

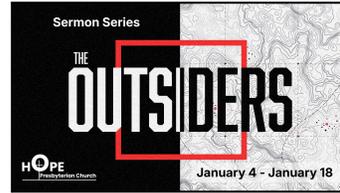
Hope Presbyterian Church
Sermon-Based Bible Study

January 4, 2026

“Ruth” - #1 in the series *The Outsiders*

Scripture Texts (NLT)

Ruth 2:1-13, Leviticus 19:9-10, Matthew 1:5-6



1. *The Outsiders*, a 1983 coming-of-age film directed by Francis Ford Coppola, was based on the popular novel by S.E. Hinton and explores themes of gang loyalty vs. family, loss of innocence, the senselessness of violence, and the importance of empathy in seeing beyond stereotypes.
 - Why do you think the novel and film garnered such a following and became cult classics?
 - What has been your experience of understanding of what it means to be an “outsider”?
2. **Read Ruth 2:1-7, Leviticus 19:9-10.**

Ruth, recently widowed, traveled with her mother-in-law, Naomi, to the family home of her husband to begin life anew.

 - How are these passages helpful to our understanding of Ruth and her decision to go into the field to glean? In what ways would Ruth have been considered an outsider?
 - What does the provision in Leviticus about gleaning tell us about the Hebrew view of outsiders and of social justice?
3. **Read Ruth 2:8-10.**

Before going into the field to glean, Ruth likely conducted her own “risk calculation” to determine whether it was safe, given that she would have been considered an outsider.

 - How does Boaz, a family relative and owner of the field, affirm and assure her safety?
 - Who, in today’s society, are often considered outsiders?
 - Why are we wary of accepting those we perceive to be outside our socially accepted norms?
4. **Read Ruth 2: 11-13.**
 - How does Boaz provide a model for how we are to welcome outsiders?
 - How do we at Hope provide a safe space for everyone - what kind of “field” are we?
 - Why are churches not necessarily places that welcome outsiders?
5. **Read Matthew 1:5-6.**

Mention of Ruth in the record of Jesus lineage shows she was not just a historical footnote, but part of a much bigger plan.

 - Consider these questions raised by the story of Ruth:
 - Am I protective of my “field” or about opening it up to others?
 - Are factors like ethnicity determiners of our worth when it comes to being included in our faith community “field”?
 - What are your thoughts?
6. How can we pray for you?