

A painting of two women in traditional head coverings walking away on a path through a golden field. The woman on the left wears a white head covering and a green robe, while the woman on the right wears a brown head covering and a brown robe. They are walking away from the viewer down a dirt path that winds through a vast, golden field of wheat or barley. In the background, there are green trees and a clear sky.

We Can't Go Alone

Advent #2 Words for the Beginning

Ruth 1:1-22



Our faith journey

Galatians 5:25 “**let us walk in the spirit**” —let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Isaiah 30:21 “Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will **hear a voice** behind you, saying, “This the way; walk in it.”

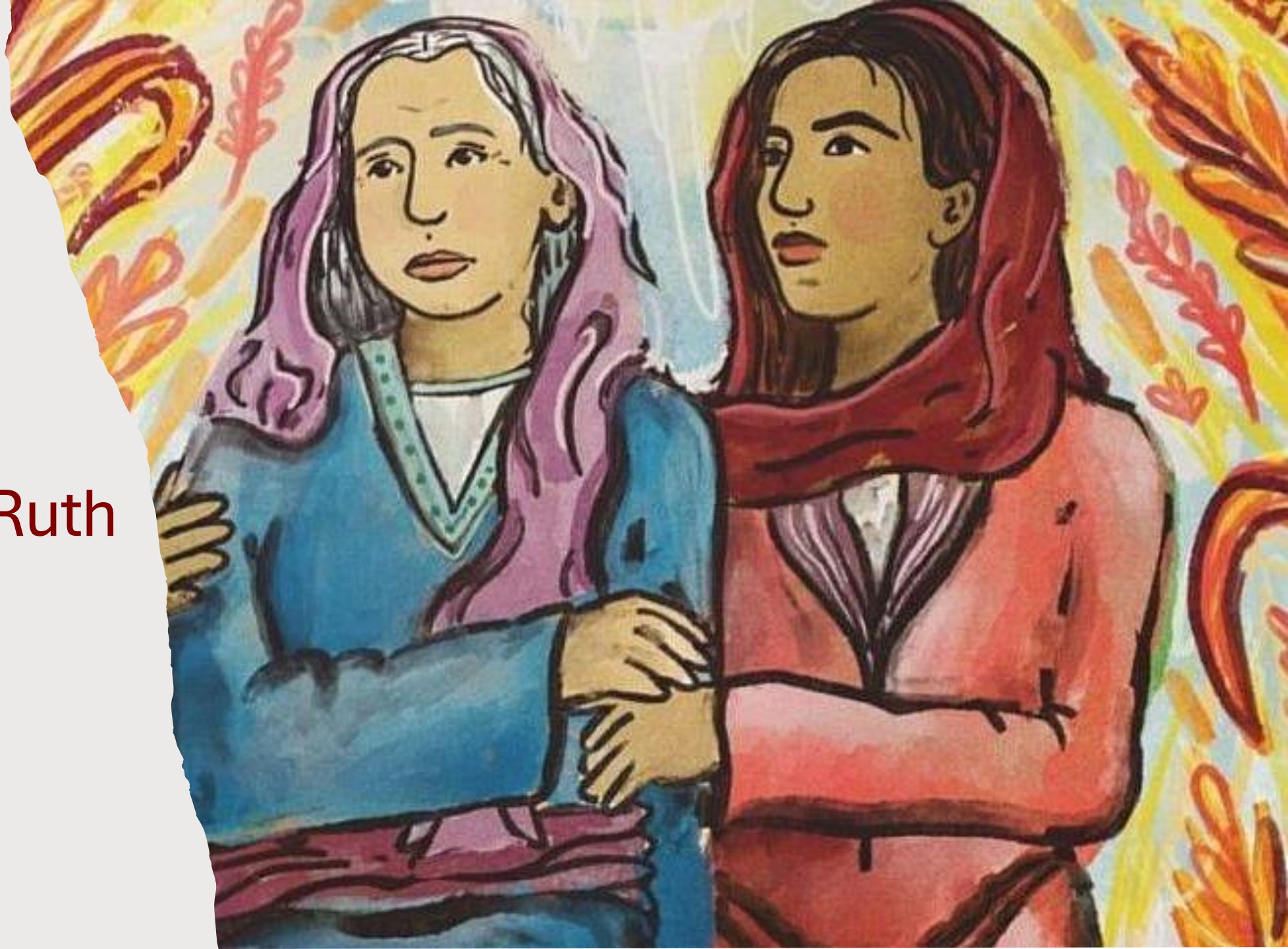
How do we hear God’s voice?

- 1) the peace of God (Phil 4:7)
- 2) the written word of God (2 Tim 3:16-17)
- 3) the Spirit of God is in us (John 14:16-17; 16:13)
- 4) the renewing of our minds (Roms 12:2)
- 5) knowing the voice of Jesus, the good shepherd (John 10:2-4)

Naomi and Ruth

Ruth 1: 1-22

(NET Bible, NIV 2011)



Ruth 1: 1-6

¹ During the time of the judges, there was a famine in the land of Judah. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah went to live as a resident foreigner in the region of Moab, along with his wife and two sons. ² The man's name was Elimelech, his wife was Naomi, and his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were of the clan of Ephrath from Bethlehem in Judah. They entered the region of Moab and settled there. ³ Sometime later Naomi's husband Elimelech died, so she and her two sons were left alone. ⁴ Both her sons married Moabite women. One was named Orpah and the other Ruth. And they continued to live there for about 10 years. ⁵ Then Naomi's two sons, Mahlon and Kilion, also died. **So she was left all alone**—bereaved of her two children as well as her husband!

⁶ So Naomi decided to return home from the region of Moab, accompanied by her daughters-in-law, because while she was living in Moab she had heard that the LORD had shown concern for his people, reversing the famine by providing abundant crops.



Ruth 1: 7-14

⁷ Now as Naomi and her two daughters-in-law began to leave the place where she had been living to return to the land of Judah, ⁸ Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Listen to me! Each of you should return to your mother’s home. May the LORD show you the same kind of devotion that you have shown to your deceased husbands and to me. ⁹ May the LORD enable each of you to find security in the home of a new husband.” Then she kissed them goodbye, and they wept loudly. ¹⁰ But they said to her, “No! We will return with you to your people.”

¹¹ But Naomi replied, “Go back home, my daughters! There is no reason for you to return to Judah with me. ... ¹³ No, my daughters, you must not return with me. For my intense suffering is too much for you to bear. For the LORD is afflicting me!”

¹⁴ Again they wept loudly. **Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung tightly to her.**



“Naomi with her Daughters-in-Law”
by Henry Nelson O’Neil, Royal
Collection Trust.

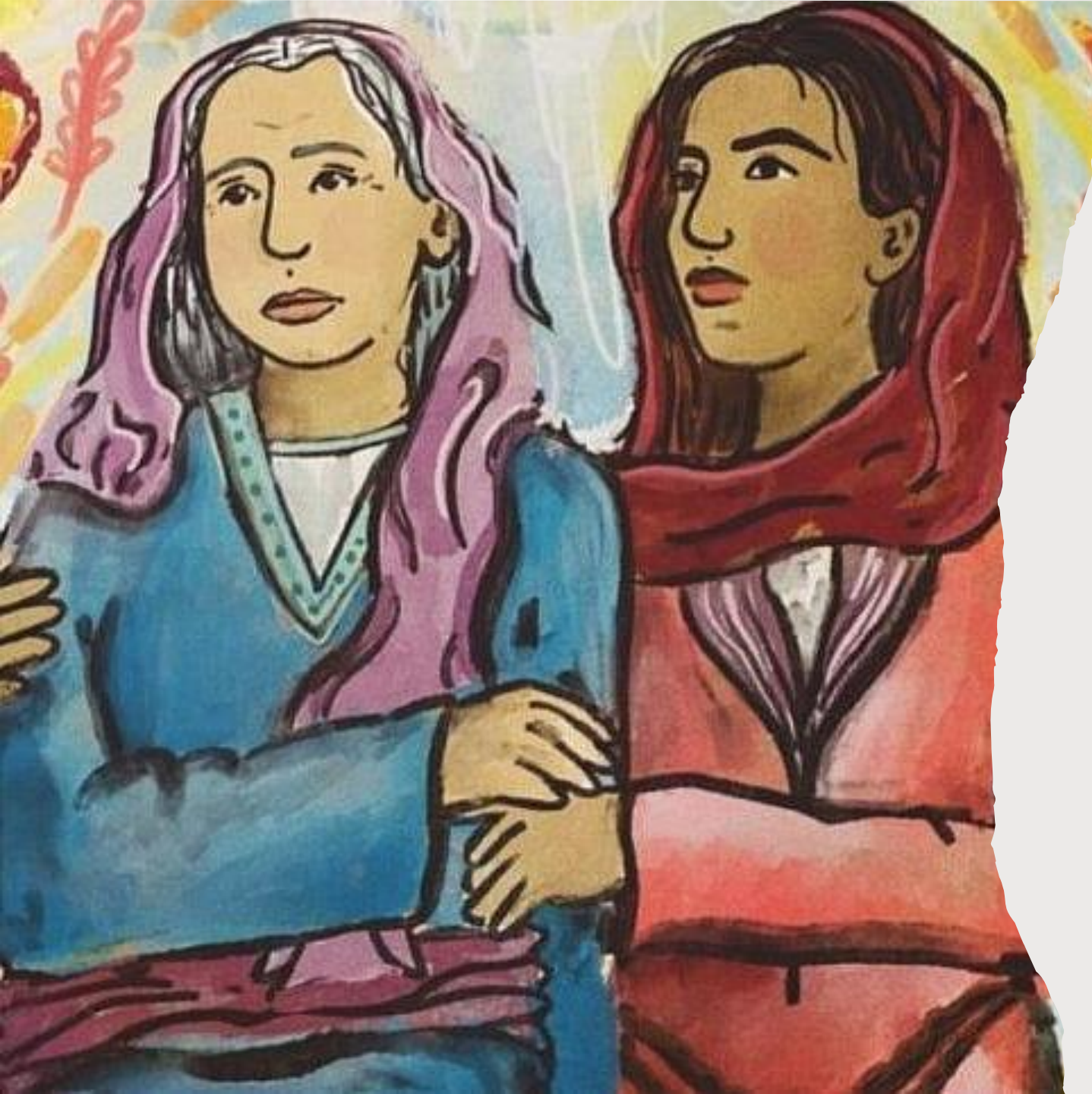


Ruth 1: 15-19

¹⁵ So Naomi said, “Look, your sister-in-law is returning to her people and to her god. Follow your sister-in-law back home!” ¹⁶ But Ruth replied,

“Stop urging me to abandon you!
For wherever you go, I will go.
Wherever you live, I will live.
Your people will become my people,
and your God will become my God.
¹⁷ Wherever you die, I will die—and
there I will be buried.
May the LORD punish me severely if I do
not keep my promise!
Only death will be able to separate me
from you!”

¹⁸ When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped trying to dissuade her. ¹⁹ **So the two of them journeyed together until they arrived in Bethlehem.**



Ruth 1: 19-22

When they entered Bethlehem, the whole village was excited about their arrival. The women of the village said, “Can this be Naomi?” ²⁰ But she replied to them, “Don’t call me ‘Naomi’! (which means ‘pleasant’). Call me ‘Mara’ (meaning ‘bitter’) because the Sovereign One has treated me very harshly. ²¹ **I left here full, but the LORD has caused me to return empty-handed.** Why do you call me ‘Naomi,’ seeing that the LORD has opposed me, and the Sovereign One has caused me to suffer?”

²² So Naomi returned, accompanied by her Moabite daughter-in-law Ruth, who came back with her from the region of Moab. They arrived in Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Ruth 4:14-17

¹⁴ The village women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! ¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. **For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.**”

¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. ¹⁷ The women said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.



Mary and Joseph

Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ... ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So **Joseph** also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to **Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.** ⁵ He went there to register with **Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.**

⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.



isolation alone
lonely loneliness





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Blessing

Beloved, you are not alone on this winding journey. May the companionship of fellow travellers reflect the love of Jesus—our Emmanuel—who was born one of us and walked this same journey.

May Jesus be our light for our journey—our rising sun from heaven, who shines on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.