

Teaching Plan - Ruth, A Friend of God

Aim - To show friends of God belong to God's family. God cares for His family and we care for one another.



Welcome

Sing: We are here together
God's love is great



Activity

Make cookies from cookie mix, or ice bought fairy cakes together to eat later - do in groups, helping one another.



Drama and

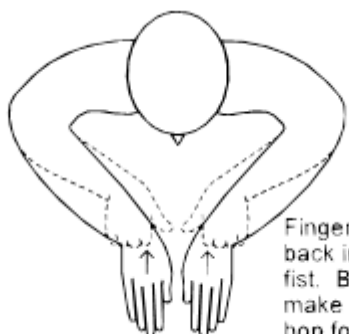


Bible reading:

INTRO: We know that families go through good and bad times together. Today we'll hear about a family who did just that. But they discovered that God cares for them and that people in God's family care for one another. When I'm telling you about this family, every time you hear the words '**The Lord bless you**' or '**God bless him or her**' turn to someone near you and sign '**God bless you.**'



God



Fingers draw back into a fist. Both fists make small hop forward

bless



you

Explain that saying **God bless you** is asking **God** to care for that person and bring good things into their life.

God's people were living in a country called Judah. One year there was a famine, and everyone was hungry as there wasn't enough food to eat. Naomi, her husband and 2 sons packed their bags and left the town of Bethlehem where they lived. They left all their friends and family behind them. They went to live in a hilly country called Moab where they hoped to have plenty to eat and a better life. In Moab the people didn't know the one true God.

Life did get better for them for a while. But as with all families, sadness came. Naomi's husband died and she missed him very much. But she was pleased when her 2 sons got married to girls from Moab. Naomi now had 2 lovely daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. But sadly, after a few years, both Naomi's sons died, and the 3 women were on their own. Naomi felt very sad. But she still remembered that she was part of God's family and that God would take care of her. She decided to go back to her home town of Bethlehem to be with all the rest of God's people. She heard that God had helped his people, ended the famine and provided them with food.

Ruth and Orpah wanted to go with her. They all set out together, but Naomi told them to go back to Moab and find new husbands. Orpah decided to go back, but Ruth decided to stay with Naomi. She had heard Naomi talking about the one true God and she wanted to know this God too and be His friend. Ruth said: 'Let me go with you. Wherever you go I will go. Your people will be my people. Your God will be my God.' (Ruth 1:16). She could see that God cared for His people.

When they came to Bethlehem everyone was very pleased to see them and made them welcome. But Naomi was still very sad, and Ruth decided to do something to help her. It was harvest time, so Ruth went out into the fields. She walked along behind the workers and picked up the leftover grain to make bread.

The owner of the fields was called Boaz. He was a friend and follower of God and he treated his workers kindly. Whenever he saw them, he would say 'The Lord be with you' and they would answer him '**And may the Lord bless you**'. (Ruth 2:4). He noticed Ruth and asked about her. When he found out who she was and that she was trying to help Naomi,

he was very kind to her. He made sure she found plenty of grain to make bread and he told her to share the water that he provided for his workers.

Ruth was surprised that he was so kind. After all she was a foreigner from another land. But he told her that Naomi was part of his family and Ruth was part of his family now too. When he saw how Ruth was helping Naomi he said '**God will bless you** for the good things you have done. You have come to him for safety and he will protect you.' (Ruth 2:12).

When Ruth told Naomi, what had happened she was so happy and said, '**May God bless him!**'. She was very glad that she and Ruth were part of Boaz's family and part of God's family. She knew God would help her and Ruth and bring good things into their lives again. And He did! It was not long before Boaz asked Ruth to marry him and he took care of Ruth and Naomi.



Talk

Everyone has difficult and sad things that happen in their lives. For Naomi and Ruth, it was:

- famine (not enough food)
- feeling sad and alone when people they loved died
- moving to a new place where they knew no-one
- and having to make a fresh start.

Questions:

Think about sad or difficult things that have happened to you. Who helps you in those times?

I wonder why Ruth decided to go with Naomi and to become a friend of God?

Even though they were sad Ruth and Naomi trusted God to help them.

How can we get God's help when things are sad or difficult? (prayer, being with God's people, helping others - not just sitting at home feeling

sad)

Who in the story was caring about other people and helped others?
(Ruth, Boaz, Naomi, God)



Bible Reading: Numbers 6:24-26 (ETRV)



Prayer Time and



Prayer activity

Thank you God that we are your friends
Thank you God that we are part of your big family.
We can trust You and you will help us and bless us.
In Your family we can help and bless each other too.
(The above prayer can be done as an echo prayer)



Possible Craft

Make a Blessing card. Decorate front of card. Inside stick the printed verse Numbers 6:24-26 and the symbol for 'God Bless You'



God



Bless



You

While you are making the card think of someone you know who needs to hear that God loves them and wants to bless them. Give the card to them and pray for them



Possible Songs

Your love is a perfect love (Prospects).
Bind us together Lord (explain words)

(With thanks to Linda Sharp for most of material in this session)