



BALDWIN COMMUNITY UMC

LOVE

MARCH 29

YOUTH FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Since the youth group—together with the rest of the church—is on hiatus for a few weeks, I wanted to put together a resource that parents can share with their youth. Think of this as a sort of family Bible study. I'll be sending one each week we are not having Youth Group. It is designed to be read by the parent/grandparent/guardian, or other adult. Additionally, I put some little suggestion boxes around the edges to help guide the conversation. I hope that these provide a nice opportunity for your family.

START HERE



"We always thank God for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers and continually recalling before our God and Father your work of faith, your labor of love, and your enduring hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thess. 1:2-3

Over the last couple of weeks, we have spent a lot more time with family than we normally do. By now we might be getting on each others nerves a little bit. When you spend time close together, it is easy to get frustrated, to start bickering, or worse. Yet, as Christians, we are called to love each other, to love everybody, even our parents, even our siblings, even when they are soooooo annoying. This is the challenge of love. Real love, the kind of love that we talk about in the church, is more than just liking someone, it's the way you care for someone, even at those times when you don't particularly like them. Love is about how we give from ourselves to others—even if its hard.

Take a few moments to talk about how you are feeling this week. Have you felt frustrated or annoyed? Have you found yourself being a more grumpy or unloving than normal?

Some questions have easy answers. But some don't. Don't be afraid of not "having all the answers." It is more important for teens to be heard, than for them to get "answers." Being heard is already comforting.

Be sure to make this a two-way conversation. *Are you feeling despair?* It is important to provide stability, but teens also want to know that they are not alone, that others feel the way they do, *especially you.*



The Bible often groups together three practices that can help us in times where we feel lost or confused—*faith, hope, and love*. This week, we are going to talk about the last of these: **love**. Let's start by reading a story about love. But this isn't your usual love story. It's not what you'd find in a rom-com or love story. Rather, this is a story about the love that holds together a family in a really tough time.

Ask a youth to read: Ruth 1

Ruth is a true model of the kind of love that we aspire to in the church, a selfless love that puts others first, even if its hard, even if it means not doing what we want.

What stood out to you in this story?

What was surprising or interesting?

Ruth showed tremendous love to Naomi, not just through her words, but through her actions. There was nothing that said she needed to stay with Naomi. There was no law or custom that said she should care for her, they weren't related by blood, their only ties were gone. In fact, even Naomi tries to convince Ruth to leave. But Ruth can't leave, she cares too much for Naomi. Ruth's love is too great to leave Naomi alone.

What sorts of things do you imagine that Ruth was willing to sacrifice to care for Naomi? How would her life now be different, because of her love?


As we close out this time, with one last question, let's think about the world that we find ourselves in today.

How might express love during this time? How do we show love to our family? How do we show love people outside of our family?

Let's close with a word of prayer:

*Spirit of God, grant us your hope.
When times are tough and things look bleak,
remind us of the wonderful future that you have for each of
us and for the whole world.*

Amen.



Did you get a trite "Sunday School answer"? Encourage them to go deeper, they can do it! Try encouraging them with a clear goal, by adding something like: "let's try to come up with three more examples."