

Sermon Notes

Ruth 1:1-22 | Written by Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson

This is the first in our four-week fall series on the Book of Ruth. What looks on the surface as a very easy to understand and straightforward story becomes nuanced, deep, and powerfully relevant to our lives and world when pondered culturally, relationally, and theologically. The book, among other things, asks the question: how is God involved in our joys and hardships? The narrator doesn't mention God working directly, but God is clearly at work behind the scenes through circumstances and people. And the result is transformation from empty to full, a turning from wandering to coming home, from barren to fruitful, from hungry to full, from "at risk" to secure in the tribe and God's hands.

1. When has life seemed to be against you and those you love? When have you gone from "full" to "empty" in more than one area of your existence? Name some of the negatives and pain and suffering.
2. Read Ruth chapter 1. Focus on the first five verses. Name all the bad things that happen to this family. I named at least six things in my sermon. Do you have more than six? I talked about the July 4th flooding of the Guadalupe River and the devastation of so many families. Is it comforting to you or no consolation that Scripture shows that those who follow God are not immune to hardship?
3. Read verses 6-18. What does Naomi suggest to her daughters-in-law? Why? Both Orpah and Ruth show agency in one acting reasonably and the other unreasonably. Defend Orpah's decision and Ruth's. Which makes more sense to you?
4. I mentioned in my message the Hebrew word, *hesed*, from verse 8, where it is translated in most versions as "kindness." I suggested that the word describes something fundamental about God and that this word can be embraced/walked out by humans as well. The word means loyalty, covenant faithfulness, sacrificial love. How does Ruth show *hesed* to Naomi? Can you name times in the Bible or in your life when God has shown *hesed* to you or those around you?
5. Read verses 19-22. Naomi blames God for her predicament amid her grief. What hint did I suggest that might provide hope in the midst of grief at the end of chapter 1? And why is it good news that Naomi does not get the last word about her situation, but God does?

.....

Financial Update	as of Aug 31, 2025
2025 Annual Budget	\$ 14,203,292
Actual Income to Date	7,705,542
Needed to Meet 2025 Budget	6,497,750

Births and Deaths
Donna Powell passed away Aug 23.
Kenneth Pearson passed away Sep 1.
More information at memorials.mdpc.org .



Alpha Launch Night

At Alpha Launch Night, you'll eat great food and watch an episode on a question of faith - then have a chance to share your thoughts. You can say anything you like, or just listen.

You're invited, no matter your background or beliefs. It's free, so come see if it's for you.

Tue, Sep 9 @ MDPC
Doors open at 6:30pm
alpha.mdpc.org



MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Men's Life: Asking Good Questions
Tuesdays, starting Sep 9 | 6:30am
Jesus used questions to teach vital spiritual truths. Carefully selected questions can challenge your thinking, strengthen faith, and spark deep conversations. Join us this fall for an all-new series as we dive into the importance of asking good questions.
ml.mdpc.org

Ladies Bingo Night
Thu, Sep 11 | 5:30-8:30pm
Get ready for a night of fun, laughter, and connection with women of all ages at MDPC! This is your chance to unwind, meet new friends, and enjoy 10 exciting rounds of bingo with great prizes and a grand prize finale! **RSVP: bingo.mdpc.org**

Noche de Sabor
Sat, Sep 13 | 6-9pm | Free Event
Our community comes together each year around Hispanic Heritage month to lift up the different cultures represented in MDPC's Fuente congregation. We hope you will join the celebration! Come hungry and get to know your Fuente family.

Senior Adult Fellowship Lunch
Mon, Sep 15 | 11am-1pm
Connect and enjoy Christian fellowship at our monthly lunch. No reservations re-

To view all events, visit events.mdpc.org.

quired! Order your food in MDPC Café and bring to our group's tables in Fellowship Hall. Learn more at seniors.mdpc.org.

Blast Off
Wednesdays starting Sep 17 | 5:30-7pm
Hey elementary kids! If you love running around, making crafts, playing games, and talking about Jesus, you've gotta be at Blast Off. Sign up at blastoff.mdpc.org - and bring a friend!

Hot Topics
Thu, Sep 25 | 6:30-8pm
"Keeping Kids Safe in this Digital Age." A presentation by our friends at Street Grace on how to recognize the various kinds of online predators and how to work with our kids (both girls and boys) to protect them.

New Member Classes
Fri PM and Sat AM, Sep 26 and 27
Curious about MDPC? This class is a laid-back way to learn what we believe, meet others, and see if this might be your church home. No pressure, just connection! newmembers.mdpc.org

Change the Life of a Child!
It takes only a small investment of time for YOU to change a young person's life! All it takes is 30 minutes, one day a week at our partner, Spring Woods Middle School. Training is easy and the impact is real! Learn more at impact.mdpc.org.

Give Online

give.mdpc.org



8:30 BLENDED SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship Clay Brown

*Worship Songs *All Creatures of Our God and King*
Jesus Paid It All

*Confession & Assurance | Prayers of the People Rachel Poysky

Worship Song *Is He Worth*

HEARING THE WORD

Sermon Turn, Turn, Turn | Ruth 1:1-22 (NRSV) Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

Song of Response *Abide*

Offertory *Give Me Jesus* arr. L.L. Fleming (1936-2003)

SENDING

*Doxology OLD 100TH

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

.....

9:45 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship Dan Aikins

*Worship Songs *Here for You*
Freedom in this House

*Confession & Assurance | Prayers of the People Mitchell Kearney

*Worship Song *Is He Worth*

HEARING THE WORD

Sermon Turn, Turn, Turn | Ruth 1:1-22 (NRSV) Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

Song of Response *Abide*

Offertory *Give Me Jesus* arr. L.L. Fleming (1936-2003)

SENDING

*Doxology OLD 100TH

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Musicians: Asher Pudlo, drums; Chris Parrott, guitar; Uvaldo Callejas, bass; JJ Blanco, keys;
Michael Middleton & Meliza Gómez, worship leaders

*Please stand, if comfortable.

As you enter worship, we kindly ask that you silence your cell phones.

11:15 TRADITIONAL SERVICE

GATHERING

Prelude *Andante Sostenuto from Symphonie Gothique*
Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937)

Call to Worship Dan Aikins

Choral Introit *When in Our Music God is Glorified*
arr. David Ashley White (b. 1944)

*Hymn of Praise *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* | Vs. 1, 2, 3 #356 | NETTLETON

*Confession and Assurance of Pardon Rachel Poysky

*Affirmation of Faith from the United Church of Canada

*Congregational Response *Psalm 103 - O Bless the Lord, My Soul* #145 | MARION

HEARING THE WORD

Anthem of Preparation *Do Not Ask Me to Leave You* Michael John Trotta (b. 1973)

Sermon Turn, Turn, Turn | Ruth 1:1-22 (NRSV) Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

*Hymn of Response *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past* | Vs. 1, 3, 5 #210 | ST. ANNE

Prayers of the People | The Lord's Prayer Dan Aikins

Offertory *Give Me Jesus* arr. L.L. Fleming (1936-2003)

SENDING

*Doxology *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* #592 | OLD 100TH

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Postlude *Prelude in C Major* J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Musicians: Sanctuary Choir | Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director
Kathryn White, Organist

ACTS II

FALL BIBLE STUDY

Join us for a 9-week study on the second part of Acts, taught by the Adult Discipleship staff. Come to one or all!

Weds, Sep 10-Nov 5 Parlor 6:30-7:30pm | Parlor

Register: ActsStudy.mdpc.org

A logo for a marriage retreat featuring a palm tree and the words 'Marriage RETREAT'.

Sat-Sun, Oct 4-5 | Noon-Noon

Couples, pack your bags: we're headed back to Moody Gardens in Galveston! It's a weekend full of teaching, rest, and reconnection with each other and with God.

For more details and to register: marriageretreat.mdpc.org

A QR code linking to the marriage retreat registration page.

Would you like to get in touch with one of our Pastors? Feel free to reach out!
Visit staff.mdpc.org for contact information and ministry areas.