Dinner on the Grounds [1]

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Dinner on the Grounds. Image
courtesy of Pitt County Historical

by O. C. Stonestreet III, 2006Society.   [2]

See Also: Church Homecomings [3]; Religion - Part 1: Introduction [4]

Dinner on the grounds, a quintessential North Carolina and southern ritual, is a covered-dish meal following the last Sunday morning worship service of many Christian [4] congregations. "Grounds" refers to the church grounds. These events are often held in honor of a church member, to greet or bid farewell to a preacher, as a homecoming, or in connection with a family reunion.

In earlier times, the majority of food was prepared prior to the Sabbath and taken to the church before the morning worship service. In most cases, it was consumed between the morning and afternoon services. This arrangement was not only a pleasant way to socialize with fellow church members but a necessity: the condition of the roads and the common means of transportation generally left inadequate time for most members of the congregation to dine at home between services. Thus, "dinner on the grounds" was a logical as well as edifying experience for countless North Carolina churchgoers.

Image Credit:

Dinner on the Grounds. Image courtesy of Pitt County Historical Society. Available from http://www.pittcountyhistoricalsociety.com/rbchurch.html [2] (accessed June 12, 2012).

Subjects:
Food and drink [5]
Religion [6]
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