

Welcome Home!

By Christy Huffman

An activity to reunite and share as a family when a service member returns home from a deployment.

For

Young Family

Season

Fall

Needed

Bands/bracelets made before deployment (see Deployment Connection activity), additional length of Parachute (550) cord, candle, matches/lighter, Bible



Important Information

- Remember, when a loved one returns home from a deployment there will be a period of adjustment for each family member. Depending on the deployment and experiences, your family member may have had fellow comrades killed or injured. The service member may not want to share too many of her/his experiences at the beginning.
- Share with young children that we are happy and excited for this family member to be home. This family member may be sensitive to flashing lights, crowds, loud noises, and such. This awareness will help the transition.
- This is an opportunity for the immediate family to gather and give thanks for their family being together again, knowing that there will still be times of adjustment as everyone settles back into a new routine.

Activity Plan

1. Light one candle as the family gathers. This candle may represent those who died during the deployment and God's continued presence.
2. Read one or more of the following Bible passages from your Bible (or see next page):
 - Jeremiah 29:11-12
 - John 14:2
 - John 14:27
 - John 15:13
3. Each family member takes turns re-stranding the beads from her/his band onto one family cord. Small children may need assistance.
4. Hang the band in the home for all to see.
5. Say this prayer or a similar prayer with each person sharing one thing they give thanks to God for with the return of their family member.

We give you thanks gracious God for the return of _____. Hear our prayers of thanks: (each member shares her/his petition). Help us to remember those who served alongside _____ and their families. Give us strength and patience as our family learns to live together again. All of this we ask in your name. Amen.

Welcome Home Bible Passages

Jeremiah 29:11-12

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you.

John 14:2

In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 15:13

Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

