

Lesson Plans that Work
Year B – Proper 27
Lesson Plans for Younger Children
Revised Common Lectionary Old Testament Readings – Track One

Scripture: Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

Background

It's mind boggling to think about how a mosaic is made. The artist has to take pain-staking care to ensure that each colored piece of glass is placed in just the right location so that at the end of the process an image appears. You could watch a mosaic artist working on a project for hours and never guess what the final product could become because, to the untrained eye, it looks like just a bunch of colored shapes. Lucky for us, the artist for our mosaic of life is the God who created this world, came to walk among us, and continues to give us words to speak when our own feeble minds fail. Sometimes we might not be sure of what the end goal should be, but we can trust that with God it will be beautiful!

A Notation for This Week's Scripture Lesson

This week we continue the journey with Naomi and Ruth. The two women have arrived back in Naomi's homeland; but the future for these two poor widows is still uncertain. Ruth's heritage as a Moabite woman works against her, but Naomi's claim of Ruth as her "daughter" acts as a talisman against the public perception. The passage for today is all about claiming our familial identity. Today's passage is a story in two parts: In the first part, Naomi worries that they need help to provide for Ruth's needs in the patriarchal society in Bethlehem. Naomi devises a plan to secure a husband for Ruth. In the second part, which takes place after we learn of all of the ways that Boaz was a kind and generous man, the reader discovers that Ruth married the exact right person for the continuation of the chosen line from Abraham. Ruth and Boaz's son, Obed, became the father of Jesse – whose youngest son David was anointed by Samuel and became the greatest King of Israel. David is important in Christian lineage because the Messiah is prophesized to come from the line of David. Thus, Ruth, the Moabite woman who refused to leave the side of her mother-in-law, is named in Jesus' genealogy at the beginning of the Gospels.

Theme: We Are Family

Before Class:

- Cut felt many colors of fabric into small, squares, circles, and rectangles, and mix all of the shapes together in a bowl. You will also need fabric glue and rectangular sheets of neutral-colored felt, one for each child. *Hint: You could also use construction paper for this activity!
- Print out some pictures of mosaics off of the internet to bring to class.

Beginning: How many of the children know what a family tree is? When the children arrive have them sit facing the classroom white/chalk board. Ask if any of them know what a family tree is – explain by drawing a simple example family tree on the board. Explain that we all have a family tree and it shows us how we are connected to people. Then, remind the children who

Ruth and Naomi are by writing their names onto the family tree you have drawn – if they were there the week prior you can ask them to tell you about the women, if not, briefly bring them up to speed about Ruth and Naomi’s special bond.

Opening Prayer: Creative and colorful God, Thank you for sending people into my life who make it brighter and more beautiful. Amen.

The Story: Ruth 3:1-5; 4:13-17

Ruth and Naomi journeyed to Bethlehem and settled there, together. Ruth got a job so she would have some money to help buy food for Naomi and herself. But Ruth’s job did not pay a lot of money so Naomi worried that she would not be able to take care of her daughter-in-law. Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, I am worried that I will not be able to take care of you always. I think it is time for us to find a nice person for you to love and marry.”

Ruth listened as Naomi spoke about her feelings. Ruth noticed that Naomi called her a “daughter” and that made Ruth feel special.

Naomi told Ruth that she should go wash herself up and put on a pretty outfit. When she was all ready, Naomi told Ruth to go find Boaz who was out at work. Naomi knew Boaz was a good man and she wanted Ruth and Boaz to get married. Naomi told Ruth that she should find Boaz when he was all alone and she should ask Boaz if he wanted to marry her and take care of her.

Ruth told Naomi, “I will do everything you want me to do.”

Ruth talked to Boaz and he promised to help Naomi and Ruth. Boaz and Ruth got married and had a baby boy! They named the baby Obed and he would go on to be a very important man when he grew up.

When the women in the village heard the good news about Ruth and Boaz, they went to Naomi and sang out: “Blessed be God! God saw the difficulty in your life, Naomi, and God sent Boaz to be with Ruth so they can be happy. You are so lucky to have a daughter-in-law like Ruth.

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder how Naomi feels about Ruth.
- I wonder why the women sing their song to Naomi.
- I wonder what Boaz thought when Ruth asked him to marry her.
- I wonder how Ruth felt when Naomi called her a “daughter.”

Activity: Today we will focus our activity on seeing the beauty in our families. **Felt Mosaics.** Each child will need one rectangular piece of neutral colored felt and some fabric glue. Show the children the pictures of mosaics you brought with you. Have them look at the mosaics and see how they are made. Then, dump the bowl of felt shapes onto the middle of the table. Using the shapes provided, the children should make a felt mosaic picture of their family.

Getting Closure: Invite the children to share their mosaic with the class and to introduce the family members pictured to the class.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, Thank you for sending me my family. Help us all to be the most loving family members we can be. Amen.

*Published by the Formation Office of The Episcopal Church, 815 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.
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