

Journeying With Ruth And Naomi

I love the story of Ruth and Naomi. Maybe it is because here we have a story of two women who have courage in determining the direction their life will follow. And a man, Boaz, who recognises their courage, and within the confines of his own society, enables them to fulfil their dream of a new life. The story ends with the sharing of community and of food. Are we ready to be so generous in the sharing of our community and our table?

We're so used to doing things our own way
We know what we believe
We know who we trust
We know which hymns we sing
We know how prayers are prayed
We know how Communion is served
We know what mission we are involved in
So ingrained, that we assume our way is right.

Yet here is Ruth travelling to a strange land
Challenging us to rethink our beliefs
Challenging us to be dependent on another
Challenging us to learn new songs
Challenging us to experience prayer in different ways
Challenging us to break bread with a new people
Challenging us to reach out with God's love
And we are afraid to risk the journey.

Yet here is Naomi encouraging Ruth to find a new home
Encouraging us to embrace the stranger
Encouraging us to care for one another
Encouraging us to rewrite our songs
Encouraging us to believe prayers are answered
Encouraging us to share bread beyond our borders
Encouraging us to extend community beyond convention
And we are afraid our identity might be lost.

Yet here is Boaz protecting Ruth and Naomi
Ensuring the doors are thrown open in welcome
Ensuring charity is extended to embrace justice
Ensuring the singing of a new song
Ensuring prayer changes our thinking and our actions
Ensuring our communion is open and inclusive
Ensuring we cannot become complacent
And we are afraid to take such a risk.

Yet here is Christ, welcoming us all to his table
Inviting us to meet him and one another
Inviting us to trust in him and in each other
Inviting us to sing a myriad of songs
Inviting us to experience the richness of prayer
Inviting us to break bread and share wine
Inviting us to gather together to celebrate our diversity

For this is my body, this is my blood, and you are my people.

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