

TEXT: Ruth 1: 7-10

SUGGESTED AGE RANGE: Pre-K-Elementary

THEME: Helping Others (offering safety)

SUGGESTED PROPS: Wear a hat, use a walking stick, carry a backpack and a water bottle.

After greeting the children, announce that you're getting ready to take a trip, and ask, "Who has ever left their home to go on a trip like me?"

Wait for a show of hands, and then ask a few of them where they went, and why they went. Was it vacation? To visit family?

Then ask how long the trip was. Two days, three? Maybe even a whole week? Ask the children who they traveled with. Did they go alone? Or did they have someone to help them on their journey?

Then make the connection to the story of Ruth: "In our Bible story today, a woman named Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi went on a trip, too. But they didn't leave their homes for fun. Ruth and Naomi lived in a country with very little food, and they were hungry all the time. So they had to leave their home to find a new place to live where they wouldn't be hungry anymore."

Then make the connection between Ruth and Naomi and refugees in the world today.

First ask, "When you went on your trip, were you ever afraid? Maybe to leave your home, or to fly on an airplane, or see things that you've never seen before. (Wait for a few responses)

"Did you know that there are millions of people in our world today who are afraid - not when they leave home but when they ARE home. More than half of those people are children and teenagers! These boys and girls live in dangerous places, and - just like Ruth and Naomi - they often have to leave home to be safe from danger. These people who have to go to a different country to be safe are called refugees."

"Here's the good news: Just like you didn't have to go on a trip to someplace new all by yourself, people who are trying to find new, safe homes today don't have to be alone, either. Today in church we are taking up a special offering. The money we collect will help refugees around the world as they look for safety. Giving our money to help is our way of walking hand in hand with them, even though we're far away."

PRAYER: "Dear God, thank you for always being with us, and thank you for walking with refugees all over the world. We pray that you would watch over our brothers and sisters who are afraid and in danger. Please use our offerings to bless those who need a safe home, and help us to walk together with them, just like Ruth and Naomi. Amen." -Amanda Garcia

STORY IMAGES: Leaving home, God's love, traveling, family, looking for a better place to live

SCRIPTURAL IMAGES: Hospitality, sharing, God, community

