

The Proverbial Potluck
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If you've ever attended a church potluck, the scene of young children racing in the hallways, aging seniors carefully carrying their plates full of small servings of a variety of dishes, and parents attempting to calm their excited children and convince them to eat may sound familiar to you. Perhaps you've been distracted from the service by the savory smells wafting up from the church kitchen.

Potlucks are commonly held within churches, where sharing food together plays an important role in the life of the community. All are welcome to stay for the meal, including any visitors - or those who forgot that they were supposed to be bringing food that day! There's always more than enough to eat.

Whether this has been part of your tradition or not, potlucks with your church, a community group, or family and friends are a great way to enjoy each other's company and taste some delicious food!

Next time you're invited to such an event, or choose to host one yourself, try this recipe for a **Crusty Bean Bake**, which is definitely a potluck hit!

Crusty Bean Bake

Combine:

- ½ c. flour
- ½ t. salt
- ½ t. baking powder
- ½ c. sour cream or yogurt (increase flour by 2 T. if using yogurt)
- 1 egg, beaten

Stir together. May be slightly lumpy. Spread thinly with back of spoon on bottom & sides of shallow greased 2-qt. casserole. Fill with bean mixture (Crust may be stirred together in advance. Refrigerate until ready to use).

Filling:

- Brown in skillet:
- 1 lb. ground beef
- ½ c. chopped onion
- 1 or 2 garlic cloves, minced

Add:

- 1 t. salt
- 1 T. chili powder
- ½ t. Tabasco sauce
- ½ t. red pepper flakes
- 2 c. undrained cooked kidney beans
- 1-2 c. tomato sauce

Spoon into crust and bake at 350 F for 35 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with 1 c. grated cheese. Return to oven for 10 minutes, or until cheese melts. Serve with 3 c. shredded lettuce and 2 c. chopped raw tomatoes.

(If you are lucky enough to take some home with you, it tastes great heated up the next day!)