

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Age-Level Overview

	Open the Bible	Activate Faith
<p>Lower Elementary</p> <p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God sticks with families.</p> <p>PRETZEL PEOPLE: Use cheese and pretzels to stick Naomi and Ruth together in love.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Velcro® strips, items that close with Velcro® (shoes, jackets, pockets, etc.),</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Medium cheddar cheese, pretzel sticks, soap, water, towels, plates, napkins, appetizer serving plate, dishtowel, plastic storage bags</p>
<p>Upper Elementary</p> <p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God helps us stick together.</p> <p>RUTH'S CLING RING: Ruth and Naomi stick together like the sweet biscuits in this snack.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Sticky notes, pens</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Sugar, cinnamon, bundt cake pan, cooking spray to coat the bundt pan, refrigerated tube of biscuits, butter, soap, water, towels, bundt pan, oven, microwave oven, rubber spatula, oven mitt, serving platter, plates, napkins, wet wipes, pencils, sticky notes</p>
<p>All Kids</p> <p>WORKSHOP FOCUS: God wants us to love and care for our families, just as God loves and cares for us.</p> <p>RUTH'S SWEET ROLL WREATH: Snack on a family circle of cinnamon rolls as kids share about God's love.</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: Spark Story Bibles, Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Poster paper, markers</p>	<p>SPARK RESOURCES: None</p> <p>SUPPLIES: Cooking spray, refrigerated tube of cinnamon rolls with icing, white paper, markers or crayons, soap, water, towels, oven, baking sheet, spoons, plates, napkins, serving spatula</p>



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content. Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find a downloadable Family Page for this rotation's story filled with ideas for families to use to explore this story and live out their faith at home.

Workshop Focus: God sticks with families.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

- Each week, remember to welcome kids to the rotation. Keep in mind that for some kids it may be the first time they are visiting your workshop!
- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
- Be sure to visit www.sparksondayschool.org to download the Family Page for this story. Make copies of it and ask Shepherds to distribute it during the Wrap Up.

Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Ruth Storytelling

Greet the kids with joy. **Hooray! You are here today! Thanks for coming.** As the kids arrive, send them to a table of Velcro® pieces. Let them play with the pieces, find matches, stick them together, and pull them apart with lots of ripping noise.

What is this stuff? (Velcro®, or hook-and-loop tape!) **What in the world do we do with hook-and-loop tape?** (hold things together, stick items together, close pockets, shoes, hats, and jackets, balls, etc.)

Hold up some household items that use hook-and-loop tape. **Here is some hook-and-loop tape in action. Look at this! These pieces are meant to stick together. In today's story, we are going to hear about two women who stuck together like hook-and-loop tape. One of the women is named Ruth. The book in the Bible is named after her and tells her story.**

Read the Naomi and Ruth story from the Spark Story Bible, pp. 110-113. Be sure to show the kids the illustrations as you read.

Just like the two sides of the hook-and-loop tape, the two women stuck together. The hook-and-loop tape belongs together, and so did Naomi and Ruth. God made our families like hook-and-loop tape and like Naomi and Ruth. We are meant to stick together with love.

Spark Resources
Spark Story Bibles

Supplies
Velcro® strips, cut into various sizes and pulled apart
Items that close with Velcro® (shoes, jackets, pockets, etc.)

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Pretzel People

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Ingredients

- Medium cheddar cheese, cut into small (5 per kid) and larger (5 per kid) cubes
- Medium cheddar cheese, cut into hearts (or precut), 2 per kid
- Bag of pretzel sticks, (25 sticks per kid)

Set Up: Arrange an appetizer plate of cheese cubes, small and large, and pretzel sticks. Cover it with a dishtowel until its unveiling at the end of the activity.

Activity Instructions

1. Lead the kids to thoroughly wash their hands before you begin. **Let's wash our hands so we can play with our food!**
2. Give each kid a plate. Let them count out three small cheese cubes, three larger cheese cubes, and fifteen pretzel sticks. Make a sample, so the kids can see what to do. **Use the cheese and pretzels to make the three women from the Bible story: Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth. The small cheese cube is a head, the larger cube is a body. The pretzel sticks are a neck, two arms, and two legs.**
3. **These three women were going through a tough time. There was famine in the land. They had no food, money, or protection.** Pick up one of your cheese people and make it walk across your plate. **They packed up their things and took off on a journey to a place where things were better, where the rest of Naomi's family lived.**
4. Keep walking the cheese person. **Plod, plod, plod. It was a long walk! Ruth and Orpah followed Naomi. Plod, plod, plod.**
5. Halt the walking when you say, "Stop!" **Halfway there, Naomi said, "Stop! This is too much to ask of you. Go back!"** Touch two of the cheese cubes together in a kiss. **Naomi kissed Orpah good-bye. Smooch! Bye, bye Orpah!** Set the Orpah cheese person down. Turn the remaining two cheese people to face each other and talk. **But Ruth would not leave Naomi. She made a pledge to Naomi.**
6. Lead the kids to repeat after you as they use their cheesy Ruth to talk. **All of you Ruths, repeat after my Ruth. "I will go where you go. (Kids repeat.) I will live where you live. (Kids repeat.) Your people will be my people (kids repeat.) and your God will be my God." (Kids repeat.)**
7. Give each kid a heart-shaped chunk of cheese. Stick into the heart one pretzel arm from each of the cheese people, so they are held together by it. **So, Naomi**

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Soap
Water
Towels
Plates
Napkins
Appetizer serving plate
Dishtowel
Plastic storage bags, 1 per kid

and Ruth stuck together. They were held together by love: their love, and God's love.

8. Unveil the appetizer plate of more cheese and pretzel sticks. Hold up two pretzel sticks like pom-poms as you say hoorays and welcomes. **Naomi's family welcomed them both into their homeland. "Hooray! Welcome home!" they said.**
9. Enjoy the Naomi and Ruth cheese people snack. Help the kids make two more cheese and pretzel stick people united by a heart. Pack the Naomi and Ruth duos in plastic storage bags for the kids to take home. **Share the story and snack with someone that sticks with you!**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Sum up the session and close with a prayer. **Naomi and Ruth stuck together through some tough times. They were held together with the love that God gives to families. God wants your family to love and care for each other like they did.**

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None

Prayer Time

Grab a piece of hook-and-loop tape from earlier to use in our prayer. Listen, watch, and do as I do. Let's pray together.

Dear God,

Thanks for giving us families. *(Hold up the two parts of the hook-and-loop tape.)*

Please hold us together with love, like Naomi and Ruth. *(Join the two sides of the hook-and-loop tape together.)*

When the world tears us apart, *(Rip the two pieces apart.)*

Bring us back together again with thanksgiving. *(Put the pieces together again.)*

Amen.

Distribute Family Pages to each kid. **Take this home with your Pretzel People for more Spark fun!**

Workshop Focus: God helps us stick together.

Keep these tips in mind as you welcome kids to the workshop and explore the story together.

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- If kids have heard the story several times during previous weeks, read it again! Kids learn through repetition, and every workshop will explore the Bible story in a slightly different way.
- Remember that the Shepherds are there to support you as they accompany kids each week.
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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Ruth Storytelling

Set Up: Write the following verses on individual sticky notes:

Ruth 1:1-5

Ruth 1:6-7

Ruth 1:8-10

Ruth 1:11-14

Ruth 1:15-17

Ruth 1:18

Ruth 1:19-22

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Sticky notes, 7
Pens

Greet the kids with a high five or hug. **Hi, there! It is great to see you today!**

Introduce the Bible story. **Today we are going to read a story from a book of the Bible named after a woman. There are only two books in the entire Bible named after women. Do you know what they are?** (*Ruth, Esther.*)

Let the kids choose a reading assignment for later in the workshop. **Open your Spark Bible to the book of Ruth (page 290). It's a short book. If you want to read, choose one of these seven sticky notes, and mark your place with it.** Be sure to have the page number of each verse ready just in case the kid has trouble finding it. **It's appropriate that we are using sticky notes. The story is about how a family sticks together, and how God sticks with us, no matter what. Now choose a Spark Bible Sticker to mark this story as well.**

Explain the notes. **You will read whatever part of the story you choose on these "sticky notes" out loud to all of us as we put together today's snack. The snack needs time to bake, so let's get started!**

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Ruth's Cling Ring

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Ingredients

(serves 10)

- Sugar, 1 cup (237 mL)
- Cinnamon, 2 teaspoons (10 mL)
- Bundt cake pan
- Cooking spray to coat the bundt pan
- Refrigerated tube of biscuits, 10 per package
- Butter, 4 tablespoons = ½ stick (72 mL)

Set Up: Mix ½ cup (117 mL) of sugar and 1 teaspoon (5 mL) of cinnamon in a shallow bowl. Mix the other ½ cup of sugar and 1 teaspoon of cinnamon into a bowl and set aside for later use. Liberally coat the bundt pan with cooking spray. Arrange the room with the sugar mixture on one side, and the bundt pan on the other. Preheat the oven according to the biscuit package instructions, about 350°F (177°C).

Activity Instructions

1. Wash your hands before you handle any food. **Today we are going to play with our food! Let's wash our hands.**
2. Ask the first reader to share Ruth 1:1-5 by reading the sticky note. Give each kid a biscuit. Guide the kids to pull each biscuit into three parts, one to represent each of the women. **Difficult times pulled apart the lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah. The men in their family had died, and a famine hit the land.**

Spark Resources

Spark Bible
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Soap
Water
Towels
Oven
Microwave oven
Rubber spatula
Oven mitt
Serving platter
Plates
Napkins
Wet wipes
Pencils
Sticky Notes

3. Invite the next reader to share Ruth 1:6-7. Make a scene of placing the greased bundt pan across the room from the sugaring station. **They decided to move back to where the rest of Naomi's family lived, a land far away, but a place where they could have food and support.**
4. Walk the balls of dough in the sugar and cinnamon mixture until they are coated. **It was a long and dusty walk. Plod, plod, plod.**
5. The next reader shares from Ruth 1:8-10. Touch the dough balls to each other, as if they are kissing. **On the walk, Naomi thinks about what she had asked of Ruth and Orpah. They were leaving their own mothers to go with her to a new homeland, family, and faith. Halfway there, she kissed them good-bye and told them to turn back without her.**
6. Cue the reader for verses 11-14. Make the dough cry. **Boo hoo! They cried because they didn't want to leave Naomi.**
7. Toss the single Orpah dough into the bundt pan. **Orpah finally turned back, but Ruth wouldn't do it.**
8. The next verses to be read are 15-17. Stick two of the dough balls together. **Ruth loved Naomi and stuck with her mother-in-law. She said, "I will go where you go. I will live where you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God."**
9. Listen to the words from Ruth 1:18. Toss the adjoined Naomi and Ruth dough into the bundt pan. **They finished the trip, side by side.**
10. The last reader finishes the story with Ruth 1:19-22. Get help from the kids to melt the butter in the microwave for 35 seconds. Have a kid helper stir the remaining cinnamon and sugar mixture into the melted butter. Pour the sugary butter atop the dough balls in the bundt pan. **When Ruth and Naomi finally arrived at their destination, Naomi's family poured over them with a warm welcome.**
11. Bake the bread for 20 minutes. While the bread is baking, clean up the kitchen then gather together to discuss the Think About It and Try It questions in the orange boxes on page 290 and 292 in the Spark Bible. How would it feel to drop everything and move to a different country? How would you welcome a new family that moved into your neighborhood? How does food taste when you're really hungry? Does helping prepare a meal change how it tastes?
12. You can also encourage kids to choose a sticker from the back of the Spark Bible and mark their favorite passage with the sticker and by writing the name of someone who sticks with them in the margin near 1:16-17. Remove the ring from the pan and serve on a serving platter. When it has cooled, give the kids a plate and napkin. Invite them to pull it apart to serve themselves. **When you pull the biscuits apart, say, "Ruth and Naomi stick together!"**

Keep some wet wipes handy for this delicious and messy snack.

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Sum up the session and close with a prayer. **Ruth stuck with Naomi, just as our families and God stick with us. Nothing—neither famine, nor rough roads, nor tough times—can separate you from God's love!**

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

Prayer Time

Give each kid a sticky note and a marker. **Write the name of someone who sticks with you in love. We'll lift up these loved ones in prayer by holding our notes up high. Let's pray!**

Dear God,

Thanks for the role model of Ruth's love for Naomi.

Thanks for sticking with us!

Thanks for sticking us with our family.

Thanks for sticking us with our friends.

We lift up these special people to you in praise and thanks. (Hold sticky notes up in raised hands.)

Thanks for holding us all together with your love.

Amen.

Stick that note in your Bible near the Ruth story to remind you to pray for that special someone. God sticks with you as you go!

Workshop Focus: God wants us to love and care for our families, just as God loves and cares for us.

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Open the Bible (10 minutes)

Ruth Storytelling

Set Up: Set out paper and markers.

Welcome the kids to the Cooking Workshop with a smile. **It's time to cook!**

Thanks for coming!

Gather around a piece of poster paper and markers. **In today's story, we are talking about families. Before we read the story, let's draw our families. Kids, draw simple pictures of your families. Stick figures and smiley faces are great! Notice that our families all look very different. The family in the story from Ruth starts with three women, a very unlikely Bible family.**

If your group is mostly older children, read from the Spark Bible in Ruth 1:1-22 and 2 and 2:1-17 starting on page 290. If your group is mostly younger children, read Naomi and Ruth, and Ruth and Boaz from the Spark Story Bible, pp. 110-117. Show the illustrations to help them follow the story.

Refer to the family poster. **No matter how different our families may look, all**

Spark Resources

Spark Story Bibles
Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Poster paper
Markers

of these families have one thing in common—love! Families love each other.

Consider placing a Spark Bible Sticker near the part of this story that you like best.

Perhaps a “Something I Like” sticker is appropriate where Ruth chooses to stay with Naomi. We all like it when our friends stick with us.

Activate Faith (25 minutes)

Ruth's Sweet Roll Wreath

Before serving any food, always check with caregivers for kids who have food allergies.

Provide an alternative if necessary.

Ingredients

- Cooking spray
- Refrigerated tube of cinnamon rolls with icing, one roll per kid

Set Up: Preheat the oven according to package directions, about 350°F (177°C).

Activity Instructions

1. Make sure the kids thoroughly wash their hands before they handle food. **Let's scrub up, bakers!**
2. Open the cinnamon rolls. Give each kid one roll. **Examine your sticky roll. The top is covered with broken pieces. The lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Orpah were torn apart like the cinnamon topping on the top of your unbaked roll. They were without the support of an extended family in a land that was experiencing famine.**
3. Spray the pan with cooking spray, leaving a cloud of spray hovering in the air. **It was a long and dusty trail to Naomi's hometown. Ruth stuck with Naomi through this difficult time, even though no one expected her to—not even Naomi. Ruth loved Naomi and wanted to take care of her. Ruth and Naomi were a family. God wants our families to love and care for each other the way Ruth cared for Naomi.**
4. **We are going to make a family circle of sweet rolls. When it is your turn, add your roll to the circle. Push the roll up against the one next to it.**
5. Guide the kids to share a story about a loved one as they add their roll to the wreath. Give an example so the kids know what to do. **Who sticks with you? As you add your roll to the circle, tell us the name of someone special who loves you. Share one way this special person cares for you. I'll go first . . .**
Name a family member or special friend and a short story of one way he/she cares for you. For example: “My cousin, Alison, sends me funny cards in the mail. She makes me laugh.”

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Soap
Water
Towels
Oven
Baking sheet
Spoons
Plates
Napkins
Serving spatula
White paper (1 sheet per kid)
Markers or crayons
Wipes

6. Bake the rolls for 13-18 minutes. As the rolls bake, clean up the kitchen, then decorate paper placemats with illustrations or words that describe the people they love. Give each kid a plate and a napkin. When you retrieve the rolls from the oven, let them cool slightly before you ice them. **Naomi and Ruth grew together through a difficult time. They leaned on each other for love and support. Your rolls grew together, too, creating a circle of family love. Look at how they lean on each other for support.**
7. Spread the top of one of the rolls with a spoonful of icing. Pass the frosting and the spoon to each kid. Remind the older kids that their help with the younger ones is appreciated. **The topper on the love that our family has for us is the love that God has for us! As you add the icing to a roll, say aloud, "God loves me! God sticks with me!"**
8. Enjoy the treats. **Eat up, everyone! Thanks for cooking!**

Send (5 minutes)

Wrap Up

Remind the Shepherds to distribute the Family Page for this story if the kids haven't already received it, and come together for Wrap Up.

Sum up the session and close with a prayer. **Ruth loves and cares for her family. God wants us to love and care for our families, just as God loves and cares for us.**

Prayer Time

Stick a short piece of masking tape to each kid's clothing. **In the prayer, I am going to say the word "stick" many times. Each time you hear it, pull the tape off of your clothing and say, "Stick with us, God!" Then, stick the tape back on for the next time. Let's pray!**

Dear God,

We need your sticky love to hold us together!
Help our families to stick (*Stick with us, God!*) **together.**
Help our churches to stick (*Stick with us, God!*) **together.**
Help our friends to stick (*Stick with us, God!*) **together.**
Help us to stick (*Stick with us, God!*) **with you, Lord.**

Amen.

Collect the tape pieces for the trash.

Spark Resources
Family Pages



Supplies
None