



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ASHLAND



This guide is an invitation to follow Jesus with greater purpose and hope. It will help you to explore the scriptures and challenge you to live out your faith. Each week we'd love for you to think about how you relate: **Up** (with God), **In** (with church) and **Out** (with neighbors).

Weekly Questions:

- How is God getting my attention? For help, think about these areas:
- How are you living up with God?
- How are you living in community with other followers of Jesus?
- How are you living out on mission with your neighbors?
- What are you going to do about it?

Sermon: Ruth 1

After Naomi loses her husband and two sons, she and her daughters-in-law are left to pick up the pieces of their shattered family.

- In verses 8-14, what do we learn about the nature of the relationships amongst the women in this family?
- What are the cultural challenges the women, all widows and of mixed ethnicities, face?
- In the few verses that include Orpah, what do we learn about her and her decision to go back home to seek a new life and family.

The Kindness and Boldness of Ruth

hesed is the Hebrew word translated to kindness, loyalty, or rescue.

- How does Ruth display not only kindness but also defiant hope?
- Ruth makes a declaration of faith and decides to live as a foreigner in Judah. What does it mean for us to live 'as foreigners' in the world (1 Peter 2:11) in choosing to put the kingdom of God first in our lives?

Naomi In Mourning

- Though Naomi is 'empty' and bitter with pain, what can we learn from her example in this chapter?
- Why is it so hard to be as honest as Naomi is in this account when we experience hardship?

Reflection & Application

- How do we / should we respond to times of emptiness (within us or around us)?
- Where can we display loyalty, fierce hope, or loving kindness in a relationship?
- What is a step of faith we're being called to take – even if we don't know the outcome?