milk
3 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon of ground cloves
1 teaspoon of all-spice
1 teaspoon of ground ginger
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 package yellow cake mix
1 cup melted butter
1 1/2 cups chopped pecans



Instructions Preheat Oven to 350°F

Spray or grease a 9x13 baking pan.

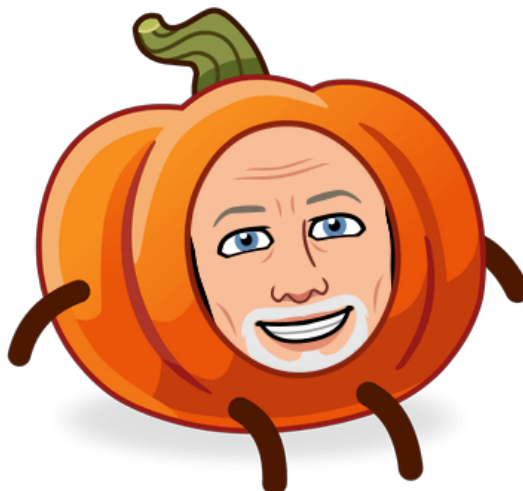
In a large bowl add pumpkin, milk, eggs, sugar and spices and mix until combined.

Pour mixture into prepared pan and sprinkle dry cake mix over the top.

Drizzle melted butter over the top of the cake mix and then sprinkle with pecans.

Bake for one hour or until a toothpick comes out clean.

**Bon Appétit,
Lynda**



About Child Beyond International “Lifting Children to New Life!”

“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...”

James 1:27

OUR VISION:

We envision every orphaned, abused and abandoned child in Guatemala having a safe place in which they can experience God’s transforming love, and be restored to their families, when possible.

OUR MISSION:

Our mission is to share God’s love so that lives are transformed and families restored through a thriving children’s home and relational mission experiences that support effective community programs.



Contact us at:

Info@childbeyond.org

541-645-0451

Childbeyond.org

Facebook.com/childbeyond/

OUR CORE VALUES

Love - The experience and demonstration of God's love is our supreme value which guides our relationships with others, our priorities, and our mission.

Justice - We value the protection and safety of children, and advocate for them in the courts so that they are treated justly and do not suffer. We speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and rise up to protect the innocent. We encourage the courts to deal with the perpetrators of abuse and neglect so that the cycle is broken.

Sustainability - We value the sustainability of this ministry and steward our resources to achieve long term financial stability.

Respect - We respect the culture and traditions of our Guatemalan partners, treating them as equals in Christ and honoring their God given talents, skills, contributions and ideas. We operate within their culture, not as superiors, but as co-laborers.

Partnership - We seek positive relationships in the local community and around the world with other like-minded organizations, churches, business, government and individuals to achieve/fulfill our mission and vision.

Compassion - We demonstrate the love of God as expressed through His Son, Jesus Christ, through our practical response to the material, emotional and spiritual needs of the children and families that we serve, leading to long term restoration and healing.

Restoration - We strive for the wholistic restoration of children-spiritually, physically, emotionally, and relationally, so they can safely return to their own family whenever possible.

Integrity - We are authentic and truthful in our dealing with everyone, doing what we say we will do, and being transparent in our financial operations with donors.

Rescue

Rescuing abused, neglected and abandoned children from a broken society through the mission of God's Grace children's home in San Cristobal, Guatemala.

Psalm 82:3-4

"Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."



Release

Having been restored, both mind, body and spirit, we seek to release children into new forever families. Here they will receive love as only a caring family can give. Support that is needed during childhood and resources needed to flourish. Consistent communication with "released" children and their families will reassure that everything is going well and keep us abreast of any urgent needs that could be detrimental to the family.

Lamentations 3:22-23
"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness."

Restore

Once they are rescued the first vital steps of the journey of restoration begins – body, mind and spirit through consistent, loving care, they are slowly healed of their physical wounds, emotional scars and spiritual separation, all so that one day they can be released into a healthy family, either their own or adoptive.

Psalm 147:3

"God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

Reinforce

Continual support for the forever families of our children and the communities in which they live will help to prevent relapse abuse and neglect as well as equip families with the tools and resources to help terrible things from ever happening. This will be achieved through scheduled visits and communication with forever families and community impact events where we will partner with local churches and short-term mission teams.

Isaiah 41:10

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."



Psalm 82:4 - "Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."



Rally to the Rescue

CHURCH HOSTED EVENTS

Rally to the Rescue - Sunday Services

These Sunday Services are a great way to get your church excited about impacting the lives of abandoned, neglected and abused children in Guatemala who desperately need to experience the love of Jesus Christ through the loving care they will receive at God's Grace Children's Home.

Child Beyond will provide you with all the materials to host a successful **Rally to the Rescue**

Sunday Service including:

PRE-EVENT

3 Weeks of Pastor Talking Points
 Videos 3 Weeks of Animated Social Media Post
 3 Weeks of Rescue Sunday Bulletin Inserts

3 Weeks of Short but Moving
 The Choice of a Child to Highlight
 Pastor Promo Video Template

SUNDAY RESCUE SERVICE

Child Beyond Banners are BIG and Colorful
 Child Beyond Representative will be THERE
 Dynamic Rescue Sunday Video
 Banner Sermon Suggestions about Rescuing Children

Pre-Service Training Session
 Rescue A Child TODAY Brochures
 *Church Branded "Rescue Sunday"
 *"I Rescued A Child Today" t-shirts

*Items have a cost for the host church associated with them.

POST-EVENT

Rescue Sunday Highlights Video
 Regular Updates About Your Child
 Home Opportunities for Virtual & Short-Term Missions
 Guatemala

Welcome Packet for All Rescuers
 Prayer Request for Child/Children's
 Monthly Zoom Updates for

ONE SUNDAY changes a life FOREVER!

TO SCHEDULE AN INFORMATION SESSION WITH JEFF MUELLER, CHAIRMAN OF CHILD BEYOND INTERNATIONAL

Email: pastorjmueller@gmail.com / Phone: 541-645-0191

Short - Term Mission Trips

Experience the joy of making a lasting difference in the life of an orphaned child, a hungry family, or a poor community who lack the basic necessities of life. Bring your love to a dark and desperate place.

As a short-term mission team member, you will...

Give joy to a child at God's Grace Children's Home (Hogar de Ninos). God's precious orphaned children find comfort and peace in the loving arms of volunteers like you.

- Help with special work projects at the children's home
- Bless the children with your love, affection, and play



Experience loving Relationships

- Build efficient wood stoves to save fuel and provide clean air
- Build homes for those who live in abject poverty
- Provide water filters to combat disease
- Assist with a medical mission team
- Participate in a sports camp or Vacation Bible School
- Work on many other projects that fill a critical need

Mission trip cost varies, but most are between \$800-\$1000 (Not including round-trip airfare)



Mission Team Project Costs

Any supplies needed for outreach projects will depend on what your team decides to do. The project cost is covered by your team.

The cost for these life-changing projects are as follows:

- Efficiency Stoves: \$200 each
- Water Filters: \$47 each
- Two bedroom Home: \$3,000

What are the requirements?

Children age 8 and up are permitted to travel with an adult. A valid passport is required. Up-to-date immunizations based on your doctor's advice are recommended, including Typhoid and Hepatitis A.

To join us in helping to reach the people of Guatemala through a short-term missions trip, either as a group or by joining an existing team, complete the attached form or go to our website.



Virtual Mission Trips

You can still do great things for God even when you can't travel beyond your own borders. Join us on a virtual mission trip to Guatemala without leaving your home.



Every day you will be given specific prayer requests and fulfill mission challenges, involving many of the experiences you would have on an actual mission trip. You'll spend time virtually with our Guatemalan mission team director, Jorge, and our children's home director, Mandy.

8 day virtual mission trip to Guatemala

- FREE for individuals and/or churches to register!
- Unlimited Space on virtual teams so everyone can participate, from children to senior adults to working families!
- Opportunities to serve in unique ways and still fulfill the Great Commission!

Educators

- Looking for new ways to inspire your students?
- Opportunities to learn about the rich culture and history.
- Custom trips available!

Pastors

- Are you serving a small church in a community of hard-working people?
- Have you struggled to provide an opportunity for your church members to fulfill the Great Commission through short-term mission trips internationally?
- Not enough people for a trips; Cost too much; Maybe your church family is made up of senior adults, or working families that cannot get away?



Ready to begin the journey? We are! The children, families and the Child Beyond Guatemalan Team cannot wait to meet you! To join us on a virtual mission trip, either as a group or by joining an existing team, complete the attached form or go to our website.



Mobile Medical Mercy Missions

4M BUS

If you have not had the joy of serving on a short-term medical mission, you'll have to imagine the amazing way God uses physical care through our medical mission teams to open hearts to the spiritual care our Lord desires to give most of all. When a desperately ill baby is healed with a simple dose of the correct medicine, a mother's heart is open to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

When pain, weakness, fear and hopelessness are physically removed, a barrier to the healing Gospel of Jesus is also removed, and the Holy Spirit brings grace, love and faith into an open, willing heart.

This is our long-term vision for Guatemala because of our Lord's clear call to GO!
(Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8)



Until now, the medical mission teams have been limited in the scope of the medical care they could provide due to the remote locations we serve.

The 4M Bus will solve these challenges and allow the mission team doctors, nurses, dentists and technicians to achieve far more success in bringing physical healing to hundreds and eventually thousands of adults and children in Guatemala over the many years ahead.



When someone receives such an incredible gift of physical relief of pain or the healing of their gravely-ill child, their hearts will be opened to hear about the greatest gift of all - spiritual healing of their sins and eternal healing of their souls won for them on the cross and empty tomb of Jesus Christ. It's all so that they will open their hearts to receive the most incredible healing of all - from the Great Physician, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

To join us in helping to reach the people of Guatemala through medical missions, either as a group or by joining an existing team, complete the attached form or go to our website.

