

BURYING AND RAISING THE ALLELUIA – A FAMILY DISCUSSION

PREPARATION – Print out the Alleluia poster – one per person or one per family, as desired.

INTRO – Ask everyone to share a time when you had to put something away for a while, and later got it back out (an item in your home, Christmas Decorations, specific clothing, a special toy, etc.)

QUESTIONS –

- How did it feel to have the item away for a season, and what were your emotions in getting it back out?
- Have you ever buried something before? What happened to the thing you buried?

DISCUSSION –

Burying the Alleluia: Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, an important and meaningful season of our faith family's life together. Lent is the forty days leading up to Easter Sunday. During Lent. An ancient way we show joy and gratitude to God as a church is to sing or say, "Alleluia." Explain how the word "Alleluia" means "Praise the Lord!" Lent is a time we often feel more quiet and serious—we are thinking about the ways we haven't loved God well and our need for God's grace. And so for this season, we do not say or sing "Alleluia." It's like we have "buried" and put away the "Alleluia" for the next forty days of Lent.

Raising the Alleluia: When Easter arrives this Sunday, we will have the opportunity to "unbury" or "raise" the Alleluia, bringing it back to new life to celebrate Jesus' rising and new life. You might talk about how Easter and this time of "stay at home" due to the virus are similar because we will move from a time of sadness to a time of joy and celebration. We will celebrate Easter this Sunday and soon we will celebrate the end of the "stay at home" period that we are now experiencing.

Share how Jesus' first followers were utterly shocked when Jesus rose to life. Unlike us, they were living the story in real-time and didn't know this would happen—it was the surprise of their lives! Remember, the meaning of Alleluia ("Praise the Lord"), and the reason we buried it for the season of Lent (to focus on our need for God's forgiveness, grace, and help).

Bring out the Alleluia poster. Decide how you want to use it as a family, e.g. everyone make their own and then decorate a window or door that your neighbors can see or make one poster as a family.

CLOSING PRAYER: Dear God, Alleluia! We praise and thank you for being the Good Giver of new life! With you, the last word is always life, joy, and hope! We give you our hearts of praise, and we love you! Amen.



