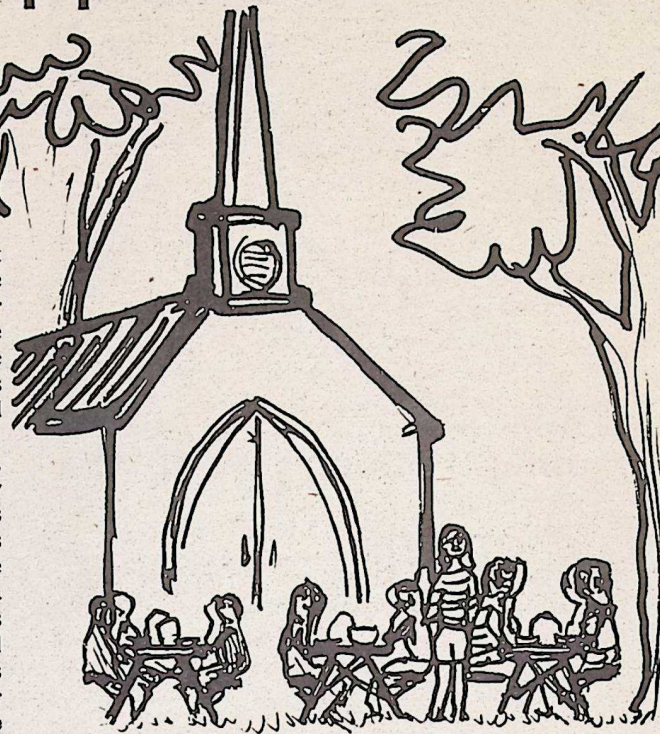


Church Suppers & Bake Sale Specials

by Lydia Lovell



Before folks got into the habit of flocking to restaurants at the least excuse to eat a meal away from home, most people either accepted an invitation from a relative, friend, or neighbor, or attended a covered dish supper at one of the churches or at the Grange, a chicken barbeque put on by the volunteer firemen, or lined up for a plateful of baked beans and potato salad with a slice of ham, all prepared and served by a local youth group trying to raise a little money.

Whenever a supper or brunch or barbeque was scheduled, everyone who possibly could go, went. And the Lovell family was no exception. Aunt Olivia and Uncle Henry were always there and, like most of the other women, Aunt Olivia was asked to "bring something." To maintain a certain balance among the foods, those asked to bring something had a choice. If 50 or 60 people were expected, at least 40 dishes would be needed; a dozen or so hearty casseroles, an equal number of large salads, and plenty of desserts. Whoever was putting on the meal usually provided the chicken, ham, or whatever the main course was to be. Aunt Olivia's **Bubble Loaf** was a dessert dish always appreciated.

2 pkg. yeast
1 C. dark brown sugar, packed
1/3 C. warm water
1/2 C. butter, melted
2 t. salt
3/4 C. milk

3 large eggs
1 egg yolk
5 C (plus) all-purpose flour
SYRUP:
1 C. butter
1 C. dark brown sugar, packed
1 C. dark raisins

Soak yeast and sugar in water for 10 minutes in a large bowl. In a saucepan, melt butter, add salt and milk; stir over low heat until milk is warm. Combine with yeast mixture. Thoroughly stir in whole eggs plus the extra yolk, then add flour, one cup at a time, stirring after each addition. Mixture will be like a soft bread dough.

Turn out onto a lightly floured board and knead for 10 minutes until elastic, adding more flour as necessary. Place in greased bowl, turning once, and cover with sheet of waxed paper. Let rise about 1 1/2 hours until doubled. Punch down and turn out on a floured board and let rest for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, melt one cup of butter, add one cup of dark brown sugar; stir together and add raisins. Butter a 10" angel cake or tube pan. Then came the part I always liked to help with; making the dough balls was really fun. Pinch off bits of dough, enough to make dough balls about the size of a golf ball, and roll gently between your palms. We usually made about 40 balls from the mound of dough.

As each ball was made, Aunt Olivia dipped and rolled it in a syrup of one cup melted butter and one cup firmly packed brown sugar in which a cup of raisins had soaked. The balls were placed loosely in the tube pan, piled on top of each other until all the dough was used and the pan almost half-full. After centering the pan on a baking sheet, Aunt Olivia poured the remaining syrup and raisins over the dough balls.

With waxed paper and a tea towel draped loosely on top,

the pan was left in a warm place for an hour-and-a-quarter until the dough had risen again to almost double. We then slid the baking sheet and the pan of dough balls into a preheated 350° oven where it baked for an hour. Following the baking, Aunt Olivia carefully removed the loaf from the tube pan, and while it was still warm, garnished the cake with thin slices of lemon.

A serving of Bubble Loaf consisted of two or three "bubbles," depending upon the estimated appetite. A small scoop of vanilla ice cream, or sometimes lemon sherbet, alongside two bubbles usually proved more than adequate for most people, though growing boys have been known to consume two, and in rare instances, three helpings of that size.

On other occasions, too, Aunt Olivia was invited to contribute some delicious concoction from her collection of desserts. Whenever there was a bake sale for the benefit of any of the ladies' clubs or the men's groups, Aunt Olivia obliged. Sometimes she doubled a recipe that had been given her by Miss Fannie Baxter and made two dozen **Sour Cream Cakes**. As printed here, yield is a dozen.

1 C. sugar
2 eggs
pinch of salt
1 t. lemon or vanilla extract

1/2 t. baking soda
1 C. sour cream
1 1/2 C. all-purpose flour
1 t. baking powder

In a small bowl combine baking soda and sour cream. Beat well and set aside. Sift flour, measure, add baking powder to flour, and sift again. Set aside. In a medium-sized bowl, beat eggs, add sugar, and beat until creamed. Add salt and flavoring. Then add sour cream and soda mixture. Beat thoroughly. Gradually stir in flour, mixing batter until smooth. Fill well-greased muffin tins three-quarters full and bake 25 to 30 minutes in a 350° oven.

A dessert appropriate for small gatherings or a party snack to be served toward the end of an evening is Aunt Olivia's **ChocklIt Roll**.

1/2 C. all-purpose flour
1/2 C. cocoa powder
1/2 t. baking powder
1/2 t. salt

4 eggs
3 T. cool water
3/4 C. sugar

Sift flour, cocoa, baking powder, and salt together; set aside. In a medium-sized bowl, combine eggs and water. Using a rotary beater, add sugar to eggs, one tablespoonful at a time, beating after each addition. Sift the dry ingredients into mixture and stir well until smooth. Line the bottom of a lightly greased 15"x10" shallow pan with waxed paper. Pour batter into pan and bake at 350° for 35 minutes.

While still hot, remove cake from pan and place on a tea towel sprinkled with powdered sugar. Trim away all four edges with a sharp knife (being careful not to cut the towel), and roll up like a jelly roll. Refrigerate. Prepare a cream filling as for eclairs or whip up a bowl of heavy cream. When cake is cool, unroll carefully, remove towel, spread with filling, re-roll, and refrigerate at least two hours before serving.

Whether for public suppers or family ones, for bake sales or children's treats, for serving with afternoon tea or on Sunday morning when the clan gathered around the Lovell's dining table, Aunt Olivia's **Chocolate Brownies** always made a hit. Occasionally, for variety, she baked **Coffee Squares**, and I think them as good as...perhaps better than...brownies.

1/4 C. margarine
1 C. brown sugar
1 beaten egg
1/2 C. hot coffee
1 1/2 C. flour
1/2 t. soda

1/2 t. salt
1/2 t. cinnamon
1/2 t. baking powder
1/4 C. raisins
1/4 C. chopped nuts

In a medium-sized bowl, cream together margarine and brown sugar. Add beaten egg; beat. Add coffee; beat. Sift together all the remaining ingredients except the raisins and nuts. Then add raisins and nuts to dry ingredients. Combine the two mixtures, stirring until well mixed. Pour batter into a well-greased 8"x8"x2" baking pan and bake 15 or 20 minutes in a 350° oven. Loaf will leave edges of pan when done. While still in the pan and still warm, frost with a mixture of one cup confectioners sugar and two tablespoons of hot coffee. After frosting has set, cut into squares and serve with hot strong coffee or, for children, tall glasses of cold milk.

Probably you will never find any of these treats listed on a menu in a restaurant, but don't be surprised if some of them still appear at bake sales, church suppers, or when the firemen put on a chicken barbeque. The only other way you might enjoy them is to make them yourself.

Bon appetit.