

9-2009

# Suppertime Devotions

Susan E. Murray  
*Andrews University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Murray, Susan E., "Suppertime Devotions" (2009). *Lake Union Herald*. 492.  
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/492>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lake Union Herald at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Lake Union Herald by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).



## Suppertime Devotions

BY SUSAN E. MURRAY

There is nothing more satisfying than seeing your children incorporate sound principles in their own family. I asked Michael Hales, our son-in-law, to share how he and our daughter, Marci, incorporate family worship into their busy lives.

“Many families today find it’s hard to get everyone around the dinner table long enough to share a meal, let alone hold a meaningful conversation. This could describe my family. Family devotions are important to my wife, Marci, and me, though finding a workable time is another challenge. It’s either too early in the morning, too late in the evening, someone’s too tired, there are too many distractions, or someone’s not paying attention.

“We’ve struggled with how to teach our children while juggling the necessities of daily living. We haven’t wanted our two young gifts to begrudge family devotions. We have varied morning schedules; once at home, in the late afternoon or evening, there are individual household chores to be completed, the inevitable homework, music lessons or practice, an evening meal and eventually bedtime.

“Last fall we started having family devotions at the dinner table. Our family meals are highly animated with tales of all the events that happened during the day. It is truly a time to listen, laugh out loud, and generally let everyone say or ask anything that comes to mind. I’ve learned the most about my family, and laughed the hardest, during these meals. There tends to be a natural lull in the dinner conversation just about the moment that second serving has been consumed, so I pick up on some aspect or theme that was mentioned during the meal and use it as a segue



© 2008 Jupiterimages Corporation

into a devotional thought or use the Sabbath school lesson’s main focus for the week. I try to keep it short and light, saving more lengthy or serious conversations for Friday evenings.

“We begin by memorizing the Sabbath school lesson’s Bible verse, learning a phrase or two each night, so that by the end of the week we have memorized the verse. I may read passages of Scripture, talk about lessons to be learned from our day’s events, and close with prayer. The television is turned off, and we don’t respond to ringing phones. We also avoid the temptation to become too verbose or hinder the kids from expressing their thoughts. Asking the children to lead devotions gives us opportunities to learn more about them and their thought processes.

“Suppertime devotions help us hide the word in our children’s hearts (Psalm 119:11) and train up our two gifts in the ways of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6). Our suppertime devotions are well received, surprisingly relevant to what is going on in our daily lives, and a blessed opportunity to share a testimony of God’s love from both the Bible and our own experiences with our children.”

Susan Murray is an associate professor of family studies who teaches behavioral science and social work at Andrews University. She is a certified family life educator and a licensed marriage and family therapist. Michael and Marci Hales are the parents of 13-year-old Cassie and 12-year-old Alex. They are the family life coordinators for the Woodbridge Church in Virginia.