

# REFLECTION TIME

A cultural adage suggests that, “*When we don’t know from where we’ve come we won’t know where we are or to what we are being called*”.

The following reflection process is to assist congregations (and groups) that are contemplating change. The process will explore the three formation questions already raised in the article on pages 9 and 10: **Who are we? Who is my neighbour? What is God calling us to do?** In preparation for engaging this reflection process, invite your group to first read the **IMPRINTS** article, and then the Book of Ruth found in the Old Testament.

After participating in a centering time...

**A INVITE GROUPS OF THREE TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

**Reference:** RUTH 1:1-5

- 1) Who was Ruth? (Think about the relationships and tasks that might have been part of her daily life, eg. a woman married to a foreigner, a homemaker, etc.)
- 2) At this time in her life, who were Ruth’s neighbours or other people in her environment? (eg. a foreign mother-in-law, her Moabite extended family, etc.)
- 3) Given Ruth’s life, what would you say she felt called to do? (eg. give care, adapt, etc.)

**Reference:** RUTH 1:6-4:22

- 4) Who was Ruth when she traveled with Naomi to Bethlehem before she married Boaz? (eg. a widow, a provider, etc.)
- 5) When you reflect upon Ruth’s life, what strengths from her past did she build upon to sustain her as she moved into an unknown future?

**B (in plenary) LIST THE RESPONSES TO QUESTION 5 ON A FLIP CHART. WHAT DOES THIS LIST REVEAL TO YOU ABOUT RUTH’S ABILITY TO MAKE CHANGE?**

**OFTEN THE PROCESS OF PERSONAL CHANGE IS NOT DIS-SIMILAR TO THE PROCESS OF CORPORATE CHANGE.**

**C NOW CONSIDER YOUR OWN CONGREGATION (OR GROUP). (in plenary) INVITE PARTICIPANTS TO RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS. RECORD THEIR ANSWERS ON A FLIP CHART.**

- 6) What programs, events, and ministries shaped our life in years past (eg. breakfast programs, picnics, musicals, etc.)? Who were we as a congregation (or group)?
- 7) Given our congregation’s (or group’s) life at that time, what would we say our congregation (or group) felt called to do (eg. reach out, build community, etc.)?
- 8) Who were our neighbours at that time - those beyond our church doors (eg. fisher families, factory workers, etc.)?
- 9) What programs, events, and ministries shape our present life? Who are we now?
- 10) Who are our neighbours now?
- 11) What strengths/characteristics/abilities from our past undergird our present programs, events, and ministries? (see answers to question 7)
- 12) What do our answers suggest to us about our congregation’s (or group’s) ability to move into an unknown future that involves change?

Note: Maritime Conference has a **Discernment Committee** to assist faith communities as they envision their future. Please contact Maritime Conference Office if you would like their support.