



# FAITH AT HOME

Aldersgate Church ~ St. Louis Park, MN

**Week of March 6, 2022: John 11:1-44**

## Craft Corner

### **Baking Cookies (any age)**

Make your favorite cookies and talk about how the batter is gooey and sticky in the bowl. Then it goes in the oven. When it comes out it looks like something else. Use this as an example to talk to kids about how sometimes we have to go through a hard season.

**Activity: Mummy** (age: adults to determine)

*You will need: roll(s) of toilet paper, tape*

Decide who would like to be the mummy, or take turns, and simply wrap the person in toilet paper. This is an opportunity to research and discuss different ways bodies are prepared after death.

**Prayer:** Dear God, we know you care about us and our friends and family. You are sad when we are sad. Help us to remember that you care about us. Amen.

## The Story: Clare's Grandpa

Clare's grandpa was looking forward to his birthday. He was going to be ninety years old. There was going to be a cake with ninety candles. It was going to be a big cake. Clare enjoyed spending time with her grandpa, he loved his garden and his greenhouse and sometimes he told her stories about when he was a little boy. Clare's grandma was nearly as old as their grandpa. She was 89. Next year she would have a cake with ninety candles too.

One day Clare's mom had a phone call. Grandpa was in hospital. Clare's mom left Clare with her dad and went to the hospital to see grandpa. When Clare's mom came home she looked sad. She told Clare that the doctors had said that grandpa was very sick. He had something called pneumonia.

Two days later her mom took Clare to the hospital to see grandpa. Clare's grandma was there too. Grandpa looked tired but he smiled at Clare and gave her a kiss. That night grandpa died. Grandma and one of the nurses were with him.

The next day all the family met to talk about grandpa. The minister came around too. There was going to be a service in the church to say goodbye to grandpa. It was called a funeral. Everyone told the minister stories about grandpa. Clare talked about the stories grandpa used to tell her, and she told the minister that grandpa had taught her how to play checkers, but she had never beaten him.

Two of Clare's friends came around to the house to be with her – she was glad. She told them about the funeral and she asked her mom if they could come too, as they

## Memory Verse

**John 11:25 & 26:** *Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die..."*

**Death and Sadness** (adjust for age): Talk with children about the Retelling for Young People story and about how the people were feeling. Talk about the different feelings the people in the story had at different times. Discuss what helped Clare and her family to feel a little better (having friend and family around and sharing stories of her grandpa). You can then talk about how they would feel/felt when a loved one or a pet died. Again, whatever is appropriate for your child. For younger children, pictures of emotions/emojis might be helpful.

**Resources:** There are, of course, many books that address talking with children about the physiology of death and dying. Funeral homes may also have resources for families. The challenging aspect is explaining death in terms of your personal theology.

had loved grandpa as well. Lots of people came to the church for the funeral. There were grandpa's friends, and people who had worked with him, and people from the bowling club, and grandpa and grandma's neighbors. And all grandpa's family were there. And Clare's friends were there with their moms and dads.

At the funeral Grandpa's friends and family carried his body in a box, called a coffin, into the church. The minister told them that the funeral was a chance to talk about grandpa's life, to listen to some words from the bible and to talk to God about grandpa, and about how they were feeling. Some people laughed when the minister told one of grandpa's stories. Some people looked sad and cried. They sang one of grandpa's favorite songs. The minister had asked Clare what her grandpa was like, and Clare had said that Grandpa was kind, that he told great stories and that he loved growing potatoes and sunflowers. When the minister was talking about grandpa she told people what Clare had said, and people smiled.

Clare was glad that her friends had been with her at the funeral. It was good to have them there, as well as her family. She knew that they would be able to talk with her about grandpa when she wanted to remember him. It's good to have friends.

It is healthy and normal to speak about death and what happens when someone (or a pet) dies with children and young people. It should not be a mystery. Be concrete and literal when discussing/answering questions, especially with younger children. Think back to your own childhood and your experience with death: how was it explained (or not). What did you think happened when a person died? Did anything make you afraid?

If it is appropriate for your child, you might want to discuss funerals that you or they have attended. Talk about the sadness and how we can pray to God because God understands. God and Jesus know what it's like to be sad.