

BURYING THE ALLELUIA

INTRO

Share a time when you had to put something away for a while, and later got it back out (an item in your home, specific clothing, a special toy, etc.) How did it feel to have the item away for a season, and what were your emotions in getting it back out?

QUESTIONS

- Did you help put your Christmas decorations away a few months ago? What are some things we put away for a while, then bring back when it's the right time?
- I wonder how having a season for something can make us appreciate it more, rather than having that thing all the time. How could it feel more special or important?
- Have you ever buried something before? What happened to the thing you buried?

WRAP-UP

Tell the children this week marks the beginning of Lent, an important and meaningful season of our faith family's life together. Explain how Lent is the forty days leading up to Easter Sunday. During Lent, we focus on ways we fall short of following Jesus and our need to commit our hearts and lives to God regularly. Share with the children how an ancient way we continue to show joy and gratitude to God as a church is to sing or say, "Alleluia." Explain how the word "Alleluia" means "Praise the Lord!" Remind the children that Lent, though, 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 will not say or sing "Alleluia." Invite the children to hold their "Alleluia" illustrations. Tell the children you will "bury" and put away the "Alleluia" illustration(s) for the next forty days of Lent as a tangible reminder we need to take our sin seriously, as well as Jesus' suffering. When we sin, we break relationship and connection. Share with the children how, when Easter comes, they will have the opportunity to "unbury" or "raise" the Alleluia, bringing it back to new life as the congregation celebrates Jesus' rising and new life. The time for joy and celebration will come, and we will wait with anticipation as a faith family! As a group or with a couple of volunteer children, "bury" the Alleluia together.

PRAYER

Dear God, we do not always follow and love you like we want to. Thank you for your love and for this season of Lent, where we can experience your grace. Help us wait with eagerness for the time we will raise our Alleluias and celebrate your victory and new life! **Amen.**