

## Old Testament Windows

### Session Six

“The Old Testament gives us stories of God’s life touching down to earth, and we call these moments holy. The scriptures also hold within them stories of holiness elongated into a sustained encounter with one another. We call that friendship.” (Melissa Florer-Bixler, in Fire by Night, p.169)

Read Ruth 1:1-17.

1) How would you describe both the character of Ruth and the character of Naomi as you see them in this chapter?

2) Ruth’s story centers on two choices:

- a) a return to biological family– to stability and familiarity;
- b) the creation of a home outside of the bonds of kinship.

*How many of you have been faced with a decision like that at some point? What influenced your choice?*

3) The book of Ruth is a story that complicates our sense of being at home– where home happens and between whom, within what boundaries, and how those boundaries are blurred between peoples and borders and families.

We find echoes of this in the New Testament, where Jesus tells an astonished crowd that his mother and brothers are those who do the will of God, not those who share his biology or household of origin.

*What do you make of that?*

4) What if, in the words of Ruth and Naomi and those later words of Jesus, instead of rejection we are meant to hear a call to expansiveness of relationship– opening up our lives to others?

5) As you have time, read the rest of the book of Ruth.

6) Read Philippians 4:8.

What things in the story of Ruth particularly strike you as being true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy?