

Order of Service 31/10/2021 (reflective)

All Saints Day

Opening verse on screen:

Where you go, I will go;
Where you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people, and your God my God

Ruth 1:16.

Gathering, Greeting and Call to Worship

Natalie

Come, let us worship God,
The God who loves us beyond our imaginings,
The Spirit who brings forth all truth.
And Christ who showed us justice in action
Let us, together, sing of our love for God in return.

Song of praise - Santo, Santo Santo, TiS 723

*Holy, holy, holy. My heart, my heart adores you!
My heart knows how to say to you: Holy are you Lord*

*Santo, santo. Mi Corazon te adora!
Mi Corazon to sabe decir: Santo eres Senor!*

SONG: [Holy, holy](#), Anon. (from Argentina), from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collings *Religious* PUBLIC DOMAIN

Acknowledgement of Country

Dave

We acknowledge and respect the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation,
the traditional custodians of this land since time immemorial.
We are learning that the land is not ours to own, but to look after;
and that if we listen, we may hear in it the calling of the eternal Spirit.

**Responding to this call, we commit ourselves
to work for justice, reconciliation, and care of the earth.**

Welcome and Introduction

Natalie

Good morning and welcome to worship. My name is Natalie, and I'm here at Brunswick Uniting Church. Today, our minister Ian is on leave, so we are pleased to welcome Kirsten Parris, a member of our congregation who will bring us the reflection today. Thank you Kirsten. Today we will hear the story of Ruth, and learn about her journey; and since this is the 5th Sunday of the month, the service will be a more "stripped back" service, with time for thought and reflection. Welcome, from wherever you are, and whenever you've joined us online. Let us worship God together

Prayers of Adoration and Confession including Word of Grace

Natalie

with SONG: [Pure Love](#), MV31

*Pure love,
pure truth,
pure justice,*

God

Light first candle

Loving God, God of truth, God of justice
We know that you created the world in all its goodness
And long to see a world where all of creation lives in harmony
We believe in you.

*Pure love,
pure truth,
pure justice,
God*

Light second candle

Loving Christ, Teller of truth, Bringer of justice
We know that you challenged the structures that hurt the vulnerable ones,
And healed those who were sick.
We seek to follow you.

*Pure love,
pure truth,
pure justice,
God*

Light third candle

Loving Spirit, Spirit of truth, Spirit of justice
We know that you have moved through creation since the beginning of time
And are present in our world, and in our lives today.
We believe in you.

*Pure love,
pure truth,
pure justice,
God*

Loving God, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,
We confess that have not loved you with all our heart nor served you with all our strength;
We have been blind to your vision of a renewed world
and deaf to your call to costly discipleship,
We have been indifferent to suffering and unwilling to forgive one another.

In your mercy, forgive and restore us,
so that together we may serve you with joy all the days of our life. Amen.

Sisters and brothers, nothing can separate us from the love of God, who knows all of our
weaknesses and all of our dreams, and who gives us the Spirit to strengthen and guide us.
Hear the good news of grace through Christ, our sin is forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

chat about Ruth, intro the reading

Hebrew Scriptures: Ruth 1:1-18

Maxine

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.

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.

With the Children part 2

Dave and Ruth

Reflecting on the reading, photo of Ruth in Ruth and Boaz' land.

Song - And On This Path (MV 8)

*And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide,
And on this path, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide, the gates are open wide!*

*So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide,
So enter in, the gates of holiness are open wide!
Open wide! Open wide! Open wide, the gates are open wide!*

SONG: [And on this path](#), from the poetry of Lynn Baumen, setting by Linnea Good, from [More Voices](#), United Church of Canada, Woodlake Publishing Inc. Reproduced with permission under ONE LICENCE #604502

Gospel reading: Mark 12:28-34

Meg

One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, 'Which commandment is the first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.' Then the scribe said to him, 'You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that "he is one, and besides him there is no other"; and "to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength", and "to love one's neighbour as oneself",—this is much more important than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.' When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, 'You are not far from the kingdom of God.' After that no one dared to ask him any question.

Reflection

Kirsten

Good morning, friends. Today we're exploring the story of Ruth and Naomi, a very famous story from the Hebrew Canon, and one of my particular favorites. Before we go into considering some of the big themes that come through this story - and there are many of them - I thought as a starting point it would be useful to consider the context of this story. Ruth and Naomi lived in an intensely patriarchal society. In this society, women and their roles, their actions, their status - all these things were defined in relation to men. In relation to their fathers, their husbands and their sons. Women had very little power, very little social standing, on their own. This indicates to us that Ruth and Naomi as two widows, a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law, were both very vulnerable as they undertook their journey from the land of Moab to the land of Judah.

Let's consider our society here today in Australia in the 21st century. In many ways, the shackles of the patriarchy have been loosened. But they haven't gone altogether. All of us are influenced by patriarchal traditions, customs and structures in society that tend to benefit men over women.

So, my first question for us to reflect on is where are we in relation to the patriarchy today?

Who of us benefit from patriarchal structures in our society, here, today?

And who of us are harmed by these structures?

Reflective interlude - *And on this path ...*

The first big theme of today's story is that of faithfulness. Ruth's declaration of faithfulness to her mother-in-law Naomi is a very famous one, and I'll read it again for you now:

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."

So, Ruth, the Moabite Ruth, who came from the land of Moab, where there was a different culture, a different language, a different God, is declaring her faithfulness to the God of Israel, to the people of Naomi, to her language and culture. It has been considered that this is one of the earliest instances of conversion. Ruth is undertaking not just to stay with, support and protect her mother-in-law on the long journey back to the land of Judah, but she's declaring that she will become one of Naomi's people.

The second big theme in the story of Ruth and Naomi is that of the journey. These two women undertake a dangerous journey, a long journey through hot and inhospitable landscapes. The story is set in the time of the Judges: a lawless time, a violent time for two unaccompanied women to be travelling.

They travelled maybe 150 kilometres from Moab to Bethlehem: a long journey to undertake on foot. We don't exactly know which route they took, but they would have travelled around the Dead Sea and crossed the Jordan River, then travelled down through the land of Judah to Bethlehem.

So, my second question for us to consider this morning is:

Where are we on our journey of faith? Are we in the hot desert, feeling vulnerable?

Have we arrived safely at our destination?

Have we crossed our own River of Jordan?

Where are we going next?

Reflective interlude - *And on this path ...*

The third big theme of today's story is that of belonging. Ruth travels with her mother-in-law from a distant land. She's a foreigner and a woman, an outsider. Not to be too much of a spoiler for those who may be preaching next week, but Ruth ends her story as an insider - someone married to Boaz, a man of standing in the community. Ruth gives birth to a son, Obed, who is the grandfather of King David. This is the ultimate story of an outsider turned insider: an outsider who becomes accepted, who takes an important place in the story of the people of Israel. She becomes the great grandmother of a king.

When Ruth marries Boaz and becomes mother to Obed, this also provides a place of belonging for Naomi too. No longer is Naomi bereft. No longer is she bitter. She has kinship again. She has a new boy child in her life.

So, where is our sense of belonging today?

It may have been substantially fractured by events of the last 18 months, as so many of our regular connections, our sense of belonging to a broader society, have been constrained - have been severed.

And how can we work to make sure others have a sense of belonging: not just belonging, for example, in our congregation, but in society more broadly?

How can we bring the outsiders in and make them feel welcome?

Reflective interlude - *And on this path ...*

Today is Halloween - also known as All Hallows Eve, the day before All Saints Day. All Saints Day is the day that we celebrate all those who have gone before us in the church: sometimes known as the Communion of Saints, the cloud of witnesses. Ruth and Naomi are a part of that Communion of Saints. They are important figures in our faith tradition, and just two of the many witnesses in that cloud of witnesses who we acknowledge today.

Blessed be the Word, the mouth that speaks, the ears that hear, the minds that understand.
Amen.

Offering with Song Santo, Santo Santo, TiS 723

Loving God, Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit,
You call us to love you, with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength,
And to love our neighbours as ourselves.

May all that we offer from our hearts:
our thoughts, our words, our prayers, our money, our actions,
be dedicated to doing all this and more.
Amen

*Holy, holy, holy. My heart, my heart adores you!
My heart knows how to say to you: Holy are you Lord*

*Santo, santo. Mi Corazon te adora!
Mi Corazon to sabe decir: Santo eres Senor!*

SONG: [Holy, holy](#), Anon. (from Argentina), from [Together in Song](#), Harper Collings *Religious* PUBLIC DOMAIN

Prayers of the People

Geoff

In today's readings we have heard of Naomi going from knowing God's plenty to feeling God's hand against her.

We have heard Jesus words to the scribe that he was not far from the kingdom of God

And as we gather today, we anticipate All Saints Day tomorrow.

These themes will weave their way through our prayers.

Let us pray:

We give thanks to you, O God, that people are drawn to your reign without them or us even knowing about it. We give thanks for those who remind us of God's love and presence when they do not realise they are doing so. Keep us alert to such reminders amongst those with whom we live and work.

Lord, hear our prayer. (*Light candles*)

We pray, loving God, for those whose faith has emptied out and find themselves in a time of dryness, including those whose faith has been emptied out by the demands and the sins of the church itself. Rekindle that spark of faith that begins to fill them again.

Lord, hear our prayer. (*Light candles*)

We pray, persistent God, for those who resist your reign, that your love may work its way in their hearts and minds. We pray that world leaders gathering in Glasgow this week will not resist your reign, or your call for justice, for this broken and tired earth.

Lord, hear our prayer. (*Light candles*)

We pray, sustaining God, for our fellow Christians whose faith is full, but who are mocked or rejected or persecuted because of it. Sustain them in faith and hope, and keep them in love. We pray especially for the Christian communities in Nigeria, Sudan, China and Pakistan.

Lord, hear our prayer. (*Light candles*)

We give you thanks, faithful God, for the saints, that wonderful community of people who, in their diversity, their eccentricities, and their ordinariness, have served and loved you, have made your love known to us, who have pointed us to your reign and drawn us to it, and who now rest in your eternal love.

We pray for each other, that we may be saints to one another, in our eccentricities, our ordinariness and our diversity, that we build one another up in faith, hope and love.

Lord, hear our prayer, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Notices

Matthew and Michael

Good morning.

I'm Matthew Cameron

And I'm Michael Cameron

And this is the BUC News

Excitement is building

Excitement about what?

Really? Seriously Emergence!

Of course, of course, of course, the exhibition. Sorry!

Thank you now that you've remembered let's give everyone a run down.

Okay you first

The Opening Night on 5th November will be on Zoom.

And there will be an artist spotlight with Liz Johnson on 6th November also on Zoom

And another artist spotlight with Clementine Loynd and Colin Hunter on 9th November again on Zoom

The performance event is on 12th November.

I believe the committee is deciding this afternoon if this one will be in person or on Zoom

Okay good.

And there will be a focus on the exhibition and the theme of Emergence during worship on 14th November

Something to look forward to.

For sure and the exhibition will also be open during the week and on the weekends.

Details for all these events are included in the Emergence page on the website

And now over to Courtney for further insights into what Emergence has to offer.

Something else very important is happening soon.

And what would that be?

As if you don't know.

Enlighten me anyway.

Okay well we are returning to in-person worship next Sunday.

Excellent is there anything we need to know

Yes there are going to be two services, one at 9:30 and the second at 11:30

Why is that?

Ian sent out a letter last week which explains how our reopening plan allows us to hold our calling to be the church of Jesus Christ open to all together with Government vaccination requirements, number limits and density quotients.

Ah yes I remember. The 9:30 service is for fully vaccinated people and children under 12.

Correct and at the 11:30 service vaccination status will not be asked.

I really like this inclusive approach.

And the really beautiful thing is that we will be celebrating Holy Communion together across the two services.

Definitely beautiful, and now a reminder that the second session exploring the Statement from the Heart will be held via Zoom on November 8th at 7.30pm.

And another reminder that the closing date for the Olive Way Coordinator position has been extended to 14th November.

Anything else that people need to know

Well I saw Mum & Dad participating in the Zoom Chat Welcoming Ceremony last Sunday.

How many people participated?

There was 34 active screens with more than 40 people participating

That's wonderful.

It is and it was.

How many people were welcomed

Fourteen which is quite wonderful.

For sure. Check out the story in the November Olive Branch.

When will that be available?

It's going to be a little late this week - either Monday or Tuesday.

Good to know.

And worth the wait with stories, reports and other news to enjoy.

And one last thing to finish up - the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties begins today and goes through to 12th November.

A very important conference. What can we do?

The Climate Action News offers two ideas.

And they are?

A scientist's guide to what success looks like and an invitation to pray

Both very important

Indeed.

Well that's it from us

It's been loads of fun bringing you the BUC News during lockdown

And now we look forward to a different kind of fun

Yes - seeing each other in person and listening to lots of people sharing the news.

Remember keep up to date with all the news in the Olive Press, website and Facebook group.

Goodbye and thanks for listening.

Sending Song - For all the Saints, TiS 455

*For all the saints who from their labours rest,
who in the world their faith in God confessed,
your name, O Jesus, be forever blest.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*You were the stranger in the dark of night
with whom they strove to find their one True Light,
to whom you gave God's blessing ever bright:
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*And there will dawn a yet more marvellous day,
the saints with laughter sing and dance and play,
the Clown of Glory tumbles in the way:
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*With earth restored, with this our fragile star,
in gladness home from pilgrimage afar,
we find in God a joy that none can mar:
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Blessing and Sending

Natalie

Hear O Church, the Lord our God, the Lord is one;
Go out into the week, loving the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,
and with all your strength.
And love your neighbour as you love yourselves.
And may the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be
with us all.
Amen.

Thank yous

Liturgist:
Natalie Sims

Acknowledgement of
Country:
Dave Hall

Bible Readings:
Maxine Loynd
Meg Orton

Children's time
Ruth Sandy
Dave Hall
(Children, Youth & Young
Adult Pastor)

Reflection:
Kirsten Parris

Prayers of the People:
Geoff Thompson

Notices:
Matthew Cameron
Michael Cameron
Courtney Rohde

Musicians:
James Balsillie
Steph Gesling
Joel Hallinan
Alistair Hunter
Elaine Potter
Courtney Rohde
Natalie Sims
Shawn Whelan

Prelude:
Pure Love, MV 31
Natalie Sims,
Shawn Whelan
SONG: Pure Love, Lyn Bauman
and Linnea Good, from More
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Postlude: May God's
Sheltering Wings, TiS 214
Shawn Whelan,
Natalie Sims,
Jane Allardice, Kate Scull
SONG: May God's sheltering
wings, by Judith Snowdon, from
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Ray Cameron - tea light
candles

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<https://aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/5-billibellary/>
https://www.livingmuseum.org.au/exhibitions/still_here/images/pamel2-map.jpg

Charles Troedel Merri
Creek:
<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/28705/>
Bechdel Test in the Bible:
<https://i.hn/bible-bechdel-test-women-scripture/>
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Moab map:
<https://www.bridgetothebible.com/People%20in%20the%20Bible%20and%20their%20stories/Ruth.htm>
Naomi and Ruth
illustrations from "Ruth's
new family". Story by
Penny Frank. Illustrated by
Tony Morris.
Production:
Michael Cameron
Saide Cameron
Ray Cameron
Dave Hall
Alistair Hunter
Lydia Jacka
Mal Rowe
Shawn Whelan

Closing verse on screen

Where you go, I will go;
Where you lodge, I will lodge;
Your people shall be my people, and your God my God

Ruth 1:16.