



St Johns
Being the Gospel to all People

Sunday
10-Dec-2023

A very warm welcome is extended to all visitors to St Johns. Morning tea is offered after the service today, so please stay and enjoy.

Scripture reading: Ruth chapter 2 (NIV)

Grace and Gratitude



Ruth Meets Boaz in the Grain Field

¹ Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz. ² And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." ³ So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

⁴ Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The Lord be with you!" "The Lord bless you!" they answered. ⁵ Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"

⁶ The overseer replied, "She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi." She said, "Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters." She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

⁸ So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. ⁹ Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled." ¹⁰ At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, "Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?"

¹¹ Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. ¹² May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

¹³ "May I continue to find favor in your eyes, my lord," she said. "You have put me at ease by speaking kindly to your servant—though I do not have the standing of one of your servants."

¹⁴ At mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come over here. Have some bread and dip it in the wine vinegar."

When she sat down with the harvesters, he offered her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and had some left over. ¹⁵ As she got up to glean, Boaz gave orders to his men, "Let her gather among the sheaves and don't reprimand her. ¹⁶ Even pull out some stalks for her from the bundles and leave them for her to pick up, and don't rebuke her."

¹⁷ So Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. Then she threshed the barley she had gathered, and it amounted to about an ephah. ¹⁸ She carried it back to town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gathered. Ruth also brought out and gave her what she had left over after she had eaten enough.

¹⁹ Her mother-in-law asked her, "Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!" Then Ruth told her mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. "The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz," she said.

²⁰ "The Lord bless him!" Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. "He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead." She added, "That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers."

²¹ Then Ruth the Moabite said, "He even said to me, 'Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.'"

²² Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, "It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else's field you might be harmed."

²³ So Ruth stayed close to the women of Boaz to glean until the barley and wheat harvests were finished. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Sunday

17-Dec-2023

THIS WEEK

Theme: TBC

From: 10-Dec-2023

Scripture readings: Ruth chapter 3

To: 17-Dec-2023

Prayer points:

- For peace and restoration of stability in Israel, Ukraine and other regions experiencing unrest;
- For Jane's health;
- For Brenda's health;
- For Felicity's recovery;
- For violence and crime to be subdued in our country.
- For those who have had major surgery and are recovering;
- For support for all those who have lost loved ones, homes and/or livelihoods in the recent natural disasters.

Sunday 10-Dec-2023

9.30 am Sunday Service in English
(Chinese subtitle)
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

Monday 11-Dec-2023

N/A

Tuesday 12-Dec-2023

7:30 pm Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 13-Dec-2023

7:00 pm AA meeting

Thursday 14-Dec-2023

3:10 pm Musiqhub

Friday 15-Dec-2023

10:00 am Knitting Group
6:45 pm Youth Group

Sunday 17-Dec-2023

9.30 am Holy Communion Sunday
Service in English (Chinese subtitle)
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

Pastoral Reflection

Hello, friends, who love St Johns,

In the first chapter of Ruth that we looked at last week, Ruth made this remarkable choice to show fidelity to Naomi her mother-in-law, what in Hebrew is called **Hesed**. They were living together in Moab at the time each of them having lost their husbands, and now it is just the two of them and they were trying to figure out how to respond, how to negotiate this moment of incredible rapture and loss.

And Naomi chose to respond in the process the only way left for her to respond and that is to go back home in Bethlehem and live out her days among her people. And she kept saying to Ruth if you are smart you will do what I am doing, you will go back to your family because you might have a future. But Ruth took a profound risk, a punk move on her part – gambling with her life – she says, no **I want to attach myself to you, and to your people and to your God. I want whatever will happen next to happen to both of us.**

And we are not sure all that goes into Ruth's decision, but we know it was profound loyalty to Naomi, Naomi who at the time is pretty sure that God has abandoned her. It was also an act of courage, because to go with Naomi for Ruth was to step away from all that was comfortable and familiar to a place that was strange and unfamiliar.

As you have been reflecting on the first chapter of Ruth, who do you identify with in the story? Naomi who suffers tragedy. Orpah who does the pragmatic thing. Or Ruth who somehow responds in an extraordinary way.

In this season of Advent what do you sense God is inviting you to do or be?



Thanksgiving **\$5,626 collected**

Express thankfulness by giving back!

Collection Period: Nov - Dec 2023

as of Dec 8

Whether you give online or through envelopes, please use the remark "Thanksgiving."



This year's Thanksgiving donation will support:

- 90% for general repair and maintenance fund
- 5% for the Breakfast Club
- 5% for a local charity in East Auckland (to be determined)

Bank account: 03-0166-0135407-025 (Bucklands Beach Co-op Parish)

Join us in spreading gratitude and helping those in need!



Charitable Donation

Felicity is collecting items for a local charity: beddings, curtains, clothing items, kitchen appliances, etc.

Please ensure they are in good condition (good enough that you will want to wear them yourself !)

Please feel free to drop them at Winnie's office



Midday Prayer Time

December 2023

Wednesday at 12:00 pm 6th

Wednesday at 12:00 pm 13th

Wednesday at 12:00 pm 20th

Wednesday at 12:00 pm 27th



"The Advent wreath consists of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. "The laurel signifies victory over persecution strength and healing. Holly also has a special Christian symbolism: The prickly leaves remind us of the crown of thorns. Any pine cones, nuts or seedpods used to decorate the wreath of evergreens depicts the immortality of our soul and the new, everlasting life promised to us through Christ."
Source: <https://tinyurl.com/3w63n878>

What are the four symbols of the Advent wreath?

"The four candles of Advent represent the four Sundays of Advent, and they respectively symbolize hope, peace, joy, and love."

Friday evening Youth Group - 6:45 p.m.



Songs for Today

1. See him lying on the bed of straw
2. Thou didst leave thy throne
3. Away in a manger
4. O come all ye faithful

Sunday Services:	English 9:30a.m.	
Office Hours:	Tues - Friday 9:00 am – 12:00 noon	
Phone: 09 534 2305	Email: office@stjohnsbb.org.nz	
Website:	https://stjohnsbb.org.nz	
Minister	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	022 674 0044
Administrator	Winnie Wong	
Property Manager	Charles de Vilder	
People's Warden	Ayleen de Vilder	
Minister's Warden	Julie Dickey	
Pastoral Care	Judy McDonald	
Prayer Chain	Judy McDonald	
Direct Credit Offerings AC	03-0166-0135407-025	

Youth Group: Contact Jeff minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz

	Today's Helpers 10-Dec-2023	Next Week's Helpers 17-Dec-2023
Preacher	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	Rev Jeff Odhiambo
Musician/s	Jeanette Li Dimock, Albert Ip Winnie Wong	Rahil John Albert Ip
Projector & Sound Desk	Mavis Haigh	Alicia Odhiambo
Reader	Felicity Vincer	Sophia Ralph
Intercessor	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	Mavis Haigh
HC set up	N/A	Ayleen de Vilder
HC Serving team	N/A	Joan Rutherford
Prayer ministry	Joan Jones	Joan Rutherford
Sunday School	An opportunity to serve here	N/A
Welcome Desk	Joan Rutherford	Mavis Haigh
Usher	Trevor Haigh	Mavis Haigh
Counters	Jeanette Li Dimock Monita Leung	Trevor Haigh Albert Ip
Morning Tea	Betty Curd Nessie Crawford	Jojo Lee Monita Leung