

Welcome to Table!

The "table" is referred to over 75 times in Scripture. In fact, Jesus invited more people to gather around the table than He did to the synagogue. Without a doubt, the table and those gathered around it mattered to Jesus.

At the table, Christ showed his humanity through His need for physical nourishment and His desire for connection and developing personal relationships. At the table, Christ told his closest friends, *“This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19)*

I hope you'll see that coming to the table is not only about tasting food; it's also about experiencing the unseen, real presence of Christ and God's gift of relationship. May you share the love of Christ often with everyone gathered at your table!

~Kristen Torres, Minister of Spiritual Development

*"It doesn't matter who you are. When you sit at the table, you become family."*

-Amy Turnbow

**WHAT IS TABLE?**

Dawson Table is an experience for women based on the "table" concept presented through the IF:GATHERING (https://www.ifgathering.com/if-table/). It includes systematic, intentional, ongoing opportunities for connection, exploration of faith, and deeper relationships with other women. Ultimately, it is our goal to create consistent opportunities and safe environments for women to gather to share meals, deepen relationships, and experience the love of Jesus Christ.

**HOW DOES TABLE WORK?**

Acts 2:46 tells us, in describing the early church, *"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts..."* Following that pattern, Table is simply this: 6 invited women, 4 questions, and 2 hours.

* Each month, Table hosts will invite 6 women to their home for dinner.
* Serve a SIMPLE meal.
* During the meal, facilitate conversation based on questions provided.
* Begin and end the gathering with a time of prayer.

**WHAT’S OUR WHY?**

*"...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another..."*

Hebrews 10:22-25

**In our time together, we will**

1. Be Authentic - *"draw near to God with a sincere heart"*

2. Be Community - *"let us hold unswervingly"*

3. Be Encouraged - *"encouraging one another"*

**TABLE HOSTS:**

T RUST God to use you.

A CCEPT the challenge to create and sustain deep relationships.

B EGIN conversations that point to Jesus.

L INGER and learn as you leave room for the Holy Spirit to move.

E MBRACE the process of drawing closer to God and to other believers.

**TABLE ETIQUETTE**

1. Keep it simple. This is not the time to showcase your house and/or culinary feats. Simple table settings with simple food are preferred!

2. Keep it safe. Confidentiality is probably the most important guideline of all! Consider everything said during table as confidential. Don't reveal it outside the group, even in the form of a prayer request, and especially not as gossip.

3. Keep it respectful. Make sure that everyone feels welcome and encouraged to share. Focus on keeping things encouraging rather than discouraging.

4. Keep it running on-time. Honor the value of everyone's time by starting and ending at the specified time, especially if there are people in your group with babysitters and/or other commitments.

5. Keep it equal. Certainly, everyone won't talk exactly the same amount but you should be mindful of the others gathered around the time and allow time for everyone to share.

6. Keep it real. Don't be concerned if members of the group have different opinions. If you need to "agree to disagree" after a reasonable time of discussion, feel free to say that and move on. Our objective is not to have everyone with the same opinion. Rather, it's to have a place where everyone's opinion can be heard.

7. Keep it personal. Gathering in person around the table is everything that electronic communications are NOT! Please refrain from cellphone use as much as possible.