



The
**YADA
YADA**
Prayer
Group

Gets Caught
Book Five

Neta Jackson

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Reading Group Guide

1. Chanda George is caught up in the glitter of her sudden wealth. (OK, 'fess up! Most of us have fantasized about Publishers Clearing House showing up on our doorstep with TV cameras and a big check—or a rich uncle naming us sole heir.) What would *you* do with the money if you had such a windfall? Why do you think sudden wealth is not God's usual way of meeting our needs?
2. Is Chanda the only Yada Yada who struggles with money issues? Who else does, and why? What money issues loom largest for you?
3. How do you react to Peter Douglass (Avis's new husband) telling Rochelle (Avis's married daughter) that she can't keep running home? If you were Avis, what would *you* do in that situation? How would you feel?
4. The issue of domestic abuse is large in our society. Why do you think women like Rochelle keep returning to abusive spouses? In what way might some Christian teachings create confusion about how to respond? What Christian teachings would be most helpful?
5. Do you know a kid like Chris Hickman—talented and has lots of potential, but making poor choices, lacking vision, and heading

down a path from which there might be no return? Is this kid on your daily prayer list? How might praying for him or her change *you*?

6. If you've put up with Jodi through all five books, in what ways do you see her growing from "good girl" to a real Christian woman? In what areas does she still get caught in Old Jodi responses? What "old responses" catch up with you?
7. Discuss the lemonade stand incident. How could something that seemed so positive have an ugly downside? What was the trap Jodi fell into? Have you ever felt "shut out" (like Denny did) in a relationship? If you are married, in what ways does this common trap play out in your own marriage?
8. What lies did Ricardo Enriques believe that caught him up in illegal dog fighting? Who are the people God used in his life, and how did each one contribute to Ricardo's redemption? Has God ever saved you "by the skin of your teeth" from the consequences of a huge mistake? (If so, take time to do some serious praising!)
9. What presumptions did both Ruth and Ben Garfield bring to their surprise, late-in-life pregnancy? How did these presumptions create misunderstanding and miscommunication? What common presumptions lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication in your own family? What can you do about it?
10. Uptown Community Church and New Morning Christian Church have taken the plunge and merged their congregations. What do you think the benefits of such a merger could be? What might be the pitfalls, in spite of good intentions? Does this

fictional merger seem too idealistic? Just plain foolish? Wouldn't be interested? Give you hope? Challenge you?

11. Read John 8:31–32 in several translations. What are the conditions for “knowing the truth”? How does God’s truth make us free? What does this scripture mean to you? What is one way you can apply this scripture to your own life situation?

12. When Becky is offered a job at Bagel Bakery but would have to work Sundays (Little Andy’s visitation day), she struggles with “half-answered prayers.” What about you? Has God answered some of *your* prayers only “halfway”? Share some prayer journeys and what God has shown you (or not!) along the way.

13. The Yada Yadas had a house blessing for both Florida’s and Chanda’s new homes. Have you ever experienced a house blessing? In what way might it be significant for you and your home—or the home of someone else in your book club?

14. When Stu finally decided to suck up the courage to visit her parents at Thanksgiving, in spite of years of no contact, she said, “If I don’t invest anything in my relationship with my parents, it’s going to die.” Are there relationships in your family that are withering and about to die from neglect? What are the obstacles to investing in these relationships? Pray together about this.

For more information about *The Yada Yada Prayer Group* novels
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The
YADA YADA
Prayer Group®
GETS CAUGHT
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Let's Celebrate!

What was it Charles Dickens said? *"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times."* All of us could probably say the same thing—about being a teenager (*the bloom of youth! the bloom of zits!*) ... falling in love (*in and out*) ... raising kids (*we love 'em! we hate 'em!*) ... going on vacation (*ack! don't even get me started*).

Or pick a decade, any decade. The Fifties? *A nostalgic decade for many Americans—unless you were black and battling Jim Crow laws.* The Sixties? *Hoo boy! Hula hoops and rock 'n roll!—and angry war protesters and civil rights marches.*

The reality is: God never promised any of us a rose garden. Wait. Take that back. God *did* promise us a rose garden. Joy and beauty! Love and laughter. But as a reminder that we live in a fallen world, even roses have thorns. Many times in our lives, joy and sorrow seem to walk hand in hand.

The good news is, even in the darkest times, there are rays of hope and beauty. Reason enough to celebrate—just like the Yada

Yada sisters did, even though they sure enough did get caught up in some mess!

A House Blessing

In *Gets Caught*, both Chanda and Florida celebrate new homes. Chanda bought a home in an upscale neighborhood; the Hickman's are renting a "fixer upper." But both homes are gifts from God, and the Yada Yada sisters wanted to celebrate His goodness by having a house blessing.

That's right. A house blessing is different than a house warming, where the primary idea is to throw a party, invite all your friends to see your new digs, hoping they'll all bring gifts (new towels, candles, a bottle of wine) or, better yet, all chip in on a new gas grill.

But a house blessing calls together family and friends not only to thank God for His provision of a roof over our heads, but to *dedicate* the home to the glory of God. A house blessing acknowledges that even our everyday life is sacramental, and our homes a holy space. Family and friends gather to seek God's protection on this home and its inhabitants, and to ask God's blessing, not just on the physical space, but on all that is said and done within its walls.

When Should You Have a House Blessing?

Moving into a new home, apartment, or condo is certainly a good time to celebrate with a house blessing. But *any* home, even one you've lived in for years, is a candidate.

But here's the thing: don't invite folks to come bless your mess. Preparing for a house blessing can be an important time to get

your rooms in order, and to rethink the way your family relates to one another at home. What do people see and hear when they walk into your home—people screaming at each other? dirty dishes everywhere? the TV droning twelve hours a day?

You don't have to create a photo op for *House Beautiful*. Kids *will* be kids (translation: noisy and messy). We all prefer a “lived in” look rather than a museum. Something important happens when we invite Jesus to be Lord of our homes and family life, when we dedicate the place where we live and the *way* we live every day to His glory.

So let's begin. The ideas below can be used by themselves or in combination for *your* house blessing!

Bless This House

How you conduct your house blessing depends somewhat on the number of people involved, as well as your own church traditions.

If you have invited your pastor, you might want to ask him or her to begin the prayers before moving throughout the house, and again to offer the closing prayer. But give opportunity for your friends and family members to also read Scriptures and/or offer prayers of blessing throughout the house as well.

If your group is less than ten people, everyone can move together from room-to-room throughout the house.

Or, you might assign two or three people to a room, to pray over that room and the activities that take place there as they are led by the Holy Spirit.

If you are comfortable with anointing oil, anoint the door-frames, the windows, and the furniture as well, asking for God's protection and blessing.

Return to the main room for a closing prayer (add songs if you'd like!), joining hands in a circle. (Or use the Candle-Lighting Ceremony on pg. 11.)

And then *eat* of course! Can be as simple as finger foods and cold or hot drinks, or as zesty as hot wings, served with celery sticks and ranch dressing (though you'll need *lots* of napkins and cold water to drink!).

Scriptures to Use

Choose from the following Scriptures to be read by various friends, family members, or your pastor as you go from room to room, followed by a prayer:

The first blessing: "Grace and peace to this house from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:7b).

The front door: "Jesus said, 'Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will go in . . .'" (Rev. 3:20). *Sample prayer:* "Lord, we invite You into this home, to be Lord and Master of all that is said and done within these walls, because we know that—" (*Read the following Scripture.*)

The true foundation of a home: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Ps. 127:1a).

Blessing the "living areas" with their books, music, magazines, and TV: "By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches" (Prov. 24:3-4 rsv). *Sample prayer:* "Lord, we dedicate our reading, our listening, our viewing, and our conversations to You, that we might grow in Your wisdom and Your knowledge. Thank You for books and music, for radio and TV,

for all the information available to us and the entertainment we enjoy. Help us to use it wisely and for Your glory.”

Blessing the kitchen and dining room: “A [family] can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in [their] work. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?” (Eccl. 2:24, 25 NIV). *Sample prayer:* “Lord, bless the hands that prepare food in this house. Give us a thankful spirit for Your daily provision of food, never taking it for granted. Help us to slow down long enough to eat together as a family, enjoying one another around this table—and help us all to share the burden of washing dishes and cleaning up.”

Blessing the bedrooms: “There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his [or her] own work, just as God did from his” (Heb. 4:10 NIV). *Sample prayer:* “Lord, give sweet rest within this room, the renewal of the mind, body, and spirit through sufficient sleep, to prepare [occupant name or names] for each new day.”

Blessing a child’s room: “Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me. Do not stop them! For the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.’ And he put his hands on their heads and blessed them . . .” (Matt. 19:14, 15 NLT). *Sample prayer:* Lord, as Jesus did, we bless [child’s name]. Send Your guardian angel to protect [child’s name] at home, and also at school and in the neighborhood. May [child’s name] fall asleep each night, free from fear and scary dreams.”

Blessing the guest room and/or the family table: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares” (Heb. 13:2). *Also,* “Then the King

will say to those on the right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home’ . . . Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you . . . a stranger and show you hospitality?’ . . . And the King will tell them, ‘I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’” (Matt. 25:34–40 NLT). *Sample prayer*: “Lord, give us the privilege of hospitality, of inviting both friends and strangers to share our table. Give us a generous spirit, Lord, sharing the blessing of this home with others, and may they find Your Spirit around our table and in this guest room.”

The Family Bible: “These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deut. 6:6, 7 NIV). *Sample prayer*: “Lord, this Bible contains the living Word of God. Don’t let it collect dust in this home. We dedicate ourselves to read it together as a family, to teach our children its precepts, and to be examples to them by obeying Your commandments.”

Candle-Lighting Ceremony

A simple candle-lighting ceremony might be another way to dedicate a home—either used by itself or as a way to close the house blessing.

Arrange eight candles on the dining room table. Ahead of time, write each of the following words on a small folded card (so it can stand up like a place card), and put the cards in a basket. As

family and friends gather around the table, ask different ones to draw a card from the basket, set it in front of a candle, and then light a candle for each word. *Option:* Invite family and friends to add comments or prayers as each candle is lit.

We dedicate this home to JESUS.

We dedicate this home to LOVE.

We dedicate this home to JOY.

We dedicate this home to HOSPITALITY.

We dedicate this home to COOPERATION.

We dedicate this home to APPRECIATION.

We dedicate this home to SPIRITUAL NURTURE.

We dedicate this home to CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

A prayer from the author:

Lord, bless the homes that will be blessed because someone reads the ideas here in this book. Oh, God, pour Your Spirit in power upon the family in each home. Protect them from all harm and danger. Fill their homes with love and laughter, order and discipline, rest and renewal. Provide for every daily need. And give each family thankful hearts, for we know that the source of all that is good comes from You. Amen.

Sukkot—The Festival of Booths

If Ruth Garfield wasn't so distracted being pregnant with twins, she'd want to tell you about Sukkot, the most joyous of the Fall festivals celebrated by the Jewish people.

The Feast of Booths in the Old Testament

Sukkot begins five days after Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, on the fifteenth day of Tishri on the Jewish calendar (usually September or October). It is variously called The Feast of Booths, The Feast of Tabernacles, or Sukkot (which is the plural of *sukkah*, which means “booth” or “shelter”).

This festival was commanded by the Lord in Leviticus 23:33–43 as a time to remember God’s care and provision when the Israelite people lived in temporary dwellings out in the desert, before they came into the Promised Land. “The Lord said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: “On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord’s Feast of Tabernacles [Shelters] begins . . . after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the Lord for seven days; the first day is a day of rest, and the eighth day also is a day of rest. . . . Live in booths for seven days . . . so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God”’” (NIV).

The celebration itself was fairly simple: build temporary shelters; live in them; invite others to share meals with you in the shelter; give thanks to God for His bountiful harvest; and the first day and the day after the festival (the eighth day) were to be days of rest.

Only one specific ritual is associated with the Feast of Booths. God instructed Moses, “On the first day, gather fruit from citrus trees, and collect palm fronds and other leafy branches and willows that grow by the streams. Then rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days” (Lev. 23:40 NLT). According to Jewish tradition, these plants are called the Four Species. The leafy branches—palm fronds, willow, myrtle (reeds may be substituted)—are bound

together and called the *lulav*, which are waved around the booth at various times during the seven days. The citrus fruit are used to help decorate the booth, along with gourds, squash, and other vegetables and fruits readily available during this harvest time.

The seventh day is called *Hashannah Rabbah*, and is often the first day of rain after the harvest. The booth is then taken down, and the eighth day (called *Shmenie Atzeret*) is a day of rest.

The purpose of this festival is to remember that God took care of His people, even when they were living in temporary shelters, even before they entered into the Promised Land. (It is also significant to notice that *God Himself* also dwelt in a temporary Tabernacle during this time, before the Temple in Jerusalem was built.)

The Feast of Booths in the New Testament

Did you know that Jesus observed the Feast of Booths? He taught in the temple during this festival, and the many pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the feast heard Him speak. You can read about it in John 7:10. Notice especially verses 37–39 (NIV):

“On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.”

This happened on *Hashannah Rabbah*, the day associated with the fall rains. What a beautiful reminder that all the Jewish feasts point to and are fulfilled in the coming of the Messiah.

Spiritual Meanings of this Festival . . . and Its Significance for Us Today

God is our shelter. In our materialistic society, it's so easy to take for granted the blessings of our homes, cars, dishwashers, and telephones. Living in a temporary shelter (even if only for a few hours, or sleeping in it overnight) can help us focus our thoughts on the One who is our shelter, whether we are rich or poor. As Paul the Apostle said, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Phil. 4:12b, 13).

This world is not our home. As the children's chorus goes, "This world is not my home, I'm just a-passing through . . ." Building a *sukkah* and spending some time in it can help remind us just how temporary this life is. Meanwhile, Jesus is preparing a glorious eternal home for us in heaven! (Read John 14:1-4.)

We don't have to live in bondage to sin. Just as God brought out the Children of Israel from bondage in Egypt when they applied the blood of a lamb on their doorposts, so Jesus has freed us from the bondage of sin by offering Himself as the Lamb of God, the ultimate sacrifice for our sin. Our journey with Jesus may not yet feel like we've reached the promised land, but we are *free*.

The "last great day." The seventh day of this festival was often referred to as the "last great day of the feast." As such, it prophetically points toward that Last Great Day when God's people will dwell with Him forever. *Read John 7:37-39 again.* It was on the "last and greatest day of the feast" that Jesus invited those who were "thirsty for God" to come to Him and "drink," and "streams of living water" would flow from within them—a reference to the

gift of the Holy Spirit when Jesus returned to heaven, and also to that Last Great Day when Jesus will come again.

Suggestions for Celebrating Sukkot

Build a *sukkah*! No, we're not going to go into construction details here. (Google "Feast of Booths" or "Building a *Sukkah*" and you will probably find a variety of instructions on the Internet. Also see Resources on pg. 17) But the general idea is to build a *temporary structure* in your yard, made of natural materials if possible. You can use scrap lumber covered by branches or even sheets. However, some families pitch a tent and "sleep out" during Sukkot. The whole point is not to get hung up on the details, but to experience a temporary dwelling in some way during this seven-day festival, and create special memories as a family. (One family with sick children made a tent with sheets in their living room, in which they ate and slept.)

Decorate your *sukkah*. Use branches, gourds, pumpkins, fruit—anything to reflect the joy of harvest. According to tradition, the lamps burning in the *sukkahs* during this festival lit up the whole city. Use strings of lights as part of your decoration.

Spend time in your *sukkah*. Use it for your time alone with God, reflecting on some of the spiritual themes of this festival. Eat as many meals as possible in your temporary dwelling. If possible, sleep in your *sukkah* at least one night, looking at the stars through your very temporary roof!

Invite guests to celebrate with you. Sukkot is also a harvest festival, a time to thank God for His abundant provision. This is a feast! Invite a neighbor family; a single coworker; a newcomer to your church. Rejoice! Eat, drink, and be merry! (And why not

invite a Jewish friend to eat with you and explain this tradition to your family?)

Read Scriptures that explain the Feast of Tabernacles. See Leviticus 23:34–43; Deuteronomy 16:13–15; and Numbers 29:12–40.

Read the Bible story about Jesus and the Feast of Tabernacles. See John 7:2–39.

Wave the *lulav*. Bind together the different kinds of branches mentioned in Leviticus 23:40, and let your children wave them as you sing songs of praise after one of your festive meals in the *sukkah*.

Suggested Resources

More ideas can be found at biblicaholidays.com.

Books for your bookshelf: *A Family Guide to the Biblical Holidays* by Robin Sampson and Linda Pierce (Heart of Wisdom Publishers). Also recommended: *The Fall Feasts of Israel* by Mitch and Zhava Glaser (Moody Press, 1987), written from a Messianic perspective.

Now, as Ruth would say, “You’re waiting for what? The sky to fall? Go build yourself a *sukkah*. A lot of fun you will have!”

Recipes

One of the best things about getting together with a group of sisters to eat and celebrate is that the food on the table is often a collection of tried-and-true family recipes. (Which is what the Yada Yada sisters are sharing here, so you better appreciate it! Adele wasn't so sure she wanted to give up her family recipe, but Nony quoted her a Scripture verse about things hidden in secret will come to the light anyway, so here it is.)

Adele's Southern Fried Chicken

Adele always starts the night before so the chicken can marinate in the buttermilk to adequately tenderize and flavor it. When Jodi tried this recipe, she had to stick a big note on the kitchen cupboard and set an alarm to remind her. (Starting stuff the night before isn't usually on her list of requirements for Five-Star Baxter Favorites.) But now she says, "Hey, using already cut up chicken pieces and pouring buttermilk over them took all of about five minutes. If I can do it, you can too."

Serves 4–6.

3½ to 4-lb. chicken, cut into pieces

2 cups buttermilk

1 tsp. black pepper

¼ tsp. salt

1¼ cups all-purpose flour

1½ tsp. seasoned salt (or ½ tsp. each of garlic powder, salt, and paprika)

2 cups vegetable oil (or 1 lb. lard if you want to be truly authentic)

1 stick butter

* metric conversion chart on page 29.

Rinse the chicken pieces and blot them with paper towels. In a large bowl combine the buttermilk, ¼ teaspoon of the black pepper and the salt, and stir to combine. Add the chicken pieces and turn to coat evenly. Cover and refrigerate several hours (overnight if possible), turning the pieces occasionally to keep them well coated.

Combine the flour, seasoned salt, and the remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of black pepper in a double paper bag. (Two bags, so they won't tear.)

Put the vegetable oil and butter in a large cast-iron frying pan or pot big enough to hold the chicken pieces in one layer without touching. Melt over medium-high heat. The oil should be about $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deep. Heat to 365 degrees on a candy thermometer.

Remove the thighs from the buttermilk marinade, and drop them into the bag of flour mixture. Close the top, and give a couple shakes until chicken pieces are coated. Place the thighs skin-side down in the center of the pan. (Thighs will require the longest time to cook.) Coat the remaining pieces in the same way and add them to the pan in a single layer without touching. Work in batches if necessary.

Don't move the chicken until the coating sets (about 5 minutes). Lift and check the underside until it is deep golden, then turn. Cook the pieces between 8 and 20 minutes (depending on size) until crispy, golden, and cooked through. Test doneness by cutting into the thickest part of the meat. The juices should run clear with no sign of blood. Place on a paper-lined baking sheet to drain.

(Of course, Adele always serves Southern Fried Chicken with her Foot-Stompin' Greens—recipe included in *The Yada Yada Prayer Group*, Book 1.)

Becky's First-Ever Chocolate Cake

This is really Jodi's recipe, but Becky was so excited to discover it was so easy, she made it every time she was supposed to bring something to Yada Yada or a church potluck, and pretty soon everyone thought of it as "Becky's Chocolate Cake." It's dark, moist, and chocolatey. Both Jodi and Becky usually double the recipe and use a 9 x 13 pan.

1½ cups flour
3 Tbsp. cocoa
1 tsp. soda
1 cup sugar
½ tsp. salt
5 Tbsp. vegetable oil
1 Tbsp. vinegar
1 tsp. vanilla
1 cup cold water

Sift the dry ingredients directly into a greased 9 x 9 x 2 cake pan. Make three "wells" into this dry mixture, pouring oil into one, vinegar into another, and the vanilla into the third. Pour the cup of cold water over it all and stir everything together just like you did in the sandbox when you were four years old. Continue stirring until it is smooth and the flour is no longer visible.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Then frost with your favorite chocolate frosting. If you don't have one, here's . . .

Easy-Does-It Chocolate Frosting

1 cup sugar
1/4 cup cocoa
1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup milk
1 tsp. vanilla

In a saucepan over medium heat, mix everything together except the vanilla. Bring to a boil for 1 minute. Remove from the heat and add the vanilla. Cool partially and transfer to a small mixing bowl. Beat with an electric mixer until spreadable (about 3 minutes). Frosts one 9 x 9 cake.

Lemon and Thyme Chicken Breasts

This one is high on the list of Five-Star Baxter favorites. First, because it's simple (yea for sales on boneless chicken breasts!). Second, because it's delicious. If you like lemon, this one is guaranteed to be a family favorite.

Serves 4.

3 Tbsp. flour

1/2 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. pepper

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts halves

2 Tbsp. olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 Tbsp. butter or margarine

1 cup chicken broth (or 1 cup water and 1 tsp. chicken bouillon)

3 Tbsp. lemon juice (fresh if possible)

1 Tbsp. fresh or 1/2 Tbsp. dry thyme

lemon wedges

2 Tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped

Shake the flour, salt, and pepper together in a lunch-size paper bag. Add the chicken and shake to coat. (Save the excess seasoned flour.) Put the chicken breasts into a large skillet in which you have heated a tablespoon of olive oil over a medium heat. Brown the chicken on one side (about 5 minutes) and turn. Add the second tablespoon of olive oil, and brown on the second side.

Remove and set the chicken aside. Melt the butter in the skillet and sauté the onions until translucent. Add the remaining seasoned flour and stir until smooth. Add the chicken broth, thyme, and 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Stir constantly while you bring the sauce to a boil.

Return chicken to skillet and reduce heat to a low simmer. Cover the skillet and cook until the chicken is tender (about 15 minutes).

Remove the cooked chicken breasts to your serving plate. Stir the remaining lemon juice into the sauce and pour over the chicken. Garnish with parsley and extra lemon wedges.

(For a quick, easy, and luscious meal, serve with rice and steamed broccoli, which you can prepare while the chicken is simmering those last 15 minutes. Pour some of the pan gravy over the rice.)

Mom Jennings' Christmas Cinnamon Rolls

Okay, so it's not Christmas. Jodi's mom makes them for Christmas morning in Book 7, The Yada Yada Prayer Group Gets Decked Out . . . whoops, getting ahead of ourselves. But this is the recipe Jodi used when she made cinnamon rolls for the work crew at the new church—and who said you had to wait till Christmas for cinnamon rolls, anyway?

Makes 12 rolls.

Dough:

1 cup milk
1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
1/2 cup sugar
1 tsp. salt
2 packets dry yeast
2 eggs, beaten
4 1/2 cups flour

Filling:

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter or margarine (at room temp. or melted)
3/4 cup brown sugar
1 Tbsp. cinnamon
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup chopped walnuts or pecans (optional)

Dough: Scald the milk; pour into the large bowl of your mixer. Stir in the butter, sugar, and salt. Cool to lukewarm; stir in the

yeast. Add eggs and mix. Add about half of the flour and beat with the mixer until smooth. Then add the rest by mixing and kneading with the dough hooks (or by hand) until the dough is smooth and elastic. Cover with a damp cloth or plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place (about 82 degrees) until double in volume. It usually takes an hour or two.

Punch it down, cover it again, and let it rest while you soften the filling butter slightly in a microwave (if necessary) and chop the nuts for the filling.

Making the cinnamon rolls: Roll out the dough on a floured board into a rectangle shape to a thickness of $\frac{3}{8}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Spread evenly with softened butter. Sprinkle with brown sugar, cinnamon, raisins, and/or nuts. Starting from the long edge, roll up the dough into a "log" with the filling spiraled inside. Cut 12 "wheels" 1-inch to 1½-inch thick from the "log" and arrange them loosely (spiral side up) in a greased 9 x 13 baking dish. Cover and allow to rise again for one hour. Brush with egg white, then bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes or until light golden brown.

Optional: Glaze with 1 cup confectioners' sugar, adding just enough water (start with 1 Tbsp.) to get your desired thinness. Dribble over the cooled cinnamon rolls in swirls.

Jodi's Classic Lasagna

When in doubt about what to serve the hungry masses, make lasagna! Jodi uses the same "Secret Spaghetti Sauce" (see Recipe in Book 4, Yada Yada Prayer Group Gets Tough) she's developed over the years, but makes it a bit thicker here so the lasagna isn't "sloppy."

Serves 4–6.

Sauce:

- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- 2 medium (or 1 large) onions, chopped
- ½ lb. mushrooms, sliced
- 1 28-ounce can tomatoes (whole, diced, or crushed)
- 2 6-ounce cans tomato paste plus 1 can water
- 2 tsp. basil
- 2 tsp. oregano
- 1–2 tsp. salt (to taste)
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed or minced

And you'll need . . .

- ½ lb. lasagna noodles (9 noodles) cooked *al dente*
- 1 pint cottage cheese
- ½ lb. (8 oz.) mozzarella cheese, grated
- ½ cup parmesan cheese, grated

For the sauce, brown the ground beef in the bottom of the pot you will use to make the sauce. Add the onions and mushrooms. While they are cooking, blend the tomatoes, tomato paste, and water in

your blender. When the beef is cooked, pour off any extra grease and add the blended tomatoes and spices. Simmer 15–20 minutes.

While the sauce simmers, cook the lasagna noodles according to package directions, then drain and rinse in cool water.

Spread a small amount of the sauce over the bottom of a 9 x 13 baking dish. Then arrange three noodles lengthwise, cover with $\frac{1}{3}$ of the tomato sauce, $\frac{1}{2}$ of the cottage cheese, and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat for a second layer. Top that with the final three lasagna noodles, the remaining sauce, the remaining mozzarella cheese, and the parmesan cheese.

Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. Remove and allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving with a tossed green salad and hot garlic bread.

US TO METRIC CONVERSION TABLE

CAPACITY

$\frac{1}{5}$ teaspoon = 1 milliliter

1 teaspoon = 5 milliliters

1 tablespoon = 15 milliliters

1 fluid ounce = 30 milliliters

$\frac{1}{5}$ cup = 50 milliliters

1 cup = 240 milliliters

2 cups (1 pint) = 470 milliliters

4 cups (1 quart) = .95 liter

4 quarts (1 gallon) = 3.8 liters

WEIGHT

1 ounce = 28 grams

1 pound = 454 grams