

SMALL GRACES

BUNNY McKNIGHT

I turned the page of the calendar. November. Thanksgiving would be different this year. We would not be seated at my parents' table, feasting on my mom's delicious food. This year I was on my own.

We were newly married and had moved from Seattle to Indianapolis, where we quickly learned that Hoosiers were friendly people. There was no Covenant church in Indianapolis then. Some new friends invited us to their church, where we found good fellowship and soon became active. God brought people into our lives to bring joy and growth.

Now I was faced with Thanksgiving. It was up to me. I had to do the turkey, dressing, candied yams, pumpkin pie, home-baked rolls. Everything. O yes, and the gravy. There must be no lumps.

Stan suggested we invite his sister, her husband and young son from Rockford. I agreed. We would enjoy the visit. Ellie was younger than I. Maybe she had not done Thanksgiving either. She would understand. I called Mom for her recipes. I prayed. I suspect Mom did, too.

On the Sunday before Thanksgiving, I noticed a new young couple sitting in church. The husband was in uniform. I did not know him but his wife looked

familiar. Where did I know her from? Maybe we shopped at the same grocery. I could not see her well from where I sat. We stood up front that morning with several others as we were received into membership. After the service, the new young woman hurried toward me.

"I couldn't believe it when I saw you up front," she said. "When did you move to Indianapolis?"

I stared. It couldn't be. But it was.

**I silently thanked God
as I served each dish.
Mom's recipes and
God helped put it
on the table.**

Ruth and I attended girls' camp together at Covenant Beach Bible Camp in Des Moines, Washington, as teenagers. Ruth was from Portland First Covenant. I was from Seattle First. We hugged.

"What are you doing here?" I asked excitedly.

Ruth introduced us to her husband. "Joe was just sent here to Fort Benjamin Harrison. Army friends told us about this church." We laughed and hugged again. Happily, we invited Ruth and Joe to join us for Thanksgiving with Jack, Ellie, and Bobby.

That long ago Thanksgiving was a happy day. God put us together, family and friends. We shared, we laughed, we ate to the full. We rejoiced in belonging to Jesus, for the nurturing we had received in Covenant churches, for the people who had made a difference in our lives. I silently thanked God as I served each dish. Mom's recipes and God helped put it on the table.

The guests, of course, said dinner was delicious. Guests say that. The crowning point was when Ruth came into the kitchen after dinner and asked, "Bunny, will you teach me how to make gravy?"

Thank you, God. You care about everything. □

Bunny McKnight is a freelance writer and member of Midway Covenant Church in Des Moines, Washington.

