

# 2021 Fall Spiritual Renewal

## Redeemer Lutheran Church

### The Church Lives

#### Week 5

#### **The Best Message Ever**

Do you remember playing with a Jack-in-the-Box as a child? You would turn a crank on the side of this small metal toy box (usually the tune *Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush*, which kept time with the cranking movement). As the song neared the end, it would be common to slow down the cranking and begin to wince. You knew what was coming. You had done this hundreds of times before. But there was still a sense of odd anticipation.

All of a sudden, with a slight rotation of the crank, the top of the box would fly open, and a spring loaded head would pop up. Every time Jack popped out of the box, you'd be startled. But then you would press Jack's head back down into the box, click the lid shut, and start cranking all over again.

Even though Jesus had foretold His resurrection ... at least three times! ... the disciples were still stunned into amazement and disbelief when He rose from the tomb. Jesus assured them that death couldn't hold him down. But when Jesus emerged from the tomb, the disciples were as shocked as a child with a Jack-in-the-Box!

#### **Talk About It**

Tell about a time you knew something was going to happen, but were still surprised and amazed when it actually did.

#### **Discussion**

Tell about a person you were close to passing away. How is that person's life still impacting yours?

Read John 20:10-18. What did Jesus teach Mary about Himself? Tell about a moment when your eyes were opened with greater clarity and you came to know Jesus in a deeper way than you did before.

Read Luke 24:13-49. How does understanding the Old Testament help us understand the New Testament?

Read John 20:24-29. When Jesus revealed Himself to Thomas, how did He seek to meet Thomas where he was in his faith and help him move to a stronger faith? How has God done something similar in your life?

Read John 21:1-19. Once Peter realized Jesus was on shore, how did he respond? What did Jesus do to restore Peter and set him back on course to live a life of service?

At the end of Jesus' conversation with Peter, He said the same words that He said when Peter was first called to be a disciple, "Follow Me!" We are all called to follow Jesus. What is one way you are seeking to live out your calling to be a disciple?

Read Matthew 28:16-20. What does Jesus call His people to do? What is God's part of this mission and what is our part of the mission?

Where in your life are you feeling the sting of pain and grief brought about by sin but also experiencing the joy which can only come from Jesus' resurrection? How does focusing on the promises of God bring hope and strength in life's tough times?

The power of the Gospel and living as a disciple brings about a desire to share the message with the people in those place we live, work, and play. Who is one person you are praying for to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior? How are you reaching out to that person? How can your group members encourage you in Gospel witness and support you in prayer?

### **Reflection**

Though by nature filled with grief, funerals for Christians are also filled with hope and assurance in the resurrection. How can God use you as an instrument of resurrection joy when you attend the funerals of friends and/or family?