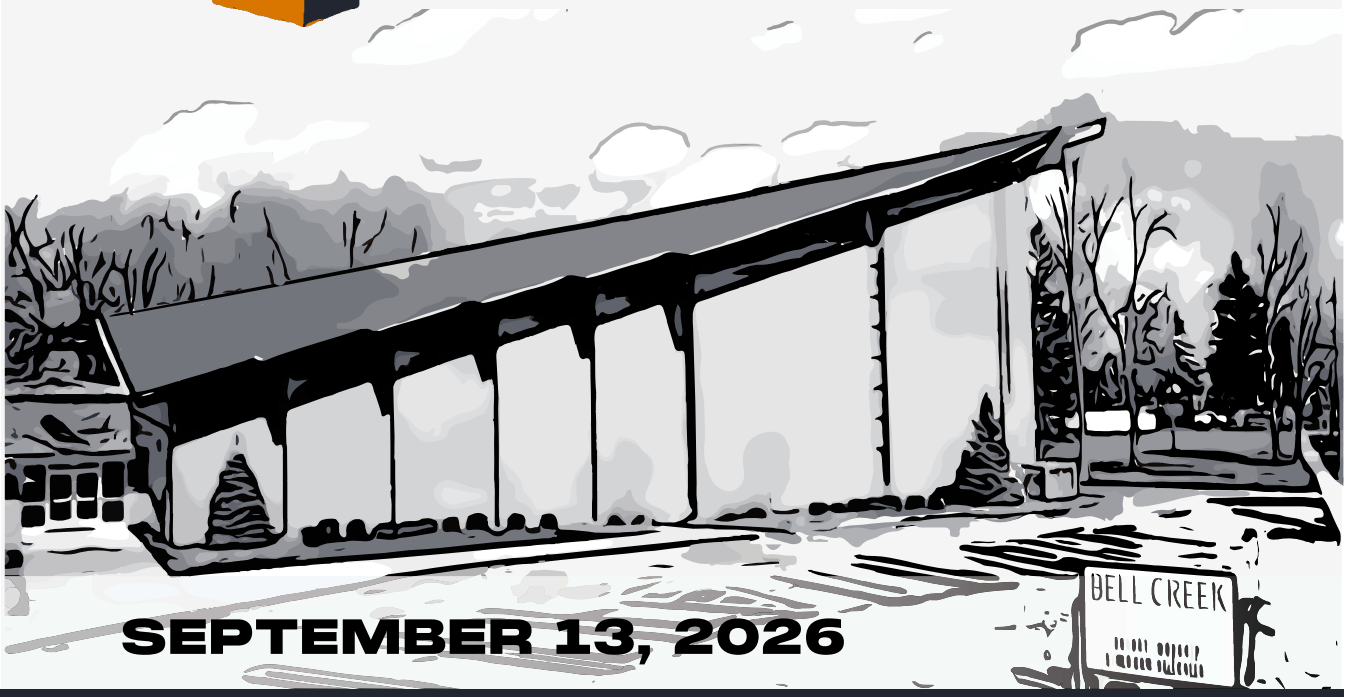
WELCOME TO

BELL CREEK
Community Church



SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

YOUR PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND YOUR GOD MY GOD
RUTH CHAPTER 1

SERMON BY: PASTOR FRED WRIGHT

CURRENT SERMON SERIES:
THE BOOK OF RUTH

YOUR PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND YOUR GOD MY GOD

RUTH CHAPTER 1

Naomi Loses Everything

Ruth Chooses Naomi's People and Naomi's God

God Brings Them Home

FOR NEXT WEEK

Read Ruth chapter 2.

DAILY CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLE READING

SEPTEMBER 13: JOEL
SEPTEMBER 14: DANIEL 1-3
SEPTEMBER 15: DANIEL 4-6
SEPTEMBER 16: DANIEL 7-9
SEPTEMBER 17: DANIEL 10-12
SEPTEMBER 18: EZRA 1-3
SEPTEMBER 19: EZRA 4-6; PSALM 137

UPCOMING AT THE CREEK

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Our Young Adult group is now open for adults 18-30 years old! Our next gathering will be today, after the second service in the Prayer Room. Join us for lunch, fellowship, games, and encouragement in our faith. Other gatherings and outings will be planned for various times throughout the year. Join us as we gather and build friendships with other young people in a fun and laid-back environment!

SERVING SUNDAY

Join us in the gym TODAY after both services to meet the team members of Bell Creek's Ministries and learn how you can get involved!

TESTIMONY NIGHT

All women are invited to hear the testimonies of Hannah Bagnell and Renee Boyle, two of our Bell Creek sisters, on Sunday, September 20 from 4:30-6:00 PM in the Prayer Room. If you have any questions, please contact Mari McRobb (marimc31@yahoo.com). Light refreshments will be served.

DADCO

DadCo is an opportunity for dads of all ages to get together for fellowship and encouragement. DadCo helps men to thrive as fathers, husbands, and men--together in community! Our next meeting will be on Monday, September 21 at Pastor Fred's house for a bonfire at 6:30 PM. The ministry meets the first Monday of each month. If you have any questions, please email info@bellcreek.org.

GAMES, GRUB & GATHERING

Join us on Saturday, September 26, for a fun night playing games, eating good food, and gathering together in fellowship.We will begin at 6:00 PM in the gym, and our featured card game will be Hearts. If you would like to attend, please sign up in the gym after service.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Join us for a weekend away in nature for a time of spiritual refreshment and connection with other women at Camp Living Waters from October 2-4. Please visit www.camplivingwaters.org/womens-retreat for more details and to self regsiter. If you are interested in carpooling or if you have any questions, please reach out to Mari McRobb (marimc31@yahoo.com).

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

PRAYER MEETINGS

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:30 PM
FRIDAYS 12 NOON

PRE—TEEN & MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM
SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP
2ND SERVICE

AWANA

WEDNESDAYS 6:30 - 7:45 PM
SEPTEMBER-MAY

HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

SUNDAYS 11:00 AM

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES AND EVENTS AT BELLCREEK.ORG

OUR MISSION

MATTHEW 22:37–40

He said to him, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest commandment. The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the law and prophets depend on these two commandments.”

MATTHEW 28:19–20

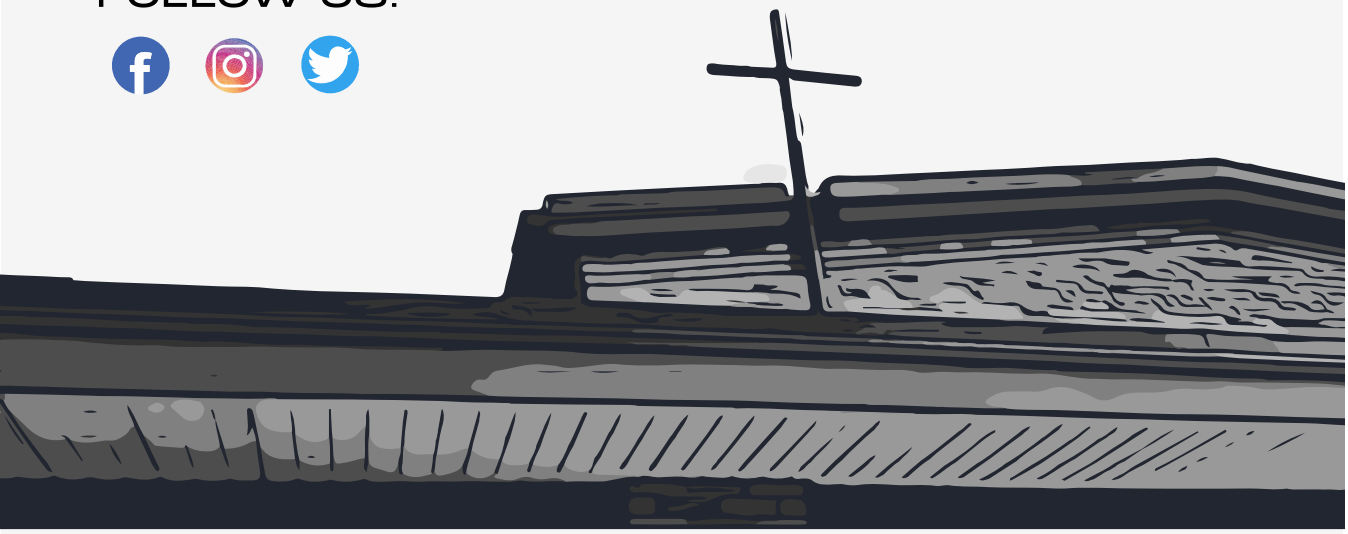
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember that I am with you always to the end of the age.

STAY CONNECTED

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU HERE!

WWW.BELLCREEK.ORG/CONTACT–US

FOLLOW US!



BELL CREEK
Community Church

30000 FIVE MILE RD.
LIVONIA, MI 48154

Sermon Series | Ruth – the God Who Redeems

Sunday, September 13, 2026 | "Your People Shall be my People, and Your God my God"

Ruth Chapter 1

Naomi Loses Everything

Ruth 1:1–2 (ESV) 1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 2 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.

> "Bethlehem" means house of bread, yet famine drives Elimelech and his family away from the promised land into Moab. The irony is deliberate.
>
> It's important to note that Elimelech is not sinning because he left the covenant land during famine and took his family into Moab (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did the same thing). But Moab is a nation with a notorious history of hostility and idolatrous influence upon Israel.
>
> In fact, it says in Deuteronomy 23:3 (ESV) 3 "No Ammonite or Moabite may enter the assembly of the LORD. Even to the tenth generation, none of them may enter the assembly of the LORD forever,

Ruth 1:3–5 (ESV) 3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, 5 and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

> The text is *silent* about why these deaths (ten years apart) occurred. It does not say how they these men died or why they died, or if anyone was at fault. The text just let's the sad events sink in. And isn't this the way with so many sad things in life? We just don't know why they happen.
>
> Then, (as now in many cultures) this is a tragedy for Naomi. In those days,
>
> "legally, the widow was ignored for purposes of inheritance, and if her husband died prematurely, this was considered a judgment for the life he had led, and she became an object of reproach, partly for her inability to prevent his untimely death (Ru 1:20, 21; Is 54:4). The poverty of widows and the cruel treatment extended to them was so widespread that frequent reference is made to it (Jb 24:21; Ps 94:6; Is 1:23; Mal 3:5)." (Hazel W. Perkin, "Widow," in Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 2141.).

Ruth Chooses Naomi's People and Naomi's God

Ruth 1:6–7 (ESV) 6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. 7 So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah.

The famine in Israel has broken. "the LORD had visited his people and given them food." Who provided food for His people? The LORD. They are returning to the promised land.

Ruth 1:8–10 (ESV) 8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people."

Naomi commands the girls to go back to their mothers. *Even in her pain*, Naomi blesses them: "May the LORD: deal kindly with you, grant you rest, grant you husbands and a home." Even in her pain Naomi still acknowledges that there is a God, and He is good, and He is strong, able to bless. Note that the girls were *good* wives, and *good* daughters to their mother-in-law. Look at Naomi's tenderness toward them and their tenderness and loyalty toward her. Who could not be moved by the pain and love for one another evident in this scene?

Ruth 1:11–13 (ESV) 11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me."

See the practical love that Naomi has for them? In her eyes, she is a widow with nothing to offer them. She can't provide for them or protect them. So, she urges them to return to their homes.

Ruth 1:14–15 (ESV) 14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

Ruth 1:16-17 (ESV) 16 But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."

Ruth 1:18 (ESV) And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.

Clinging to Naomi, and with an oath, Ruth gives up her own journey (she will *follow* Naomi*)*, her home (Naomi's home will be her home), her people (Naomi's people will be her people), her gods (Naomi's God will be her God), and her life (She will stay with Naomi until death).

This is an incredible example of love and loyalty that mirrors the commitment of Jesus toward us and our commitment towards Him. And if we know Jesus, if we are trusting in Him for the forgiveness of our sins, our salvation, then we are in a covenant relationship with Him.

Ruth's oath mirrors Jesus' covenant (His commitment) to us: Jesus does not leave or forsake us. He goes with us wherever we go. He is not ashamed to identity Himself with us, His people. He brings us into fellowship with His Father. He enters our suffering and even our death (where you die, I will die). He remains faithful to us to the end, and his love is so strong that not even death can separate us from Him.

Ruth's oath also mirrors our covenant (our commitment) to Jesus: Where He leads, we follow. His people become our people. His home, will be our home. His Father becomes our Father and his God our God. We leave behind other loyalties and cling to Him. We take up our cross and follow him wherever he leads. In life and in death, we belong to Christ and remain faithful to Him.

Let me pause here and ask those of us who know Jesus: Are we *clinging* to Jesus with the kind of loyalty Ruth shows here, following where He leads, loving His people, leaving behind our old loyalties our old beliefs, and trusting that you belong to Him in life and in death?

God Brings Them Home

Ruth 1:19–20 (ESV) 19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" 20 She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.

It seems Naomi appears stricken with grief. The people wonder, "Is this Naomi?"

Naomi means "pleasant" or "sweet" in Hebrew. Mara means "bitter" in Hebrew.

Ruth 1:21 (ESV) 21 I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

"it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me."

"the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me"

"I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty."

"the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

Naomi acknowledges that the LORD has done these things to her. She could have blamed an accident, or disease, or maybe some fault in her husband or her daughters-in-law, or she could have said "Satan did it," (and maybe the enemy did have a hand in it). But she doesn't do that.

If it had been me, I would have softened the language a little bit. I would have said something like "the LORD *allowed* these terrible things to happen to me." But Naomi doesn't do that. It seems that she knew the LORD could have prevented these tragedies, but *He chose not to*. So, she gives Him glory. She

acknowledges that He is God. 1 Samuel 2:6-8 "The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to the grave and raises up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts."

But notice something important here: She knows the LORD is good (that's why she asks Him to bless and protect her daughters-in-law). The LORD sends famine, but He brings it to an end and provides food for His people. He wounds, but He also brings healing. It seems to me that Naomi's response to these tragedies is incredibly healthy. Why? She does not curse God or call Him evil. She acknowledges that God is God, Sovereign over everything, even the deaths of her men. She does not sugar coat her pain (bitter, empty). She submits to God's will, in this bitter, bitter providence, and she keeps trusting Him because even though she doesn't understand why He did this, she knows that He is good.

Ruth 1:22 (ESV) 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

The author of Ruth ends this sad chapter with hope: "at the beginning of barley harvest!"

If you don't know Jesus yet, what would keep you from saying to Him, I believe you are God and the only Savior. Forgive me for my sins, and come into my life. "Your people will be my people, You are the Lord, You will be my Lord, and where You lead I will follow"? Jesus is the faithful Redeemer who welcomes sinners, forgives them, brings them home to a relationship with God and His people, and never abandons those who come to Him.

For those of us who are suffering: Can we trust that even if God seems hidden by our "bitter providences" that He *is* there, and He is good and He is strong? Can we trust that even in a terrible time, He is still at work for our good? Naomi felt empty, but God was already working to bring her and a loyal daughter-in-law home at the beginning of the harvest. And the LORD was preparing a redeemer for them, and a greater Redemption for all of us that Naomi could have never believed.

Sermon Worksheet 09/13/26
Ruth – The God Who Redeems
Ruth 1:1-22

Your People Shall be my People, and Your God my God

1. What did you think about the sermon "Your People Shall be my People, and Your God my God?"

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2. Ruth choses to stay with Naomi even though it meant leaving behind her home, people, and gods. What stands out about Ruth's commitment and loyalty? What can you learn from this?

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3. Naomi experiences tragic loss and describes the loss with hard true language, but she never curses God. She submits to His will. Do you give God the glory when going through something so difficult? How?

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4. The sermon asks us whether we are "clinging" to Jesus like Ruth clung to Naomi. Are you following Jesus with such loyalty? What does that look like for you?

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5. At the end of chapter 1, Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest. What do you think is the point of this sentence? Is this to show that God always provides new hope?