

Prayer

Electronic mail message from Carol Just Halverson, St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Perhaps because my four older siblings only spoke English to me... and my parents had relocated to a non-Ger-Rus community, we only said the "Come Lord Jesus" at our table. It wasn't until twenty years ago when I asked my parents to teach my young daughter some verses and prayers from their childhood that I heard my father say "Abba Lieber Father Amen" for the first time. He remembered that it was the first prayer they learned as children, but didn't indicate that it was only a mealtime prayer. My children use it as a prayer to this day.

During that same visit Dad sang, without faltering, three verses to the lullaby "Mude Bin Ich, Geh' Zur Ruh" (Weary am I, to Rest Must Go). He said he hadn't heard it since his mother died in 1925 when he was 11-yrs-old. Memory is an amazing and powerful gift. Dad is the 5th of 10 children and remembered his mother singing that lullaby when she rocked the babies to sleep. At a family reunion this past summer, Dad again led the singing of the same lullaby as descendants circled the grave of my maternal grandparents. Sadly, there were only four of his generation who could sing it with him.

It was a powerful moment for all who were there. The grandchildren were especially moved by the entire scene. I can only hope it provides a wonderful story for them to tell their own grandchildren about a rare and poignant scene on a blue sky day in the middle of the North Dakota Prairie.

Does anyone remember the tradition of singing "Wo findet die Seele die Heimat, die Ruh" at the graveside?

Electronic mail message from Sherrie Gettman Stahl

Meal time prayer

Thank you for the sun
Thank you for the water
Thank you for the fish
Thank you for the food
That is coming to my table.

The German translation is as follows:

(Herr) wir danken Dir fuer die Sonne und das Wasser,
wir danken Dir fuer den Fisch und die Nahrung* (das Essen),
die wir auf unserem Tische haben.

(either "die Nahrung" or "das Essen" - the latter is more common).

German Table Prayers from Arthur E. Flegel, Menlo Park, California

Taken from the *Golden State Chapter Newsletter*, California, May-June, 1998, volume 27, number 3, American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, page 4

Vater, segne diese Speise, uns zur Kraft und dir zum Preise, Amen.

Father, bless this food to our nourishment and to your praise, Amen.

Kom, Herr Jesu, Sei unser Gast, und segne was du uns bescheret hast, Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let this food to us be blessed. Amen

O Gott, von dem wir alles haben, wir preisen dich fuer diese Gaben; du sorgst fuer uns, weil du uns liebst, O segne auch, was du uns gibst, Amen.

O God, from whom we have received everything, we praise you for these blessings; you care for us, for you do love us, O bless also what you have given, Amen.

Herr, wir gehen zu den Essen, las uns Deiner nich vergessen; segne uns weil Du uns libst, Segne auch was Du uns gibst, Amen.

Lord, as we partake of this meal, let us not forget your presence; bless us because you love us, bless also what you have given, Amen.

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