

## Meal Ministry Tips

- Remember that it doesn't have to be a homemade meal. Rotisserie chicken and vegetables from the store can still be a blessing!
- Soup and lasagna are the most common meals to bring because they taste so good, they're the easiest to make, and they travel well. But make sure they haven't received a bunch of those already.
- As many of you know after a significant event, there's often no shortage of food. A frozen meal can be set aside for when it's most convenient. These come in handy a couple months down the road and a particularly hard day/week comes and can be delivered at any time.
- Many families prefer familiar meals rather than "fancy" ones (e.g. lasagna with red sauce rather than a seafood lasagna with white sauce and spinach and artichoke and mushrooms and so on).
- When you bring a meal, feel the situation out for whether or not you should linger. They might want you to stick around and talk, but if you think not, it's perfectly acceptable to drop it off and get going.
- You're bringing a meal because of their event, but they might not want to talk right then. Just before dinner might not be the best time to talk.
- Always provide a meal in containers that don't need to be returned to you. Having to keep track of 9x13's and serving bowls is too much work. Use recyclable containers or go to thrift stores for pretty dishes that don't cost a mint! You can deliver these meals in the dishes and they have dishes they can keep and not worry about giving them back.
- Make sure they know that you don't need a thank you note. You can even go as far as telling them that you'll actually be *bot hered* if they take the time to write you a note.
- Gift cards!
- If you don't have the means or availability to make a whole meal, bring something else, like some tea or a small plate of cookies. It's about letting them know you're thinking of them.
- Take a shipment of paper products and plastic utensils over to them so that clean-up is mindless too.
- Always include dessert. Especially if the family has children, this will let the family know that you were thinking about all of them, not just the adult.
- The giving and receiving of food is one of the true hallmarks of a true community. Nothing says that people are thinking of you more than a home-cooked or "home-bought" meal. It is so nice to have a tangible expression of people's love.
- For new moms (nursing) stick with foods that are easy on the stomach-stay away from anything spicy.
- Aim for a meat, a carbohydrate, and a vegetable. You may also add a salad, roll and dessert if you wish.
- Add a card to make it personal.
- Label food items.
- If you are delivering dinner, tuck in a few items for breakfast also!