

Let this story remind us that when we open our tables and hearts to one another, we become living expressions of God’s love. In our patience, prayer, and joyful service, we taste the enduring goodness of Christ among us.

**Four: The Table**

**Scripture: Romans 12:10–12**

“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

**Cast**

- **Bella**—A shy newcomer who deeply longs to be included but is afraid to speak up. She represents all who arrive at church carrying invisible needs and fears of rejection. Through her quiet courage, the group learns that real fellowship requires making space for the most vulnerable voices.
- **Noah**—The loud, funny kid who constantly cracks jokes, masking his fear of being truly seen. His humor keeps things light but also pushes people away. Noah’s journey in the play shows how breaking the “class clown” persona lets him connect more honestly, demonstrating the value of honoring others above himself.
- **Sarah**—The pastor’s daughter who feels enormous pressure to behave perfectly and make everything “nice.” Her sense of responsibility becomes controlling at times, but it also comes from a genuine desire to serve. Through the meal, Sarah learns that true hospitality is messy, humble, and welcoming of imperfection.
- **Javier**—A recently homeless teen who is quiet and guarded, uncertain whether he really belongs. He’s slow to trust and hesitant to share, but his story reveals the harsh realities many face outside the church walls. By sharing his situation, he challenges the group to move beyond shallow kindness to genuine compassion.
- **Pastor Mark**—A kind, well-meaning but weary leader who wants to create community but sometimes forgets to listen. He feels the weight of guiding these young people while managing his own exhaustion. His vulnerability, owning his frustration and apologizing—models leadership rooted in humility and love.

**Scene 1: Setting the Table**

The youth group gathers for a planned potluck in the church basement. Sarah tries to organize everything perfectly while Noah jokes and teases, creating tension. Bella hovers nervously on the edge, unsure of her place. Pastor Mark encourages them to focus on welcoming everyone, but mismatched expectations and awkwardness hang in the air.

**Scene 2: Hidden Struggles**

As they prepare to eat, Bella hesitates to serve herself, revealing she hasn’t eaten much that day. Javier quietly admits he doesn’t have a steady place to stay. The group falls silent, realizing the potluck is more than a social event. It’s a real opportunity to feed and care for one another. They see each other’s hidden needs.

**Scene 3: The Breaking Point**

Tension boils over. Pastor Mark snaps in frustration at the bickering and chaos, then immediately regrets it. He pauses, apologizes sincerely, and shares his own struggles with feeling overwhelmed. This moment of honesty breaks down walls among the group and opens the door for more genuine sharing.

**Scene 4: The Love Feast**

The youth let go of perfectionism and share an imperfect but honest meal. Laughter bubbles up alongside serious conversation. They make room for Bella and Javier, showing real hospitality. The group learns that true “agapē” love isn’t about flawless presentation but about sharing life—including its messy parts—with devotion and care.

**Scene 5: Closing Prayer**

Pastor Mark leads a closing prayer that acknowledges their imperfections and thanks God for bringing them together. They pray for patience, hope, and faithfulness as in Romans 12:12. The scene ends with quiet smiles, laughter, and a sense that they’ve built something lasting—a community defined by love, honesty, and belonging.

**Synopsis:** When the youth group gathers for a simple potluck, they discover that inclusion is more than sharing food — it’s sharing **life**. Inspired by Romans 12, they move from awkwardness and hidden pain to laughter, honesty, and a sense of community that echoes the early Christian *agapē* feasts — meals of love and belonging.

**Song: Faithful in Prayer** *(may read responsively and/or with music played from collection)*

**Verse 1 (Leader)**

Be devoted in love, let your kindness be known,

Give honor to others more than your own.  
With hearts set on mercy and hands that will share,  
We live out His calling through work and through prayer.

**Chorus (Audience)**

Faithful in prayer, patient through pain,  
Joyful in hope that rises again.  
Never grow weary, never let go—  
Serving the Lord wherever we go.

**Verse 2 (Leader)**

Let zeal be your banner, let fervor be flame,  
A spirit that burns in the Savior’s name.  
In sorrow or stillness, in struggle or song,  
He strengthens the weary, and carries us on.

**Chorus (Audience)**

Faithful in prayer, patient through pain,  
Joyful in hope that rises again.  
Never grow weary, never let go—  
Serving the Lord wherever we go.

**Bridge (All)**

Though trials may come and peace may delay,  
Love walks beside us and teaches the way.  
Not just in promise, but every day,  
Our hearts stay true though skies turn gray.

**Final Chorus (All)**

Faithful in prayer, patient through pain,  
Joyful in hope that rises again.  
Never grow weary, never let go—  
Serving the Lord wherever we go.

**Reflection**