



## Introducing the 2007–2008 *Horizons* Bible Study

# Above and Beyond

## Hearing God's Call in Jonah and Ruth

By Carol M. Bechtel

With Suggestions for Leaders by Joyce MacKichan Walker

Every Christian has a call. Sometimes that call demands major life changes. Sometimes that call is answered in small acts of faithfulness made many times over in the course of a lifetime. But what exactly does it mean to hear God's call? What does it mean for each of us, as people of faith, to hear and respond to God's call?

In the 2007–2008 *Horizons* Bible study, *Above and Beyond: Hearing God's Call in Jonah and Ruth*, Old Testament scholar and pastor Carol Bechtel looks at this question through the lens of what God's call meant for Jonah and Ruth. Not just a "fish tale" or a "Cinderella story," these biblical books, says Bechtel, offer us insight into what it means for each of us to hear and heed God's call. Further, these books teach us that God's steadfast love goes above and beyond anything we could ever imagine and leaves no corner of our lives untouched!

No matter where you are on your life's journey, this study will challenge you to ask, "What am I called to do? Who am I called to be? What am I called to say?"

### Helps and Highlights in Each of the Nine Lessons

- ❖ Key ideas
- ❖ Discussion questions
- ❖ Opportunities for reflection
- ❖ Definitions
- ❖ Prayers
- ❖ Suggestions for Leaders
- ❖ Bible study resources in every issue of *Horizons* magazine

Carol M. Bechtel is professor of Old Testament at Western Theological Seminary. She grew up on a farm in Fulton, Illinois, and attended Hope College and Western Theological Seminary. She received her PhD in Old Testament from Yale University in 1992 and was the Bible study leader for the 2000 Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women. She has written several books including *Esther: A Commentary for Preaching*, in the Interpretation Series, and two devotional collections—*Glimpses of Glory* and *Life After Grace*—all published by Westminster John Knox Press.

Joyce MacKichan Walker is minister of education at Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton, New Jersey. A graduate of the Presbyterian School of Christian Education (now Union-PSCE) and a certified Christian educator since 1983, she has served on two General Assembly workgroups on the role and status of Christian educators. Joyce teaches PC(USA) educator certification courses and is a visiting lecturer at Princeton Theological Seminary. She wrote a leader's guide for Marcia Z. Nelson's *The Gospel According to Oprah* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).



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