

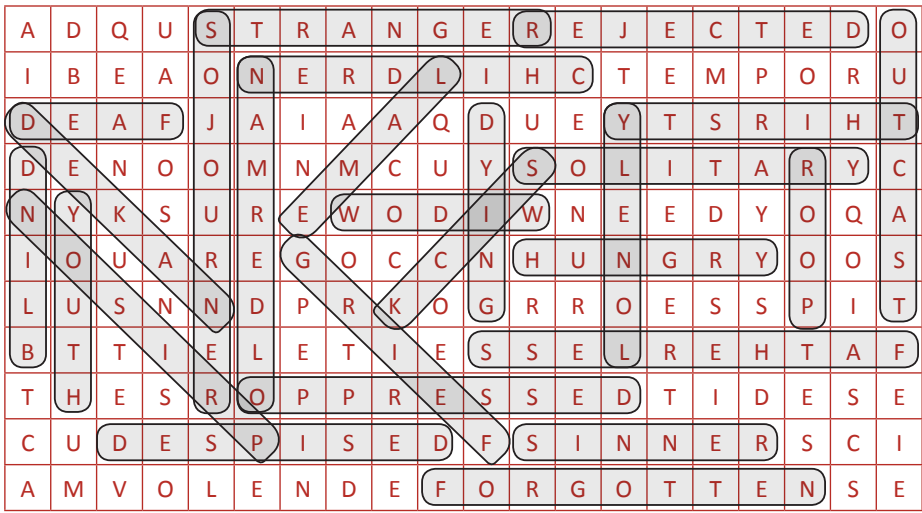
# MADE TO BE IN COMMUNITY PART TWO

## CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Copies of the downloadable “622 service” and “Prayers & Thanksgivings” booklets
- Copy of the leader’s notes - *note fifth page re ice breaker, you may want multiple copies*
- Copy of the leader’s notes
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

## ICE BREAKER: (FIND THE) INVISIBLE PEOPLE: A WORDSEARCH

As the teens arrive, provide copies of the wordsearch (page five of the leader’s notes), and have them see how far they can get in the allotted time. They will need Bibles to look up the references given in the clues. If time allows, take the answers up together, otherwise set the wordsearch to one side and provide the answer key (to right and below) at the end of the lesson. Some of the verses will be familiar and others may be obscure. This is intended to introduce the repeating message of scripture, that God cares about those whom the world often overlooks.



*(The “blanks”, in order, are: poor; older man; lame; outcast; lonely; dying; fatherless; widow; sojourner; solitary; children; oppressed; needy; forgotten; despised; rejected; grief; youth; deaf; blind; hungry; thirsty; stranger; naked; sick; prison; sinner)*

FOR SMALLER GROUPS, YOU MAY EITHER HAVE THE GROUP WORK COOPERATIVELY ON A SINGLE COPY OF THE PUZZLE, OR WORK COMPETITIVELY AS INDIVIDUALS. FOR LARGER GROUPS, TRY DIVIDING THEM UP INTO TEAMS COMPETING TO ANSWER MORE THAN THE OTHER TEAMS BEFORE TIME’S UP.

## 622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order of service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK’S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

## DISCUSSION: SUPPORTING CHARACTERS

As an introduction to the lesson ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

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- Describe a typical Hollywood hero or heroine. What do such people look like? What abilities do they have?
- What are supporting characters like?
- Why do you think these stories aren't focused on the supporting characters instead?
- Do you identify more with the hero/heroine or with the supporting characters? Why?

*A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):*

- *Sometimes we do see stories with unlikely heroes, but oftentimes those who claim the focus of Hollywood films and popular shows are attractive, young, charming, funny, intelligent and/or uniquely gifted.*
- *Supporting characters are more likely to represent a diverse group of people in every way.*
- *In order for a film or show to be "marketable" it must have broad appeal, and that often means placing the focus on the most interesting or appealing characters. Sometimes stories and characters are actually changed from their original form during the production process in order to make the lead characters more appealing to audiences.*
- *Listen to what you're hearing from your teens. Some will identify with the protagonists, but others will resonate with a feeling of being "invisible" or on the fringes. You may want to pause briefly to say a prayer for the whole group – that your teens would recognize that each one of them is precious to God, and would also be able to see one another as precious as well.*

## THE LESSON: RUTH 1+4

The first part of the lesson (below) can be read aloud. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

(IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP RESPOND TO QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE RAISED DURING THIS UNIT, WE RECOMMEND "DISCOVERING THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER: A HANDS-ON APPROACH, VOLUME 3: SPECIAL OCCASIONS" BY SUE CARELESS.)

In the beginning, at the time of creation, God recognized that it was "not good that the man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). The companionship of animals and the meaningful work of tending the garden were not enough. In order to thrive, human beings need community. Various translations of Psalm 68:6 tell us that God settles "the solitary", or "the lonely" in "a home", or "in families". All of scripture echoes the story of a God who sees and cares, not just about those who seem destined for the spotlight, but those on the fringes too.

Christian marriage is a great blessing that enriches the lives of husbands and wives with a uniquely beautiful companionship. But not every believer marries. And no marriage is without challenging times. And even those blessed with a healthy marriage may someday experience the loss of a spouse, finding themselves alone once again. None of us knows what the future holds. But believers know that God will be with us through whatever comes. And in the Church, each one of us may find a community, a place of belonging, and a spiritual family.

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The Old Testament book of Ruth tells the love story of the virtuous young widow Ruth and the godly man Boaz. But it also tells the story of Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law. Naomi was an unlikely protagonist. She was an old woman who had moved to a strange land with her husband and two sons. The sons married, but then both they and Naomi's husband died. She felt very alone. Upon returning to her own country again, she said, "I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty" (Ruth 1:21). Can you sense the grief and bitterness of those words? Yet God saw Naomi and God cared about Naomi. Let's take a look at how things played out for her.

Refer to Ruth 1:7-8, 13-18, 4:13-17.

(VERSES HAVE BEEN CLIPPED FROM THE READING FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY AND FOCUS, BUT IF YOU HAVE TIME TO EXPLORE MORE OF THE BOOK OF RUTH, FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL PASSAGES.)

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS' NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE.)

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Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they've just read. Here are some questions to help guide the discussion.

- If time permits: Does anyone know the part of the story we didn't read? What happens between the arrival of Ruth and Naomi, and the marriage of Ruth and Boaz?
- What does this passage tell us about Naomi?
- What does this passage tell us about Ruth?
- Are the words Ruth speaks in 1:16-17 familiar? What do they remind you of?
- Check out what the women say to Naomi in chapter 4. Why do you think they say "a son has been born to Naomi"?
- What example can we take from these women?

*A few notes and reflections for reference:*

- *Ruth and Naomi were poor, so the able-bodied Ruth had to "glean" food by following after reapers in the fields of wealthy strangers. It turned out that Boaz owned the field where Ruth first gleaned. Boaz learned about Ruth's virtue and loyalty to Naomi and did what he could to ensure that she would be safe while gleaning and able to take plenty of food home. Then Naomi cooked up a plan to put it to Boaz that he "redeem" and marry Ruth. Boaz knew that there was a nearer relative with a prior legal right, so immediately he set out, settled the matter and married Ruth.*
- *When Naomi returned to her home country she was sad and disheartened. She felt that God's hand had been against her (1:13), but her faith was not broken. In spite of her grief, Naomi wanted what was best for her daughters-in-law and spoke a blessing over them (1:8). We don't know what it was about Naomi that compelled Ruth to vow to stay with her, but the story shows us that Naomi was wise, and wanted what was best for Ruth.*
- *Ruth is a beautiful example of loyalty and obedience. She chose to stay with her mother-in-law though she could not know what lay ahead. Then, when they were settled, she did exactly what Naomi told her, working faithfully, and trusting herself and her future to the care of this older woman.*
- *Ruth 1:16-17 is a beautiful vow which has sometimes been read at informal (non-liturgical) weddings. Sometimes when people read it in context for the first time they are surprised to realize that it is not spoken by a bride to her husband, but by a daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law.*
- *In the time and culture in which the story of Ruth takes place, childlessness was seen as a curse, and having children a great blessing. The marriage of Ruth and the son born to her was seen by the entire community as a blessing to Naomi - a son for Naomi. The understanding was that Ruth's son took away the "curse" of childlessness from Naomi, a gift of provision and comfort in her old age. Naomi was old, her husband and children dead, but through Ruth and Boaz, and through the blessing given to them, she was also blessed.*
- *Both Naomi and Ruth are wonderful examples for us of love, loyalty, virtue and faith during challenging times. Both women act selflessly for the good of the other, and in the end there is blessing for all.*

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON'T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

## PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY "AT-HOME CHALLENGE" IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

**Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.**

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE "FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES", WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

**Spend some time praying with the words of this prayer throughout the week. Ask God to open your eyes to the people in your life who may be feeling overlooked and to show you how best to reach out to them in love.**

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*O loving Father, we commend to thy gracious keeping all who are near and dear to us. Have mercy upon any who are sick, and comfort those who are in pain, anxiety or sorrow. Awaken all who are careless about eternal things. Bless those who are young and in health, that they may give the days of their strength unto thee. Comfort the aged and infirm, that thy peace may rest upon them. Hallow the ties of kindred, that we may help, and not hinder, one another in all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

(PRAYER FOR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, FROM THE “FAMILY PRAYERS” SECTION OF THE BCP, P. 732)

## CLOSING PRAYERS (622 AGAIN)

Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

***Before closing, ask the teens to pray the words of the At-Home Challenge prayer with you, remembering not only those we first think of as “relatives and friends”, but also the broader Church community.***

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE THE “PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS” SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER.

Then finish with the “Grace”, the final prayer in the booklet.

## RUTH 1+4: BLESSINGS FOR NAOMI

**1** <sup>7</sup>So Naomi 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. <sup>8</sup>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... <sup>13</sup>it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me.” <sup>14</sup>Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

<sup>15</sup>And she said, “See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” <sup>16</sup>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. <sup>17</sup>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.” <sup>18</sup>And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more...

**4** <sup>13</sup>So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the Lord gave her conception, and she bore a son. <sup>14</sup>Then the women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! <sup>15</sup>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 given birth to him.” <sup>16</sup>Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. <sup>17</sup>And the women of the neighbourhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

MADE TO BE IN  
**COMMUNITY** PART  
TWO

(FIND THE) **INVISIBLE PEOPLE**: A WORDSEARCH

A	D	Q	U	S	T	R	A	N	G	E	R	E	J	E	C	T	E	D	O
I	B	E	A	O	N	E	R	D	L	I	H	C	T	E	M	P	O	R	U
D	E	A	F	J	A	I	A	A	Q	D	U	E	Y	T	S	R	I	H	T
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A	M	V	O	L	E	N	D	E	F	O	R	G	O	T	T	E	N	S	E

“They asked us to remember the \_\_\_\_\_” (GALATIANS 2:10)

“Do not rebuke an \_\_\_\_\_ but encourage him” (1 TIMOTHY 5:1)

“I will save the \_\_\_\_\_ and gather the \_\_\_\_\_” (ZEPHANIAH 3:19)

“I am like a \_\_\_\_\_ sparrow on the housetop” (PSALM 102:7)

“He had an only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she was \_\_\_\_\_” (LUKE 8:42)

“He executes justice for the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_, and loves the \_\_\_\_\_, giving him food and clothing” (DEUTERONOMY 10:18)

“God settles the \_\_\_\_\_ in a home” (PSALM 68:6)

“Let the \_\_\_\_\_ come to me, and do not hinder them” (LUKE 18:16)

“The Lord is a stronghold for the \_\_\_\_\_” (PSALM 9:9)

“The \_\_\_\_\_ shall not always be \_\_\_\_\_” (PSALM 9:18)

“He was \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with \_\_\_\_\_” (ISAIAH 53:3)

“Let no one despise you for your \_\_\_\_\_” (1 TIMOTHY 4:12)

“You shall not curse the \_\_\_\_\_ or put a stumbling block before the \_\_\_\_\_” (LEVITICUS 19:14)

“I was \_\_\_\_\_ and you gave me food, I was \_\_\_\_\_ and you gave me drink, I was a \_\_\_\_\_ and you welcomed me, I was \_\_\_\_\_ and you clothed me, I was \_\_\_\_\_ and you visited me, I was in \_\_\_\_\_ and you came to me”. (MATTHEW 25:35-36)

“There is joy before the angels of God over one \_\_\_\_\_ who repents” (LUKE 15:10)