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OUR HOUSE — SERIES

FOLLOWING GOD’S PLAN

Whatever has value to us, we make a plan for its future. If your bank balance is important, you make a financial plan. If your home is important, you make a house plan. If your body is important, you make a fitness plan. If your family is important to you, make a family plan. Thankfully, God doesn’t leave us in the dark about how to build a great family. He outlines His plans for the family in His Word. When we follow God’s plan we will build great families.

This is a series for everyone. We are all called to make our homes places where people and families thrive. It will be an inspiring and practical series for parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, brothers, sisters, people who are single, married couples and those who would like to be married one day.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This is a short but practical series and we pray that this resource will be useful for both you and your life group. On the first page of each week there will be a selection of Scriptures that will be used throughout the teaching series. Here your life group will use the Discovery Bible Method together to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to you and the church.

The adjacent page is more for personal reflection and plan making. The Blueprint page has a place for you to write down your personal prayer and plan for you life, your family and your legacy. The aim of the Blueprint is to give you a practical plan for your next steps and to ask God to grow you and your household to be more like Jesus.

**IN THEIR HEARTS HUMANS PLAN
THEIR COURSE,
BUT THE LORD ESTABLISHES
THEIR STEPS.**

— **PROVERBS 16:9**

MAKING PLANS

USING THE BLUEPRINT FOR YOUR HOUSE

To give you the best shot at making a lasting plan for your household, we've got 5 action questions and space for you to write these plans down.

Pray: What is the prayer that God is placing on your heart for your family, friends, neighbours, children and legacy?

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

GRANDPARENTS DAY

Bring your whole household to church on
Sunday 31st October

Tell your children about it, and let your children tell
their children, and their children the next generation.

— Joel 1:3

WEEK 1

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

In Ephesians 5, Paul outlines God's plan for a Christian marriage in a culture that was living according to a different blueprint. In ancient Greco-Roman culture, wives were the property of husbands. Love was considered irrelevant as marriage was to produce children, not friendship. Wives were practical, not precious and in a sex-saturated society, fidelity from husbands was rare. Paul gives followers of Jesus a different plan to follow for a loving and lasting marriage and blueprint for all people to live by: "be devoted to one another out of reverence for Christ".

Key Passages to choose from

Ephesians 5:21-33

Genesis 2:18-25

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for our Loved Ones

Pray: What is your overarching prayer for the way you love, your friends, your family, your partner? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

WEEK 2

KIDS AND FAMILIES

Psalm 127 is a Psalm of Solomon, who despite some of his flaws, was a great builder. God gave his father David a clear plan to follow to build His house, but it was Solomon that He selected to do the building. Solomon followed the plan diligently, not taking any shortcuts. He knew that God was building His home as the workers simply followed His plan. Sadly, Solomon didn't follow God's plan when it came to raising his own family. Likewise, we can make very detailed plans to build a beautiful home without taking the same time to plan for the Godly family that we want to raise in that home.

Key Passages to choose from

Psalm 127

Ephesians 6:1-4

Deuteronomy 11 (particularlry verses 18-21)

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for our Kids and Families

Pray: What is your overarching prayer for the children in your life (your kids, nieces and nephews, neighbours, etc)? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

WEEK 3

A LASTING LEGACY

When Ahaz died, his son Hezekiah becomes the King at 25 years of age. Hezekiah decided that he would not follow the plans of his father who had turned away from God. Instead, he returned to the ways of his great, great, great.....grandpa David. Every parent, every grandparent, every follower of Jesus has a decision to make: What from my family of origin is good and needs to be preserved in the next generation? And what from my family needs to change so that we have a lasting legacy? What is going to make God's name great beyond your lifetime?

Key Passages to choose from

2 Chronicles 29:1-4

2 Chronicles 32:2-4

2 Kings 19-20 (tells of the larger impact of Hezekiah's reign)

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for a Lasting Legacy

Pray: What is your overarching prayer for the impact your life will have on those who come after you? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

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OUR HOUSE

GATEWAY CITY AND 6PM SERIES

In the first early stages of life, our homes are a key influence in shaping how we see ourselves, others and the world around us. In our teen years and early to mid twenties, we begin to move out of the home we grew up with and begin the journey to find and forge our own home. Not a physical home, but a home of our values, community, purpose and relationships.

This journey to create and find a new home can be difficult to navigate in a culture that encourages autonomy, sex without intimacy, and relationships that are on our own terms. As Christians we are called to live a different way where Biblical principles underpin vibrant and thriving relationships that create a loving and healthy home to live in. Dating, Singleness and Marriage aren't relationship destinations, but seasons for Jesus to shape us to be more like him and create a thriving home.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

This is a short but practical series and we pray that this resource will be useful for both you and your life group. On the first page of each week there is a key Scripture to dive into. Here your life group will use the Discovery Bible Method together to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying to you and the church.

The adjacent page is more for personal reflection and plan making. The Blueprint page has a place for you to write down your personal prayer and plan for your relationships, no matter if you are single, dating or married. The aim of the Blueprint is to give you a practical plan for your next steps and to ask God to grow you to be more like Jesus.

**IN THEIR HEARTS HUMANS PLAN
THEIR COURSE,
BUT THE LORD ESTABLISHES
THEIR STEPS.**

— PROVERBS 16:9

MAKING PLANS

USING THE BLUEPRINT FOR YOUR HOUSE

To give you the best shot at making a lasting plan for your household, we've got 5 action questions and space for you to write these plans down.

Pray: What is the prayer that God is placing on your heart for your relationships, whether you are single, dating or married?

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

WEEK 1 - DATING

Dating isn't something that the Bible has a clear framework for. You can't find a chapter in the Bible with Jesus' teaching on it, but you can find guiding principles about our relationships, how we are to navigate them, and also who to choose to do life with. Dating is a period of time where two people are committed to discerning whether a lifelong commitment is something they can make to each other.

Therefore dating needs to have a purpose. Dating needs to be done with a focus on imitation of Christ not just attraction another. Attraction happens naturally but a lasting relationship is built on the character of the couple.

Key Passage to explore

Ephesians 5:21-33

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for Dating

Pray: What is your overarching prayer for the kind of person you want to be for your current/future partner? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 personal characteristics you need to grow in to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 characteristics, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

WEEK 2 - SINGLENES

Singleness is a natural part of life. While we often think of 'singles' as those who are younger and not yet married, we forget that singleness exists in many forms; widows, single dad's, people who have been divorced. Singleness is not something that just exists until you get a partner. So often the unfortunate narrative is that singleness is a season to get out of quickly so that we can be fulfilled in a relationship and marriage...as if singleness is a lesser state of being.

Rather, singleness is a gift from God in the same way that marriage is a gift from God. Paul was able to articulate that singleness has both blessings and complexities and that being single can help us to see what God is doing in us and what God can do through us.

Key Passage to explore

1 Corinthians 7:29-35

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for Singleness

Pray: What is your prayer for the current season that you are in? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

WEEK 3 - MARRIAGE

In Ephesians 5, Paul outlines God's plan for a Christian marriage in a culture that was living according to a different blueprint. In ancient Greco-Roman culture, wives were the property of husbands. Love was considered irrelevant as marriage was to produce children, not friendship. Wives were practical, not precious and in a sex-saturated society, fidelity from husbands was rare. Paul gives followers of Jesus a different plan to follow for a loving and lasting marriage and blueprint for all people to live by: "be devoted to one another out of reverence for Christ".

Key Passages to explore

Mark 10:1-8

Ephesians 5:21-33

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from the passage.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Blueprint for Marriage

Pray: What is your overarching prayer for marriage, either present, future or your married loved ones? Write it down.

Prioritise: What are the top 3 things you need to prioritise to see this prayer come to life?

1.

2.

3.

Plan: For each of these 3 priorities, what is the first action step you can take this week? Make calendar entries into your week so you don't forget.

1.

2.

3.

Practice: We only see progress when we practice. How will you practice and implement these plans to grow your house?

Praise: Look back at these plans and see where God has grown you and those around you. Give God thanks and praise for all He is doing.

RUTH

RUTH

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RUTH

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RUTH

LIFE GROUP
BOOK

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RUTH — SERIES

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Ruth is a beautiful vignette - a story set in one of the most turbulent times in Israel's history. Yet, despite these hard days this is ultimately a story about how God uses normal people to outwork His wonderful plan and works all things together for good. Through the faithful obedience and courage of people like Ruth and Boaz, we see God's redemptive plan at work that changes all of human history.

This Life Group Booklet has a lot of content for you and your life group to explore together. Each session begins with a summary of that week's theme from Ruth and a snippet of Scripture from the key text in the chapter. We invite everyone to do the Discovery Bible Method as it creates a habit for both new believers and long time Christians alike to ask the Holy Spirit to speak through God's Word.

This may be enough content for your life group. However, for groups that want to go deeper, the adjacent page to the Discovery Bible Method has some extra questions, application, prayer and practice for you to engage with. The aim of the deeper reading into Ruth is to ask the Holy Spirit to help show you how to Practice the Way of Jesus. Some of these questions are adapted from the Ruth Series from RightNow Media.

**“DON'T URGE ME TO LEAVE YOU OR TO
TURN BACK FROM YOU.**

**WHERE YOU GO I WILL GO, AND WHERE YOU
STAY I WILL STAY.**

**YOUR PEOPLE WILL BE MY PEOPLE AND
YOUR GOD MY GOD.”**

- RUTH 1:16

CHRISTMAS AT GATEWAY

CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN EVERY CAMPUS

Christmas at Gateway is the most wonderful time of the year as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. In the midst of the Christmas dinners, presents and holidays, we remember the Good News that Jesus was born and through him all creation is redeemed.

This year we are excited to let you know that Gateway Carols will be live in every campus thanks to the Carols Roadshow! Our wonderful production team, singers, musicians, cast and a whole host of volunteers will be bringing good tidings of Carols joy to you over two massive weekends. Visit our website for all the details.

**FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN,
TO US A SON IS GIVEN,
AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ON HIS
SHOULDERS. AND HE WILL BE CALLED...**

**WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING FATHER,
PRINCE OF PEACE.**

- ISAIAH 9:6

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Head to our website to see the dates
for Carols in your Campus

gatewaybaptist.com.au/christmas

RUTH CHAPTER 1

Where are you, God?

The story of Ruth begins in an act of desperation. Elimelech has taken his wife and family away from Israel to the foreign land of Moab, where they inevitably fall into the worship and practices of that nation. Sadly, their act of unfaithfulness ends in pain and death. Naomi and Ruth are left with no husbands, no family, and no hope. Yet despite this, Naomi returns to the land of her family and her God – believing for better days. And Ruth, her Moabite daughter-in-law profoundly chooses to be faithful, not only to her mother-in-law but also to her God.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 1

But Ruth replied, “Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me.” – Ruth 1:16-17

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 1.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Ruth personifies faithfulness. Who do you see that personifies faithfulness in your life and why?

Going Deeper

Read: Deuteronomy 23:3-6. Why did God banish the Moabites from entering Israel? What do you think the relationship between Israel and Moab would be like at the time of Ruth's story?

Share: In verses 8-9 Naomi prays for her daughters-in-law. What does she pray and why?

Share: Who does Naomi blame for her situation? How is Ruth's response different?

Application

Share: What would it look like for you to be like Ruth in your friendships, marriage, work relationships and at church? What sacrifices might you have to make to serve others as Ruth did?

Share: Naomi renames herself Mara, which means bitterness. What might be the consequences of not dealing with bitterness in your own heart?

Pray

Pray: Thank God for his love for you and ask Him to show you how to increase your faithfulness to Him and to those around you.

Practicing the Way

Action: Choose one relationship this week to focus on living and loving sacrificially for that person, just as Ruth did for Naomi.

RUTH CHAPTER 2

God is my Provider

As Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem, their circumstances begin to change. Firstly, God provides through a provision that had been made in the Law. They were entitled to collect the off cuts of crops left behind during the harvest. But more than this, Ruth also encountered significant generosity and provision from Boaz – a man of character who exhibits godly kindness (*hesed*). Whilst others would possibly ignore or even attack, Boaz sees and offers kindness. Boaz is the answer to the prayer that Ruth prays.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 2

Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” – Ruth 2:10-12

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 2.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Has there been a time when the unexpected generosity of a stranger has provided for you in miraculous ways?

Going Deeper

Share: The Hebrew word for this love is the word *hesed* - a love that is abounding in kindness, generosity, steadfastness, loyalty and faithfulness. Where do you see *hesed* in this story?

Read: What provision in Deuteronomy 24:17-22 is Ruth benefiting from here? How does Boaz go above and beyond?

Share: Why do you think Ruth stood out to Boaz?

Application

Share: What risks did Boaz take to extend kindness to Ruth? What social norms do we often have to cross today in order to serve others?

Share: What are some other examples of people in the Bible who went above and beyond for others like Boaz did?

Pray

Pray: What are the big prayers on your heart for you and your family right now. Pray for humility for one another and ask God for miraculous provision for your circumstances.

Practicing the Way

Action: How can you practice generous provision this week by being an answer to prayer for someone else?

Encourage: Look on the characteristics of Boaz and find someone you know who displays the same virtues. Tell them about what you see in them and how their character inspires you.

RUTH CHAPTER 3

God is Faithful

Ruth shows incredible faithfulness to Naomi, trusting her wisdom and guidance in her relationship with Boaz. As a Moabite woman, it takes great courage and confidence to pursue Boaz. But her action is noted as godly kindness (*hesed*) – and Boaz celebrates her as a woman of noble character. Boaz too is faithful to Ruth in choosing to receive Ruth in his life and take up her desperate cause.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 3

The LORD bless you, my daughter,” he replied. “This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character. – Ruth 3:10-11

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 3.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Ruth follows Naomi's instructions and steps out boldly and in faith. Have you got a story of when you made a leap of faith and trusted in God's greater plan for your life?

Going Deeper

Share: Summarise the story of Ruth so far. What has changed for the two women and what challenges remain unsolved?

Share: What links can you see in Ruth's request in 3:9 and Boaz's prayer in 2:12?

Share: Why can't Boaz redeem Ruth? How does this speak to the character of Boaz?

Application

Share: Naomi first tells Ruth to act and then tells her to wait on Boaz. What is the difference between actively and passively waiting on God? How is the waiting passive or active here?

Share: How does Boaz go further to protect Ruth and Naomi at the end of the chapter? What does this say about what Boaz sees in Ruth's character?

Pray

Pray: Pray for open doors for every person in your life group this week. Pray for courage to practice faithfulness, even when it may cost you something.

Practicing the Way

Action: Choose one area of your life and ask God for discernment and courage to make a bold step for Him this week.

RUTH CHAPTER 4

God is my Redeemer

Where this story begins in tragedy and death, it ends with joy and life. God's plan for Ruth is one of redemption, hope and joy. At a cost both financially and personally, Boaz chooses to redeem Ruth and her life is changed forever. This climax to this story points to God's redemptive story for humanity. Just as Boaz is the guardian-redeemer for Ruth, there is another Redeemer who would ultimately come in the line of Boaz and Ruth that would save the world. In the following generations that boy, Jesus would also be born in Bethlehem and redeem all of humanity.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 4

So, Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son...Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. – Ruth 4:10-17

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 4.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Who is someone who regularly shows you *hesed* and sacrificial love? How do they show it and how might you love them this week?

Going Deeper

Share: Boaz clearly desires Ruth but risks that love to follow the letter of the Law. What does this say about Boaz? What does it say about God?

Share: How does Boaz turn the tables and convince the other redeemer to allow Boaz to marry Ruth? Is there any significance to why Boaz would include Ruth in the second round bargain?

Application

Share: The other redeemer is supposed to redeem Ruth first, but this chapter is the first time he's introduced in the story. What does this tell us about his character? How is this different than God's command to care for those around us who are struggling?

Share: Boaz sacrificed for Ruth. Jesus sacrificed for us. What is the most meaningful part about Jesus' sacrifice to you?

Pray

Pray: Pray that God would grant each of you holiness and integrity of character. Pray bold prayers for your future that will bear fruit because of that integrity.

Practicing the Way

Action: Like Boaz, we are invited to step in the gap. How can we step in the gap this week and invite people to hear the good news of redemption? Who can you invite to Gateway Carols?