

Ruth: The Musical

Discussion Guide

WELCOME! Thank you for choosing the **Ruth: The Musical** Discussion Guide, in conjunction with Midwest Food Bank's Kapu Africa. We hope that this brief study will help you to see a glimpse of God's plan for our redemption and how God loves to use His people to work out that plan.

Midwest Food Bank has eleven locations, nine in the United States, and one each in East Africa and Haiti. Its mission is to share the love of Christ, by alleviating hunger and malnutrition locally and throughout the world and providing disaster relief; all without discrimination. More information is available at midwestfoodbank.org

Ruth: The Musical is an original work of musical theater written by David Getz in 2018. Ruth received its world premiere at Grace Church in Morton, IL on June 16, 2018.

Contents of this guide:

1. Pray
2. Watch
3. Discuss



Welcome!

The preamble below will give you an idea of the storyline behind **Ruth: The Musical** and allow you to discover how its storyline is paralleled to the mission of the Midwest Food Bank.



Redemption at its core is thus
A sacrifice is made by one
Who values so another's life
And bids their fortune toward the sun.

But hear this now, or else be drawn
Away from peace as once it seemed
In moments there, when all is lost
A sigh calls out to be redeemed.

Redemption can be commonplace
Yet also heralded royalty
It leaves no room for recompense
Nor demands the vows of loyalty.

These are words you well should hear
For ever and anon they come
Their path as winding as the waves
Yet steady as the pulsing drum.

To see another broken down
Defeated by the bitter cold
Of life's unfeeling grip of death
And silencer of those once bold.

This, my part, is but for now done
Our tale now must be told by those
Who saw redemption at its peak
And all its wondrous gifts they chose.

Preamble, Ruth: the Musical

Pray

Before you begin, pray for God to open your eyes, ears, and heart to all that He wants to share with you. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion, and to lead you into repentance and action for your good and His glory!



Watch

Watch and enjoy **Ruth: The Musical** by David Getz

- ❖ Available on YouTube from 8:00 AM CST Friday, September 11 - 10:00 PM CST Sunday, September 13

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxb3yorwG93o-eehXYWY02g>

Reserve your spot and attend the **Composer's Q&A Forum** - optional

- ❖ 7:00 PM CST Saturday, September 12
- ❖ Participants will have the opportunity to talk with David Getz and lead performers from the show via Zoom. The forum will include a discussion of the making of the show, its meaning, and the performers experiences in the arts.

<https://events.idonate.com/ruth>

Discuss

The story of Ruth takes place during the time of the judges.

Then the Lord raised up judges to rescue the Israelites from their attackers. Yet Israel did not listen to the judges but prostituted themselves by worshiping other gods. How quickly they turned away from the path of their ancestors, who had walked in obedience to the Lord's commands. Whenever the Lord raised up a judge over Israel, he was with that judge and rescued the people from their enemies throughout the judge's lifetime. For the Lord took pity on his people, who were burdened by oppression and suffering. But when the judge died, the people returned to their corrupt ways, behaving worse than those who had lived before them. They went after other gods, serving and worshiping them. And they refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways.

Judges 2:16-19 NLT



So the family moved to Moab
In an effort to survive
This quickly made decision
Would soon quickly change their lives
(*"Journey to Moab"*)

Read Ruth 1:16-18

Ruth showed Naomi loyal love. The Hebrew word for this type of love is "Hesed" (steadfast love; love based on faithfulness and commitment).

1. What is our part as believers in showing the love of God to those in need? What, specifically, is God calling you to do in the community or in the world to help those whom He wants to reach with His love?

Bonus: Read this blog about how Midwest Food Bank's Kapu Africa is helping churches in Kenya to show God's lovingkindness and bring more people into the family of Christ.
<https://www.midwestfoodbank.org/news/blog/mfb-east-africa-seeing-people-come-to-christ>

Read Ruth 1:20-21

For naught I hold my head up high.
For naught I plead, and pray, and cry,
For God cares not at all for how I'm feeling.
(*"Bitter"*)

Naomi was devastated after losing her husband and two sons. She felt as if her entire identity had changed. She went from being called Naomi, which means pleasant, lovely, and delightful, to wanting to be called Mara, which means bitter and sad. Naomi let her circumstances define her identity.

2. How can we have faith in the midst of difficult circumstances or doubt?



I am praying to a God I've never known.
I am talking to her friend I've never seen.
Should I stand, should I bow,
should I get down on one knee?

("Ruth's Prayer")

3. Are those who don't know the Lord our enemies? How can we approach those who do not know the Lord with love and humility?

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God.

Leviticus 19:9-10 (also see Deuteronomy 24:19-22)

Read Ruth 2:8-17

4. How does Boaz go above the minimal requirement to help Ruth?

Bonus: Read about how food is but one aspect of helping others experience the love of God. <https://www.midwestfoodbank.org/news/blog/kapu-africa-mfb-east-africa-delivering-more-than-food>

Read Ruth 3:6-12

In verse nine, Ruth asks Boaz to spread the corner of his covering, his garment, or his wings over her, depending on your translation. (For more about the healing in the corner of our Redeemer's garment, see the story of the woman with the issue of blood in Luke 8:43-48)

Keep me as the apple of the eye;
Hide me in the shadow of Your wings

Psalm 17:8

5. When have you seen the protection of God in your life?

In the shadow of Your wings
In the shadow of Your wings
I see God's story
Love is pouring out before me
In the shadow of His wings we'll be redeemed!
(*"Shadow of Your Wings"*)

Read Ruth 4:1-10

If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6

6. What were the other redeemer's priorities as opposed to Boaz's priorities? (For cultural context, read Genesis 19:30-38 and Judges 3:12-30)

The other redeemer did not value the life of Ruth enough to take her on as his own responsibility. Marrying her would be highly inconvenient—she was not even Jewish!

7. How might the Lord be challenging you to value the life of others despite it being "inconvenient" to you?

Read Ruth 4:13

The picture of this marriage foreshadows God's plan for redeeming mankind through the person of Jesus Christ.

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation"

Revelation 5:9

Hesed love throughout the Old Testament culminates in God's fulfillment of the promise of a Redeemer for God's people. Jesus Christ left heaven to dwell among us, live as the perfection of humanity despite trials and temptations, and died a death that He did not deserve to become our close relative redeemer.

Our redeemer will come
Our redeemer will come
He carry all our burdens, he will wipe away our tears
When we lose hope in tomorrow, then his presence will draw near
He will ransom our captives, he'll shoulder our load
He will save us from hunger, he'll raise the downtrod
He will rule in this land that's been promised by God.
When our Redeemer comes!
(*"Redeemer"*)

8. How has Jesus shown Himself as Redeemer in your life?

Read Ruth 4:17-22

(For more info about Boaz's mother, Rahab, read Matthew 1:5, Joshua 2, and Joshua 22-23)

9. How did Ruth's story fit into the larger picture of God's plan for humanity?

10. Do you think God has a plan for your life? How might your story fit into God's big picture? How might your actions play a part in generational change?

We cannot know everything God has in store for us, but we can ask for open eyes to get a glimpse of His purposes for our lives. He will lead us to those whom He wants to show His love. When we act in obedience and out of our own love for Him, we can see God's wonders!

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

Bonus: Read about the boundless love of God, despite others' background.

<https://midwestfoodbank.org/news/blog/kapu-africa-sharing-the-love-of-christ>

Pray

I praise You, God, as provider and redeemer. You are the Creator and Sustainer of all things. The whole earth is Yours, and You are sovereign over all of time. I trust You and I commit my life to You. Give me Your heart for those around me, and lead me in all You have planned for my life. In the name of my Redeemer, Jesus, I pray. Amen.



For more about this event, visit www.midwestfoodbank.org/ruth
For more about Ruth: The Musical and David Getz,
visit www.theruthmusical.com

For more about Midwest Food Bank Kapu Africa,
visit www.midwestfoodbank.org/kapuafrica

More resources, such as the **Musical Themes Discussion Guide**, can be found
at www.midwestfoodbank.org/ruth

All verse quotations are from the English Standard