



## Bible Month Worship Resource: WEEK 1

Please use alongside the *30 days with Ruth* magazine which is divided into 4 weeks of Bible notes, preaching ideas, small-group study and all-age activities.

This short act of worship includes prayers, hymns/songs, Bible readings. Prepared by Blair Kirkby.



This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use church premises. It is planned to enable you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

### Opening Prayer

God of the magnificent journey on which I find myself, be with me now as I cast my eye inwards and outwards in search of you, for I am sure that I will find you in both of those places. Be with me as I think about the world of the biblical people and the world of my own life, for I know that you abide in each. Be with me as I think about how you were the God of Ruth and her journey three millennia in the past, and the God of mine here and now. For I ask it in Jesus' name, Amen.

### Hymn: Singing the Faith 458

#### Away with our fears

You can hear the tune at

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/away-with-our-fears-stf-458/>

Away with our fears!  
The glad morning appears  
when an heir of salvation was born!  
From Jehovah I came,  
for his glory I am,

and to him I with singing return.

I sing of your grace,  
from my earliest days  
ever near to allure and defend;  
hitherto you have been  
my preserver from sin,  
and I trust you will save to the end.

O the infinite cares,  
and temptations, and snares  
your hand has conducted me through!  
O the blessings bestowed  
by a bountiful God,  
and the mercies eternally new!

What a mercy is this,  
what a heaven of bliss,  
how unspeakably happy am I;  
gathered into the fold,  
with your people enrolled,  
with your people to live and to die.

All honour and praise  
to the Father of grace,  
to the Spirit, and Son, I return;  
the business pursue

he has made me to do,  
and rejoice that I ever was born.

In a rapture of joy  
my life I employ  
the God of my life to proclaim;  
'tis worth living for, this,  
to administer bliss  
and salvation in Jesus's name.

My remnant of days  
I spend in his praise,  
who died the whole world to redeem;  
be they many or few,  
my days are his due,  
and they all are devoted to him.

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

### **Prayer**

Dear God of time, in whom we live and move and have our being, hear my prayer. Dear God of space, in whose wondrous and dangerous world we stay indoors in this time of lockdown, help us to see back into the world of the Bible and forward into the world of tomorrow so that we might be faithful to you. Amen.

### **Today's reading from the book of Ruth 1:1-18**

On May 28<sup>th</sup> 1983, whoever would have guessed it, I got married to an English girl at St Andrew's Anglican in Enfield. I stood there beside her, and in front of our two families - mine from Western Canada, hers from England - and happily said, "I do." I have never regretted it, and I would do it again tomorrow, but there were huge challenges to face and considerable differences to overcome. I was a rural Canadian and Ann was a Cambridge graduate. I said "tomata" and she said "tomato." I said "potata," and she said "potato." Some of our differences were small and harmless, while others were large and painful. Add to this that we didn't have any money or any real plan as to how we were going to face the future. However,

despite all of that we were in love, committed, and prepared to let go of what had been, for the sake of what could be together under God's grace. So, when my very Canadian mother stepped up to that English lectern and read the following words, they seemed just right.

*"Entreat me not to leave you or to turn back from following you!"*

*Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge;*

*your people shall be my people, and your God my God.*

*<sup>17</sup> Where you die, I will die, and there will I be buried.*

*May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!"*

Ruth 1:16-17

Of course, when those words were first spoken by Ruth to her mother-in-law, Naomi, some three thousand years ago, they had nothing to do with a wedding, and the world in which they were spoken was a seemingly strange one to us. And yet, I am often amazed at how much, in spite of the differences, the biblical world resonates with our world, and how appropriate a biblical word can be for our time even though it originated in a very different time.

When these two recently widowed women started their journey from one land to another, from the past to the future, they were giving up an old world for the sake of a new one, and that was not going to be easy. Israel's economy, having suffered its own kind of lockdown, was just beginning to start up again after a famine. "The Lord" says verse 6, "had given his people food," and that was the sign that normal life was beginning to be "phased back in." So, there was reason to hope, but they had considerable challenges to face and arguably the new normal, whenever that arrived, would be a very different one to the one that they had known in the past. They had no real source of security other than one another and God. Sometimes that is the way

it is for young married couples too.  
Sometimes that is the way it is for all of us.

Take a time to sit quietly.

### **A time of prayer**

Gracious God, be with me on my journey from the past into the future. Be with all people everywhere as we work our way towards a “new normal.” Be with those who suffer most and have no faith to help them. Come to them in Jesus we pray and give them salvation. Amen.

### **The Lord’s Prayer**

Our Father ...

### **Hymn: Listen to On Eagles Wings by Michael and Ellen Cover**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6tvLVmwQug>

### **A prayer of blessing**

Bless me O God, but not from six feet away, not from a distance that the experts would think is safe. Come close, I pray, as only you can and bless me right where I am in this season. Bless me so that I might be a blessing to others and to you too. For I ask it in the name of Christ the King, before whom every demon quakes. Amen.

### **Ruth 1:1-18**

Elimelech’s Family Goes to Moab  
In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there for about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so

that the woman was left without her two sons or her husband.

### **Naomi and Her Moabite Daughters-in-Law**

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had had consideration for his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go back each of you to your mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.’ Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, ‘No, we will return with you to your people.’ But Naomi said, ‘Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me.’ Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, ‘See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.’ But Ruth said,

‘Do not press me to leave you  
or to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;

where you lodge, I will lodge;

your people shall be my people,

and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die—

there will I be buried.

May the LORD do thus and so to me,

and more as well,

if even death parts me from you!

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.



## Bible Month Worship Resource: WEEK 2

Please use alongside the *30 days with Ruth* magazine which is divided into 4 weeks of Bible notes, preaching ideas, small-group study and all-age activities.

This short act of worship includes prayers, hymns/songs, Bible readings. Prepared by Phil Challis.



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### Opening Prayer

Praise the Lord, all you nations!  
Extol him, all you peoples!

For great is his steadfast love towards us,  
and the faithfulness of the Lord endures  
forever. Praise the Lord!

(Psalm 117 NRSV)

### Hymn: Singing the Faith 88 Praise to the Lord

You can hear the tune at  
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/praise-to-the-lord-the-almighty-the-king-of-creation-stf-88/>

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,  
the King of creation!  
O my soul, praise him,  
for he is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear,  
brothers and sisters, draw near,  
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord,  
who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;  
surely his goodness and mercy here daily  
attend thee:

ponder anew what the Almighty can do,  
who with his love doth befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord,  
who doth nourish thy life and restore thee,  
fitting thee well for the tasks that are ever  
before thee,  
then to thy need he like a mother doth speed,  
spreading the wings of grace o'er thee.

Praise to the Lord,  
who, when darkness of sin is abounding,  
who, when the godless do triumph,  
all virtue confounding,  
sheddeth his light,  
chaseth the horrors of night,  
saints with his mercy surrounding.

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore  
him!

All that hath life and breath,  
come now with praises before him!  
Let the amen  
sound from his people again:  
gladly for aye we adore him.

Joachim Neander (1650–1680)  
translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827–1878) and  
Rupert E. Davies (1909–1994)

### Let us pray together

O God our Father,  
we come to thank you  
for all the bright things of life.  
Help us to see them,  
to count them and to remember them,  
that our lives may flow in ceaseless praise;  
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

J.H. Jowett (1846-1923 altd)

Holy God,  
we who have sinned come to you.  
Pure God,  
we who have sullied your image in us  
come to you to make confession.  
We are sorry:  
sorry that we have turned away  
from your goodness,  
sorry that we have cut you down to  
size as if we could manage you,  
sorry that we have done wrong things,  
sorry that we have withheld our help  
when you needed it.  
Because you love us, Lord  
assure us of your forgiveness.  
Because you are powerful, Lord,  
restore us.  
Because you have come to us in Jesus,  
call us again to follow him  
and give us your gracious Spirit  
that we may respond, today and every day.  
Amen.

**Today's reading from the Old Testament**  
Ruth 1:22-2:23

**Today's Gospel Reading:** Matthew 9:35-38

### Time to reflect

As Bible month continues, we re-join the story of Ruth. There is much that speaks to our contemporary society. I was struck by the status of women assumed in our passage. "To whom does this young woman belong?" (v5) and the risk of being molested at work (v9 & 22). As we hear the news, we know that some women still suffer such behaviour. The "me too" movement has shown just how prevalent abusive behaviour is.

And we need to recall that Ruth is a foreign woman, a migrant worker. She is also someone who acts with respect and works hard (v6-7).

There is hope here too.

Notice how Boaz behaves to protect Ruth (v8,9; 14-16).

How Ruth works to provide for vulnerable and depressed Naomi (who has taken the name "Bitter") (v17-18; Ch1:20).

How the faithfulness of Boaz and Ruth restore Naomi's trust in God (v20).

What might this be calling you to do this week to brighten someone's day?

What compassion might Jesus be showing to you or through you? (Matt 9:36)

"You pray for the hungry, and then you feed them. This is how prayer works" said Pope Francis. How are you called to "pray" this week?

Take a time to sit quietly

### A time of prayer

We bring to God the world he shares with us; to remember before God people and situations that trouble us.

We pray with people denied human rights. Especially (given our reading) we pray with women denied dignity or subjected to abuse. May your Spirit of justice enable and empower people to stand with those who cry for justice.

We pray for refugees, for those who seek asylum, for those who we depend on who are

migrant workers in our country. May they find their “Boaz characters” who show welcome, care and concern.

We remember before God those who are hungry. We think today of people forced by the current situation to use food banks. May all with the chance to provide help be moved to do so.

And we pray to God for those like Naomi, who have lost hope, whose lives have become bitter. May we, as disciples of the good shepherd, find ways to channel your grace and hope.

*Take a few moments to bring to God the people and places that are on your mind this morning...*

*Then close our time of prayer by saying:  
The Lord hears our prayer. Thanks be to God.*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father ...*

### **Hymn: Listen to**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMBDWG9tseU>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind.

### **A prayer of blessing**

May God give us the faithfulness of Ruth,  
the practical care of Boaz  
and the compassion of our Lord Jesus,  
and may we all know the blessing of God,  
star-maker, pain-bearer and life-giver, today  
and always. Amen.

Original Materials by Phil Challis  
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### **Ruth 1:22-2:23**

22 So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

2 Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband's side, a prominent rich man, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. <sup>2</sup>And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, 'Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone in whose sight I may find favour.' She said to her, 'Go, my daughter.' <sup>3</sup>So she went. She came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. As it happened, she came to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. <sup>4</sup>Just then Boaz came from Bethlehem. He said to the reapers, 'The LORD be with you.' They answered, 'The LORD bless you.' <sup>5</sup>Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, 'To whom does this young woman belong?' <sup>6</sup>The servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, 'She is the Moabite who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab.' <sup>7</sup>She said, "Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers." So she came, and she has been on her feet from early this morning until now, without resting even for a moment.'

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, 'Now listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. <sup>9</sup>Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped, and follow behind them. I have ordered the young men not to bother you. If you get thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.' <sup>10</sup>Then she fell prostrate, with her face to the ground, and said to him, 'Why have I found favour in your sight, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?' <sup>11</sup>But Boaz answered her, 'All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. <sup>12</sup>May the LORD reward you for your deeds, and may you have a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!' <sup>13</sup>Then she said, 'May I continue to find favour in your sight, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, even though I am not one of your servants.'

14 At mealtime Boaz said to her, 'Come here, and eat some of this bread, and dip your morsel in the sour wine.' So she sat beside the reapers, and he heaped up for her some parched grain. She ate until she was satisfied, and she had some

left over. <sup>15</sup>When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, 'Let her glean even among the standing sheaves, and do not reproach her. <sup>16</sup>You must also pull out some handfuls for her from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her.'

<sup>17</sup> So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. <sup>18</sup>She picked it up and came into the town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave her what was left over after she herself had been satisfied. <sup>19</sup>Her mother-in-law said to her, 'Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.' So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, 'The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.' <sup>20</sup>Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, 'Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!' Naomi also said to her, 'The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin.' <sup>21</sup>Then Ruth the Moabite said, 'He even said to me, "Stay close by my servants, until they have finished all my harvest." ' <sup>22</sup>Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, 'It is better, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, otherwise you might be bothered in another field.' <sup>23</sup>So she stayed close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests; and she lived with her mother-in-law.

### **Matthew 9:35-38**

<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. <sup>36</sup>When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup>Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; <sup>38</sup>therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.'





## Bible Month Worship Resource: WEEK 3

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This short act of worship includes prayers, hymns/songs, Bible readings. Prepared by Miriam Moul.



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### Opening Prayer

*You may like to be still, light a candle, listen to a calming piece of music as we gather in worship.*

*'The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.'*  
(Lamentations 3:22-23)

Holy God, as we come to worship you, help us to remember that, though apart, we belong to your church, your people, your world, we are not alone. Draw us together by your Spirit as we worship. Amen.

### Hymn: Christ whose glory fills the skies (StF 134)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4FpmaYlIuuA>

Christ, whose glory fills the skies,  
Christ, the true, the only Light,  
Sun of Righteousness, arise,  
triumph o'er the shades of night;  
Day-spring from on high, be near;  
Day-star, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn  
Unaccompanied by thee;  
joyless is the day's return,  
till thy mercy's beams I see,  
till they inward light impart,  
glad my eyes, and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine;  
pierce the gloom of sin and grief;  
fill me, radiance divine;  
scatter all my unbelief;  
more and more thyself display,  
shining to the perfect day.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

### Let us pray together

Holy God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer in life and love and hope. In the creative cover of darkness, you formed your creation until the time when your light burst forth, illuminating the beauty, vibrancy and wonder of all that you have made. May we, your beloved people, encounter you in the spectacular and in the mundane. Ever-creating God, meet afresh with us as we come to worship.



God of transformation, in love you sent your Son to live among your people, to enter the frailty of human flesh. Befriending the 'wrong' sort of people, Jesus, powerfully proclaimed your message. Jesus demonstrated the depth and breadth of your great love, love too strong to be bound and held by death, love that burst forth from a tomb with the rising sun.

Holy Spirit of God, love and laughter, creativity, dance and song, you call us continually into relationship with you and one another. In this time of challenge, of fear and uncertainty, encourage us to look for signs of you at work all around us.

Holy God, we come also to ask your forgiveness... (time of quiet prayer).

Our liberating God of love, hope and peace calls us afresh to serve in the work of the kingdom, forgives us in Christ, renews, inspires and enables us through the Holy Spirit. We are forgiven people. Amen.

### **Today's reading from the Old Testament** Ruth 3

#### **Time to Reflect**

At the beginning of Chapter 3, Naomi wishes to seek out some security for Ruth's future life, 'so that it may be well with you.' What might seeking security look like for us in this season? Where is our security?

Throughout the text, Ruth is consistently identified as 'other', an outsider, Ruth the Moabite. She is asked 'who are you?' by Boaz. In these challenging days this can be an insightful question for us to ponder – who am I? How do I define my identity? Do we frame our identity by where we come from, who our family are, our work, our roles in life, our faith? 'O Lord, you have searched me and known me', writes the Psalmist in Psalm 139. Perhaps we might reflect on the question: who am I in the eyes of our loving and faithful God?

Another feature of this multi-layered and nuanced text is the call to resist. Ruth faces discrimination and she is required to seek security as a widow. Perhaps this text calls us as people of faith to stand boldly in courage and to continue to resist dominance, discrimination and the labelling of any as 'other'. How might we, in this time of global pandemic, continue to stand up for inclusion, justice and peace for all?

Take a time to sit quietly.

#### **A time of prayer**

God of hope, embracing us, surprising us, loving us, be near.

Creative God, as we adapt to a new way of being; distracting and busying ourselves; may we also seek to be present to you and each other in this season of lockdown. Help us to know the presence of the risen one in our being and in our doing.

God of creation, as we bear witness to the springing up of Spring in the beauty of your creation, may we rejoice in cleaner air, and wonder at the blossoming of life amidst such horror, longing for a new way of hope for our world.

Living God, we can feel claustrophobic, crowded or desperately lonely, our horizons of hope diminished. Lead us to restorative places, our still waters, remind us that we are not alone, call us to solidarity, to love our neighbours, to reach out. Draw us close by your hope-filled Spirit.

God of all comfort, when we are fearful, anxious or overwhelmed, may we hear you whisper our names lovingly, 'beloved child, do not be afraid.'

Tender God, when we are overwhelmed by grief and despair, you weep with us, embracing those who are sick, holding the dying when we cannot, present in a hand held, a smile, a word of comfort, love personified in doctor, nurse or care worker,

embrace us in our grief. We pray for all those that are ill at this time, for those who care for them and for those who have lost loved ones...

God in the darkness, hold us when everything feels too much, when all we can do is get out of bed, when nothing gets done, when lockdown seems about competitive 'doing' and we haven't the energy to be productive. Help us to listen to ourselves, to love ourselves as you love us, to remember that you do not measure our worth by our activity, you simply love and love beyond all measure. Hold us in our struggles.

Resurrecting God, when we long for a return to how things used to be, open our eyes to the new thing that you are doing. By your Spirit labouring within us, may we discern new opportunities, yet also rest in the stillness. God of hope undiminished and new horizons, in this season you hold us through pain, anxiety and doubt, through loss and longing, through unexpected and unbridled joy. Keep us enfolded in your loving embrace.

God of hope, embracing us, surprising us, loving us, be near. Amen.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*Our Father ...*

### **Hymn: Listen to 'O God you search me and you know me' (StF 728)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5q0QCl6ONNo>

O God, you search me and you know me.  
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.  
When I walk or lie down you are before me:  
ever the maker and keeper of my days.

You know my resting and my rising.  
You discern my purpose from afar,  
and with love everlasting you besiege me:  
in every moment of life or death, you are.

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,  
you have known its meaning through and through.

You are with me beyond my understanding:  
God of my present, my past and future, too.

Although your Spirit is upon me,  
still I search for shelter from your light.  
There is nowhere on earth I can escape you:  
even the darkness is radiant in your sight.

For you created me and shaped me,  
gave me life within my mother's womb.  
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you:  
safe in your hands, all creation is made new.

Bernadette Farrell (b. 1957)  
based on psalm 139

### **A prayer of blessing**

May the Lord bless you and keep you; the  
Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be  
gracious to you; the Lord lift up his  
countenance upon you and give you peace.  
(Numbers 6:24-26)

Original Materials by Rev Miriam Moul  
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### **Ruth 3**

Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, 'My daughter, I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you. Now here is our kinsman Boaz, with whose young women you have been working. See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing-floor. Now wash and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing-floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do.' She said to her, 'All that you tell me I will do.'

So she went down to the threshing-floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she

came quietly and uncovered his feet, and lay down. At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman! He said, 'Who are you?' And she answered, 'I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin.' He said, 'May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter; this last instance of your loyalty is better than the first; you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not be afraid; I will do for you all that you ask, for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. But now, though it is true that I am a near kinsman, there is another kinsman more closely related than I. Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will act as next-of-kin for you, good; let him do so. If he is not willing to act as next-of-kin for you, then, as the Lord lives, I will act as next-of-kin for you. Lie down until the morning.'

So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before one person could recognize another; for he said, 'It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing-floor.' Then he said, 'Bring the cloak you are wearing and hold it out.' So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley, and put it on her back; then he went into the city. She came to her mother-in-law, who said, 'How did things go with you, my daughter?' Then she told her all that the man had done for her, saying, 'He gave me these six measures of barley, for he said, "Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed." She replied, 'Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.'



## Bible Month Worship Resource: WEEK 4

Please use alongside the *30 days with Ruth* magazine which is divided into 4 weeks of Bible notes, preaching ideas, small-group study and all-age activities.

This short act of worship includes prayers, hymns/songs, Bible readings. Prepared by Kate Strange.



This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use church premises. It is planned to enable you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

### Opening Prayer

Gracious God, the psalmist writes, "I will sing of the Lord's great love for ever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations". Let us walk in the light of your love, let us stand firm upon your word. We know that blessed are those who rejoice in your name, let us rejoice this day for it is the day that you have made! We ask for strength to glorify your name, all honour and praise to you be given this day, now and forever! Amen

### Hymn: Rejoice the Lord is King StF 335

Sing / read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2N0iVysrykU>

**Rejoice, the Lord is King!  
Your Lord and King adore;  
mortals, give thanks, and sing,  
and triumph evermore:**

**Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
rejoice! Again I say: rejoice!**

**Jesus the Saviour reigns,  
the God of truth and love;  
when he had purged our stains,  
he took his seat above:**

**His kingdom cannot fail,  
he rules both earth and heaven;  
the keys of death and hell  
are to our Jesus given:**

**Rejoice in glorious hope;  
Jesus the Judge shall come,  
and take his servants up  
to their eternal home:  
We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;  
God's trumpet-call shall sound: rejoice!**

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

### Let us pray together

We come to you creator God. God of the moon and stars, the wind, rain and the sunshine.

We call to you in times of great joy with thanksgiving and adoration for you are a mighty God.

Your faithfulness endures forever.  
We celebrate your righteousness.  
We proclaim you as king.

Draw us closer to you, we pray. In our times of doubt, sorrow, or pain and reveal yourself to us; let us not turn from you but draw closer to you.

Forgive us when we fail, hold us when we fall, for we know you are our mighty God who heals and forgives all who turn in repentance to you. Hear our prayer this day.

We ask all this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
Amen

### **Today's Readings**

Psalm 89 1-4, 15-18

Ruth 4:13-16

### **Time to Reflect**

Ruth was a wise and capable woman who put the needs of her family before herself and was rewarded by the love of her mother-in-law Naomi. Together they made a new life for themselves. The pathway was not always easy, but faith in God, and a focus on a loving relationship, sustained them until a fruitful end. Ruth is accepted by the community, Naomi's needs are met, hope is restored, a daughter secured and she received another son Obed who is seen as a sign of restoration for all that has been lost.

For many of us going through these strange times, we too can feel lost, confused, some feel displaced that the land we thought was ours now feels foreign to us perhaps even unsafe for some. The story of Ruth is a reminder that whatever difficult times we may face, God – through his amazing, transforming grace (demonstrated in the sacrificial giving of Jesus on the cross) – brings about something new. It may not be in the

familiar land which we started off in, it may look and feel very different, but it is still our home and God empowered by the Holy Spirit will walk the land with us – that is his Amazing, transforming Grace.

### **Grace – Amazing, transforming Grace.**

Spend a moment listening to this song on **Grace by Laura Story**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51LGsPMKeAE&list=PL-Setdg6GIKQCY6j7qNLX3zafx2rSclr8&index=2>

Take time to sit quietly.

### **A time of prayer**

Lord we pray for all the world including the places where the media cannot tell the stories yet where we know there is suffering... Lord in your mercy (hear our prayer).

We pray for our country for the leaders in all places and situations. Let them listen with a servant heart, give them wisdom and guidance. Lord in your mercy... (hear our prayer).

We pray for the Methodist Church, for those who were to be ordained at the Methodist Conference this year. As they are Received into Full Connexion may they still feel 'worthy' may they know the love of the church family in these strange times. We pray for all those involved in the Methodist Conference. Let them seek your will, for your kingdom. Lord in your mercy (hear our prayer).

Lord we pray for our communities and for those we know and love; for those we now call frontliners, for those risking their lives for others. We pray for those who are afraid, lonely, anxious, tired, weary, for those ill, or those who mourn. Lord in your mercy (hear our prayer).

In a moment of quiet, we pray for ourselves.

## The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father ...*

**Hymn: Listen to** Lord I come to you StF 471  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL1POv2eY04>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind.

**Lord, I come to you,  
let my heart be changed, renewed,  
flowing from the grace  
that I found in you.  
And Lord, I've come to know  
the weaknesses I see in me  
will be stripped away  
by the power of your love.**

**Hold me close,  
let your love surround me;  
bring me near, draw me to your side.  
And as I wait,  
I'll rise up like the eagle,  
and I will soar with you,  
your Spirit leads me on  
in the power of your love.**

**Lord, unveil my eyes,  
let me see you face to face,  
the knowledge of your love  
as you live in me.  
Lord, renew my mind,  
as your will unfolds in my life  
in living every day  
by the power of your love.**

*Geoff Bullock (b. 1956)*

### A prayer of blessing

May the Lord of all comfort, bring us peace.  
May the Spirit of gentleness bring us wisdom.  
May the God of Grace circle us with love, now  
and forevermore.  
Amen

Original Materials by [Kate Strange](#)  
All hymns reproduced under CCLi 1144191.

## Psalm 89 1-4, 15-18

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD,  
forever;

with my mouth I will make your faithfulness  
known  
through all generations.

<sup>2</sup> I will declare that your love stands firm for  
ever,

that you have established your faithfulness  
in heaven itself.

<sup>3</sup> You said, 'I have made a covenant with my  
chosen one,

I have sworn to David my servant,

<sup>4</sup> "I will establish your line for ever  
and make your throne firm through all  
generations."

<sup>15</sup> Blessed are those who have learned to  
acclaim you,  
who walk in the light of your  
presence, LORD.

<sup>16</sup> They rejoice in your name all day long;  
they celebrate your righteousness.

<sup>17</sup> For you are their glory and strength,  
and by your favour you exalt our horn.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Indeed, our shield<sup>[b]</sup> belongs to the LORD,  
our king to the Holy One of Israel.

### Today's Gospel Reading

Ruth 4:13-16 New International Version - UK  
(NIVUK)

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife.  
When they came together, the LORD made her  
conceive, and she bore a son. Then the  
women said to Naomi, 'Blessed be the LORD,  
who has not left you this day without next-of-  
kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel!  
He shall be to you a restorer of life and a  
nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-  
in-law who loves you, who is more to you  
than seven sons, has borne him.' Then Naomi  
took the child and laid him in her bosom, and  
became his nurse.