



Family Meal

Ideas,
Tips, and
Plans



Sharing a meal together regularly is an important piece to community group life. It is through the meal we have an opportunity to bless one another every week, and it is during the meal we have the opportunity to encourage one another toward Jesus and His mission. In fact, Jesus Himself did a large majority of His ministry, discipleship, and mission during meals. Meals are significant, and when they are done well, they can affect the ministry of a community group significantly. We have found that community groups with great family meals are usually growing healthily.

Hope these meal ideas help your community group without hurting your waistline!

COMMUNITY GROUP MEAL TIPS

Depending on the group, it usually works best to have whoever is hosting provide drinks and still sign up for something. (Water and Country Time lemonade mix is cheap and works great.)

Try and get the meal sign-up out to everyone four to five days prior to the night so they have time to plan, so they can get their supplies on their grocery store trip, and so you can fill in the gaps or ask for extra help if no one has signed up.

Bring your best stuff, and other people tend to follow suit! It makes the meal so much better when everyone puts effort into it!

Be aware of meetings when you will have new people or guests who you don't expect to bring a dish. Make your people aware so everyone can pitch in a little extra. We would never want a guest to feel like there isn't enough food for them!

COMMUNITY GROUP MEAL IDEAS

These meals have been set up for community groups with twelve to fifteen adults and five to six kids. If you have more adults and/or kids, adjust accordingly. Below are meal ideas and a list of the items people can sign up to bring.



This can be a general theme. There are a few other more specific ways to do Mexican, as well.

- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Tortilla chips
- ☐ Queso
- ☐ Guacamole
- ☐ Rice and beans
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Build your own soft or crispy tacos.

- ☐ Seasoned ground beef (2 lbs)
- ☐ Shredded chicken (2 lbs)
- ☐ Black beans and shredded cheese
- ☐ Small tortillas and taco shells (30 tortillas, 12 crispy tacos)
- ☐ Shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes (1 head of lettuce, 2 tomatoes)
- ☐ Queso and salsa
- ☐ Guacamole (2 pints)
- ☐ Tortilla chips (2-3 bags)
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



This is basically a Mexican salad.

- ☐ Seasoned ground beef (2 lbs)
- ☐ Seasoned ground beef (2lbs)
- ☐ Fritos and/or tortilla chips (4 bags total)
- ☐ Shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes, sour cream
(3 heads of lettuce, 2 tomatoes, 10-15 oz of sour cream)
- ☐ Shredded cheese (2 lbs)
- ☐ Guacamole (1-2 pints)
- ☐ Queso
- ☐ Rice and black beans (optional)
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Sandwiches can be boring, but if you add a few extra toppings and a panini grill, it can be a favorite!

- ☐ Sandwich bread (2 loaves of wheat bread, plus add in a loaf of white if you have lots of kids)
- ☐ Turkey (1-1 1/2 lbs)
- ☐ Ham (1-1 1/2 lbs [not usually as popular as turkey, so you may want to double turkey instead])
- ☐ If you have lots of picky kids, you might want to throw in a jar of peanut butter!
- ☐ Sliced cheese (20 slices)
- ☐ Mayo, mustard (Sometimes the host has plenty, so check with him or her before you make it a sign-up item.)
- ☐ Leaf lettuce, sliced tomatoes, sliced onions (1 head of lettuce, 2 tomatoes, 1/2 onion)
- ☐ Sliced avocados (5 avocados sliced)
- ☐ Assorted chips (3 bags)
- ☐ Fresh fruit salad
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Everyone's favorite: breakfast for dinner!

- ☐ Egg main dish (9x13 dish)
- ☐ Egg main dish (9x13 dish)
- ☐ Bread or pastry item (This allows for people to do muffins, cinnamon rolls, tea bread, donuts, etc.)
- ☐ Bread or pastry item
- ☐ Fresh fruit (People usually just bring a big bowl, and it works out well.)
- ☐ Bacon (1 lb)
- ☐ Sliced breakfast sausage (1 lb)
- ☐ Orange juice and apple juice

**Dessert isn't needed for brinner because the pastries basically are!*



Have someone man the griddle, and just start flipping! Kids loooooove this night!

- ☐ Pancake mix and corresponding ingredients (Usually 2-3 boxes and just mix it as needed)
- ☐ Syrup (1-2 bottles depending on size)
- ☐ Butter (1 tub is usually enough)
- ☐ Bacon (1 lb)
- ☐ Breakfast sausage slices (1 lb)
- ☐ Fresh fruit
- ☐ Drinks

**No dessert needed*



This is just a broad category. There are a few other more specific ways to do Italian, as well.

- ☐ Main dish (9x13 dish)
- ☐ Main dish (9x13 dish)
- ☐ Green or Caesar salad
- ☐ French bread/Italian bread (1 loaf will generally feed 10-15 people)
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Mention that they can either pick up a pizza or bring a homemade one! This is a good theme when everyone has been busy and needs a break!

- ☐ Large pizza
- ☐ Large pizza
- ☐ Large pizza
- ☐ Large pizza
- ☐ Large pizza
- ☐ Green salad
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



This can be a little tricky to keep the noodles in good shape, but it's basically like a pasta bar!

- ☐ Spaghetti noodles cooked with a little olive oil to keep from sticking (2 lbs)
- ☐ Penne noodles (2 lbs)
- ☐ Any other noodle option you want (2 lbs)
- ☐ Spaghetti/meat sauce
- ☐ Alfredo sauce
- ☐ Green salad
- ☐ French bread (1 loaf)
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Comfort food at its finest! You can also throw in a soup, too, to switch it up!

- ☐ Sliced sandwich bread (3 loaves bread)
- ☐ 20 slices of a certain cheese (cheddar)
- ☐ 20 slices of a different cheese (provolone or another variety)
- ☐ Sliced avocados (5 avocados)
- ☐ Sliced tomatoes (2 tomatoes)
- ☐ Bacon (1-2 lbs)
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Build your own salad!

- ☐ Heads of romaine lettuce, washed and in salad-sized bites (6-8 heads of romaine)
- ☐ Hard-boiled eggs (diced), bacon pieces, diced tomatoes (10 eggs, 1 lb of bacon [crumbled], 2 tomatoes)
- ☐ Sliced avocados (5-6 avocados)
- ☐ Bleu cheese crumbles, feta cheese crumbles
- ☐ Grilled chicken breast, diced (4 breasts and can be cold)
- ☐ Thick-sliced deli turkey (1-2 lbs)
- ☐ Bleu cheese dressing, ranch dressing
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks
- ☐ Mac and cheese or PBJ for kids



This is a great one for people to get creative! Just remember that people love finger foods, so have plenty of options and encourage people to make a decent amount. It is a good idea to list the number of appetizers needed and ask for people to reply with what they are bringing so not everyone shows up with a crockpot of queso.

- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Appetizer dish
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



This can be an expensive one since meat is pricey, so don't do it too often!

- ☐ 2-3 lbs of BBQ chicken
- ☐ 2 lbs of sausage
- ☐ 1-2 lbs brisket or chopped beef
- ☐ 1-2 lbs turkey breast
- ☐ Potato salad
- ☐ Baked beans
- ☐ Corn or creamed corn
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Bring your favorite thing to cook!

- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Side dish
- ☐ Side dish
- ☐ Side dish
- ☐ Bread or dinner rolls
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Great for cold winter nights!

- ☐ Soup option #1
- ☐ Soup option #2
- ☐ Soup option #3
- ☐ Bakery-style bread and crackers
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Who doesn't love Frito pie?!?

- ☐ Batch of chili
- ☐ Batch of chili
- ☐ 3 bags of Fritos and sour cream
- ☐ 2-3 bags of shredded cheese
- ☐ Mac and cheese for kids
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



This is an easy one as long as you know someone (easiest for host) to bake all the potatoes

- ☐ 18 baked potatoes (You can bake them and keep them in a cooler, and they will stay hot!)
- ☐ 2 lbs chopped BBQ beef
- ☐ Sour cream and shredded cheese (16 oz sour cream and 2 lbs cheese) ☐
- Bacon pieces and chopped green onions
- ☐ Tub of butter
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Doesn't have to be Easter!

- ☐ Sliced ham
- ☐ Sliced ham
- ☐ Sliced ham
- ☐ Green bean casserole
- ☐ Deviled eggs
- ☐ Mashed potatoes
- ☐ Dinner rolls
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks



Doesn't have to be Thanksgiving!

- ☐ Turkey
- ☐ Turkey
- ☐ Turkey
- ☐ Green bean casserole ☐
- Sweet potato casserole ☐
- Mashed potatoes
- ☐ Cranberry sauce
- ☐ Dinner rolls
- ☐ Pumpkin pie
- ☐ Pecan pie
- ☐ Drinks



These dishes take some effort, but people can always do take-out!

☐ Main dish ☐

Main dish ☐

Fried rice ☐

Fried rice ☐

10 egg rolls

☐ 10 egg rolls

☐ Dessert

☐ Drinks



Whatever you think is comfort food, bring it!

- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Main dish
- ☐ Side dish
- ☐ Side dish
- ☐ Bread
- ☐ Drinks
- ☐ Dessert



Great for a summer night with not much of an agenda because grilling does take some time!

- ☐ 8-10 hamburger patties
- ☐ 8-10 hamburger patties
- ☐ 24 hot dogs
- ☐ 24 hot dog buns and 24 hamburger buns
- ☐ 20 slices of cheese
- ☐ Mustard, ketchup, mayo
- ☐ 1 head of lettuce, 2 sliced tomatoes, 1 sliced onion
- ☐ 3-4 bags of chips
- ☐ Dessert
- ☐ Drinks