



Growing through times of change

Week 5 Reflection



St Paul's
LUTHERAN CHURCH BOX HILL

Ruth 1:8-18

Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness to your dead husbands and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband." Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons— would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord's hand has turned against me!" At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her. "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her." **But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried.** May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me." When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

Loving God, you have created us to be in relationship with others, just as we are in relationship with you. Give us courage to be vulnerable in connecting with others so that we may grow in body, heart, mind and soul. Thank you for your unconditional love for us that enables us to love others. Bless our relationships and all whom we connect with. Amen.

We are designed for relationship – for connection with others.

My entire system is dependent upon connectedness and relationship to help ensure that I grow in body, heart, mind and soul. This remains throughout the course of life.

For many, this is a time of vulnerability - the tension between longing for relationship and connectedness and the desire for safety and self-protection. Within each of us:

- *There's a deep desire to belong.*
- *There's a deep desire to be understood, seen and known for who we truly are.*
- *There's a deep desire to be given a space where we can unconditionally enter.*

These desires make us vulnerable. *Relationship is an investment that costs but the possible rewards are immense:* In order to find meaningful connectedness:

- *I need to want to connect.*
- *I need to be aware of my own needs and capacity.*
- *I need to be myself and allow others to be themselves.*
- *I need to be curious and value the other.*

To maintain genuine connectedness with others requires intention, action, trust and perseverance in order to reap its rewards.

If you question whether relationships and connectedness are worth the investment and the cost, reflect on the areas of your life that bring the greatest blessing. Let that guide your answer - for where your treasure is there will your heart be also.