

# congregational libraries today

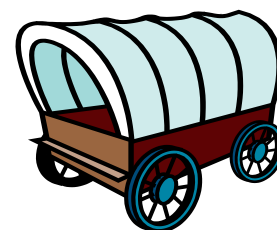


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Return with CSLA ...



## to the Oregon Trail

As has been said before, we hope you have started saving your pennies for a trip to glorious Portland and beautiful Oregon **July 30 – August 1.**

Plans are underway for an excellent meeting at the lovely Crowne Plaza of Lake Oswego. This hotel is set in a quiet residential/commercial part of Portland with complete safety for walking and exploring. Many good restaurants are in easy walking distance. The hotel has a shuttle service available for a five-mile radius.

gatherings, roundtable offerings, or just sitting and enjoying the pleasant open space. There is a restaurant adjacent to the lobby with delightful meals.

The website has a series of photos of the hotel and its amenities. Just google Crowne Plaza Lake Oswego and see the array. The conference committee thoroughly enjoyed our tour of this facility, and these photos are just exactly what the hotel looks like. We had a really “scrumptious” breakfast there and went back for dinner another day.

This year the conference will be from Wednesday through Friday as this hotel is usually extra busy on weekends. We hope this will make it possible for people to come to Oregon and stay for the week and see the sights before and after the conference. The hotel has graciously extended our room price for before and after the conference so make your reservations early.

Although it is a little early for speakers, leaders, and vendors to commit to the “advanced” date of

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The accommodations at this hotel and conference center are really delightful. An open central lobby can be used for plenary sessions if necessary, or discussion

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## Good news to start our year, virtual chapter, opportunities

It is a pleasure to start the year with good news. Many of you live in areas where there is not a local chapter, but now there is an active Virtual Chapter and you can participate from the comfort of your home. You only need internet access or, in the case of our first virtual meeting, access to the web or a telephone. Some of the participants used Skype, and other CSLA Virtual Chapter members participated by phone.

For the past two years the CSLA board has been working with the idea of the virtual chapter. Through the leadership of Marcia Trauernicht, Chapters Coordinator, we have had our first virtual meeting. If you are interested in participating in the Virtual Chapter, contact Marcia for more information or see the article on page 7 in this issue.

### NCLA GIFT

CSLA has received a wonderful gift from the National Church Library Association. As you may know, NCLA ceased operation during the

2013 calendar year. We are pleased to welcome former members of NCLA into CSLA membership and we look forward to their participation. The Church and Synagogue Library Association is also thrilled to have been chosen as one of the recipients of the final disbursement of NCLA funds. This boost to our treasury made possible the purchase of a much needed new computer for our national office in Portland, Oregon, as well as providing additional support for the mission of CSLA in the support of congregational librarians. Thank you NCLA!

### OPPORTUNITIES

If you are looking for ways to get more involved in CSLA there are many opportunities. If you love to read, the Rodda Committee will be needing a chairperson and members for next year to select the outstanding book for adults. Contact me or the national office and we can steer you in the right direction if you would like to be active on this

committee.

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Begin making your plans now to attend the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference in Lake Oswego, Oregon, July 31 through August 2. If you have never attended one of the CSLA conferences, it is something to add to your "bucket list." The workshops provide information about new technologies and library topics as well as encourage dialogue about library issues you may be experiencing. Be sure to check the CSLA website for conference information; the registration form will be posted there as well. Come join us as we journey down the Oregon Trail, making new friends and building a stronger network of library support.

Looking forward to seeing you in Oregon.

—Cheryl Cutchin  
President, CSLA



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## Conference—

continued from page 1

the end of July, we have had some plans confirmed.

The library tours, which are always a big attraction, are planned for the afternoon of Tuesday 29 July. There is an Episcopal cathedral in the city's downtown. It has two small libraries, one a very interesting children's library, and a lovely, small bookstore. We bought a few things there – surprise!

We hope to visit a synagogue library very near there. There is another resource center that is housed in a Presbyterian church in the same area. The church has a library which we did not know about until we visited the resource center. We asked them to please include that in our tour because it is very small but has an amazing use of its space. We just fell in love with it.

Tuesday morning is the beginning librarian's school taught by Jeri



**Atrium provides gathering options.**

Baker. Then the class will join the afternoon tour of libraries and resource centers. As this is not official conference time, so to speak, we hope to have some planned activities for early birders this evening—perhaps roundtable discussions or maybe a dinner cruise on the Willamette.

**Wednesday, July 30** will begin with a plated breakfast and the annual business meeting. Following this will be a grand opening of the exhibits and silent auction. Take note—Cokesbury has already agreed to exhibit for Conference 2014.

Dawn Domans is in charge of the silent auction and would be glad of some help in arranging and setting up. She did a super job last summer. Monica Tenney has graciously taken over the exhibits. We are most grateful.

In this time period we are planning for any committees to meet that have not met already or need to finish a previous meeting.

Wednesday noon will be the opening luncheon and keynote speaker with author signings following and then our first session of workshops. We are hoping to have “tea with the exhibitors” in late afternoon to give us quality time with those who have come to display, sell, and assist us.

Dinner will be plated and dessert follows at the Chapters Coordinator reception in the Atrium. It is such a pleasant setting as you see in the photo at the top of this page. If scheduling allows, there might be time for roundtable

>>

## Fisher is Thursday dinner speaker



Author Suzanne Woods Fisher from California will be our speaker on Thursday evening. Fisher is a bestselling author of fiction and non-fiction books about the Old Order Amish for Revell Books. She lives with her family in the San Francisco Bay Area. You can find Suzanne online at [www.suzannewoodsfisher.com](http://www.suzannewoodsfisher.com). Some of her bestselling books are *The Keeper*, *The Lancaster County Secrets* series, *A Lancaster County Christmas*, as well as nonfiction books about the Amish, including *Amish Peace*. She is fascinated by faith-based communities. Her interest in the Anabaptist culture can be directly traced to her grandfather, who was raised in the Old Order German Baptist Brethren Church in Franklin County, Pennsylvania. Suzanne is the

host of *Amish Wisdom*, a weekly radio program, is a columnist for *Christian Post* and has a free downloadable app, *Amish Wisdom*, that delivers a daily Amish proverb. She loves to hear from readers!

Her chosen topic will be “Talk about the Amish: Why Do They Fascinate Us?” Maybe it's the fast pace of living, maybe it's the speed of new technology, but there's something about the Amish that beckons to us. Who are the Amish and how have they been able to hold on to their traditions for over 400 years? In this program, Suzanne gives a brief, painless history of the Amish. She offers ideas about how to bring some of the better characteristics of the Amish into our busy, modern, very non-Amish lives.



## Conference—

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discussion here after dessert if all are not too “done in.”

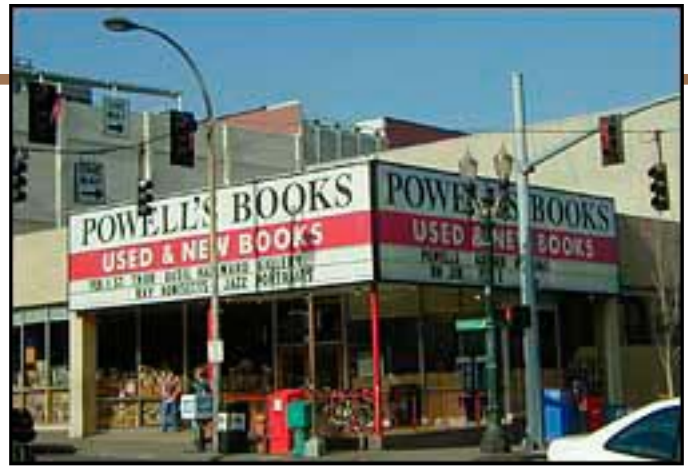
**Thursday, July 31** will be another active day with workshop sessions II and III in the morning and session IV after lunch. Breakfast will be on your own. This day’s luncheon will be the Awards event. This part of conference is always such a treat as we see the awardees and hear about their accomplishments. After the final workshop [IV] there will be time for denominational meetings. We have not had these in some time and the committee felt it was time to renew acquaintance with our scattered fellows.

Late Thursday afternoon will be time to complete affairs with vendors and make those final bids at the silent auction. The auction concludes at 6 p.m. The evening dinner will have a most special

speaker - Suzanne Woods Fisher from California. Author signing will follow dinner.

**Friday, Aug. 1** will be a plated breakfast with the installation of officers. We also plan to have the usual skit and preview of conference 2015.

After breakfast there will be a final pickup of auction materials at the registration desk. During the morning one can pick up a boxed



**Besides the pre-conference tour of libraries and resource centers on Tuesday, there is a guided tour of Powell's Bookstore that will include their rare book department. This is a treat NOT TO BE MISSED!**

lunch for the trip home or to eat on the afternoon tours.

Planned tours for Friday are not final yet, but we hope to do the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive

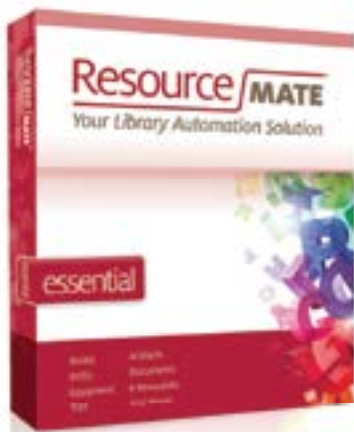
Center. This is a great presentation of the endurance and pluck of our pioneer ancestors in what was certainly a most extraordinary journey. It would be nice to go to

Multnomah Falls [the symbol of the state] and have dinner. Really one must see this falls – another NOT TO BE MISSED. You won't miss Mt. Hood [a symbol of Portland] because you can see it just about anywhere you are in city. There may also be the possibility of the dinner cruise mentioned earlier.

All workshop leaders are not confirmed so far. There will be more about the conference in the next issue and on the web [www.cslainfo.org](http://www.cslainfo.org). —Conference 2014 Committee



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# DOING DEWEY:

## CLASSIFYING MATERIALS WITH CONTRIBUTORS FROM MORE THAN ONE FAITH TRADITION

BY SUSAN E. SNYDER  
[SSNYDER44147@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SSNYDER44147@GMAIL.COM)

I am writing about a situation that I encountered twice when looking over the recommended Dewey Decimal numbers for the pre-publication reviews in *Congregational Libraries Today* (CLT). One of the books being reviewed was about leadership, and the other was about the problem of suffering, but both included contributions or viewpoints from more than one faith tradition. In each case, for CLT, I recommended a number from the comparative religion section of the Dewey Decimal Classification. Because I was using the 23rd unabridged edition of Dewey, from which the 15th abridged edition is derived, I recommended numbers from the very beginning of the 200 class: 206.1 for the book on leadership and 202.118 for the book on the problem of suffering. I would have recommended the same numbers if I had been using the 22nd unabridged edition, from which the 14th abridged edition is derived.

However, if you are using the 21st unabridged edition, from which the 13th abridged edition is derived, or an edition earlier than that, you should not use these numbers. In these earlier editions, comparative religion was classed in the 291s. The number for the book on leadership would be 291.61, and the number for the book on the problem of suffering would be 291.2118 using these earlier editions.

The Dewey numbers that I recommended for these books are

the numbers that would also be used for them in a public library. I recommended them for CLT because the Church and Synagogue Library Association serves all faiths. Singling out one tradition for books with contributions from more than one tradition would have resulted in numbers that would not be useful to readers of CLT serving congregations from other traditions.

While using comparative religion numbers for materials written from more than one faith tradition is correct from the viewpoint of a Dewey purist, it is not absolutely necessary to do this in your own congregational library. You may decide that books about a specific subject, with contributions from more than one faith tradition, would be more useful if classed with the specific subject in your own faith tradition.

For example, in a Christian church library, the book on local congregational leadership would then be classed in 253, and the book on the meaning of suffering would be classed in 231.8. In a Jewish synagogue library using Dewey, the book on local congregational leadership would then be classed in 296.61, and the book on the meaning of suffering would be classed in 296.3118. These numbers have remained the same from the 21st unabridged (13th abridged) edition to the 23rd unabridged (15th abridged) edition. If you make a local policy decision of this type, record your decision for future reference.

## New Year's Resolutions

“For a new year to bring you something new, make a move, like a butterfly tearing its cocoon! Make a move!” —

**Mehmet Murat Ildan**

2014 will be the year for great expectations and bold actions.

I resolve to:

- ▷ Have my membership with CSLA active.
  - ▷ Use the CLT journal as a source of news as well as guidance through its reviews for my library's new acquisitions.
  - ▷ Bring the news of CSLA programs and publications to as many members and prospective members as possible.
  - ▷ Spread the word about the benefits of CSLA membership to new librarians and library science students.
  - ▷ Encourage new librarians to contact us for mentoring via e-mail or by actual visits to our own library.
  - ▷ Keep in mind ways to support CSLA financially with established venues like The Women's Bean Project ([www.womensbeanproject.com](http://www.womensbeanproject.com) with our Code CSLA 12) and making purchases from Amazon.com through our National Web Site ([www.cslainfo.org](http://www.cslainfo.org)) as well as donations (Memorials for deceased members of our Chapter)
  - ▷ Attend the CSLA National Conference in Lake Oswego, Oregon, July 30-August 1, 2014.
- I invite you to consider these resolutions as your own.

Happy 2014!

MARIA ISABEL GARCIA  
MEMBERSHIP VICE-PRESIDENT  
NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER



# TECH TALK

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION TOOLS (PART 2)

by Marjorie Smink



Internet-based or electronic communication tools continue to ease the sharing of information between individuals and within groups. These tools can be helpful for congregational librarians as they work with library users and staff. Blogs, social networks and chat rooms are more examples of electronic communication tools.



A **BLOG** is an informational site that is published on the Internet. It is made up of specific entries or “posts” that are usually displayed in reverse chronological order with the most recent post shown first. The word *blog* is a truncation of the term “weblog.” The majority of blogs are interactive; they allow visitors to leave comments and send messages. One well-known blog is Wikipedia.



There are many types of blogs which differ in content and delivery. A **PERSONAL BLOG** is a diary written by one person. A **GENRE BLOG** focuses on one subject such as music, art, health, politics, travel or congregational libraries. A **MEDIA TYPE BLOG** could be a photo, sketch or typecast blog. A **REVERSE BLOG** is created by users, not a single blogger.



A **MICROBLOG** is composed of posts of small pieces of digital content—photos, text, short videos. Increased functionality of this portable communication tool has increased its popularity. Friends, families and library colleagues use microblogs to keep in touch. Examples of microblogs are social media such as Twitter and Facebook.



A **SOCIAL NETWORK**, the grouping of individuals into a specific group, can be accomplished in person but is most popular online. The Internet is accessed by millions of people who want to meet others who share their interests in many subjects. Websites are used for social networking. Examples of networking communities are MySpace, Yahoo! and Facebook. Social networking sites allow users to share photos and comments with people in their network. Social networking services associated with these sites provide profiles and social links for each user as well as the means to connect by e-mail and instant messaging.

A **CHAT ROOM** is an area on the Internet where online conversations are held in real time by a number of users. The primary use of a chat room is to share information with a group of people who are connected by a shared interest. The ability to converse with multiple people in the same conversation sets apart chat rooms from instant messaging programs, which are meant for one-on-one communication.

**CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARIANS ARE ENCOURAGED TO INCREASE THE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION TOOLS AS PART OF THEIR LIBRARY MINISTRY.**



# CHAPTER Chatter



## LOS ANGELES COUNTY AREA CHAPTER

**“AHEAD (Accelerated Habilitation Education And Development) with Horses”** was the featured program at the October 11 fall meeting of the Los Angeles County Area Chapter. Host Joyce Davison has been a longtime volunteer with this “organization that helps disabled, disadvantaged, and special needs children in the Los Angeles area.” For more information about this forty-five year old organization, check out its website at <http://aheadwithhorsesla.org/>.

## SAN JOSE BAY AREA CHAPTER

The members of the San Jose Bay Area Chapter scheduled an afternoon full of fun and discovery for September 16, starting with a picnic at Washington Park in Sunnyvale, CA, followed by a visit to the Sunnyvale Public Library. Glenda Strombom described its automated return process, saying that returned material is sorted by subject/DDC as it is moved on conveyer belts, then dropped into corresponding rolling bins to be shelved. (Shelving and dusting still has to be done by humans!) A demonstration of the library's new 3-D printer was also given—at the time of the tour, there was a four-month waiting list for its use. Definitely a fun and interesting way to end the summer!

Here is a useful website recommended by the San Jose Bay Chapter: **The Interfaith Calendar** (<http://www.interfaithcalendar.org/>).

## NORTHEASTERN OHIO CHAPTER

On October 11, the Eastern Shore Area group of the Northeastern Ohio Chapter held its fall meeting featuring “Untangling the Web” and “Book Chat.” Members shared websites that they have found useful for their work with their congregational libraries and also recommended those that would be appropriate for congregational library collections.

Is your chapter on Facebook? Check out this chapter's page: “NE Ohio Chapter - Church and Synagogue Library Association.” And, don't forget the “Church & Synagogue Library Association” page either. (Be sure to type in the full name when searching for it, if you haven't “friended” CSLA yet.)

[org/](#)) lists “primary sacred times for world religions” through 2021. Be sure to click on the “Definitions of Calendar Listings” link for brief descriptions of these religions' events and holy days.

## VIRTUAL CHAPTER

Over a dozen interested CSLA members attended the Virtual Chapter breakfast meeting, held July 28, 2013 at the recent CSLA National Conference held at Lake Junaluska, NC. This chapter was initiated last year, with Dawn Domans leading the group.

All present agreed that everyone was interested in communicating with others in an online environment about the various aspects of congregational libraries, regardless of geographical

boundaries, and in providing support and fellowship to each other.

The discussion centered on how best to communicate, and how often to “meet” as a group. It was decided to meet quarterly, with the first meeting to be held in late October/early November. Prior to the meeting, various communication methods will be explored. Think of the V.C. members as pioneers!

Well, the first “live” chapter meeting did happen on November 13, 2013. A handful of members met online via Skype, a service that allows you to conduct voice and video chats free with other Skype users, and do the same with cell phones or land lines inexpensively. (To learn more about Skype, go to <http://www.skype.com/en/what-is-skype/>.)

The group began with a discussion on distance learning options for librarians, a topic suggested by Sara Mansbach. Her work centers on a project to establish and develop a library in Haiti (photo at left). A librarian is in place but there is a need to provide additional training opportunities for that person,



primarily through online avenues. (Go to <http://www.haitiliteracy.org/about/our-projects/village-library/> to learn more about this initiative.) It was mentioned that two libraries located in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, are supported by the Christian and Missionary Alliance: Emmaus Bible Seminary and Cowman International School. These schools may be able to offer some ideas on maintaining a library in Haiti.

In addition to CSLA's and the American Library Association's offerings, other suggestions for online education are:

The Commission for International Library Advancement (Association of Christian Librarians) website: <http://www.acl.org/index.cfm/get-involved/cila/>

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) sponsored by library schools such as Syracuse

University's School of Information Science. Many are free at this time, if you are not seeking course credits. For an example, learn more about the New Librarianship Master Class at <http://ischool.syr.edu/future/grad/newlibopencourse.aspx>.

Other useful information from the group: Dorothy Lewis is teaching four-year-olds how to use computers in her children's library, and has found the software **Boowa & Kwala** (<http://boowakwala.uptoten.com/kids/boowakwala-home.html>) works well for this age group. There are lots of games to play in each four-part lesson, and everything is appropriate for a congregational library. (Some units are free, too!)

Of course, cataloging remains an important topic, and Pat Shufeldt mentioned the online list of cataloging tools that she has created and maintained: **Online Tools**

**for Church Library Catalogers**, located at <http://fprc.scoolaid.net/bin/pf/pfView?pflid=4> and also available through the CSLA website. At <http://www.csainfo.org/>, follow this path: Resources >LINKS > Congregational Libraries > Foothills Presbytery Resource Center (South Carolina.) If you find a new cataloging resource, just let Pat know!

The next "live" meeting will be scheduled soon. In the meantime, other avenues will be explored and established to create more ways of information sharing.

Remember, anyone who is a current CSLA member is welcome to join—just contact Marcia Trauernicht at [marciatmail@gmail.com](mailto:marciatmail@gmail.com) for more information.

—MARCIA TRAUERNICHT  
CSLA CHAPTERS COORDINATOR



## CSLA Annual Conference July 28 - August 1 Make Portland Your Vacation Trip

Hitch up your wagon, come early and leave later to enjoy all the attractions available in the Portland area just waiting for your visit.

- ▷ 2014 Walking Tour "Gallery Without Walls" presented by the Arts Council of Lake Oswego.
- ▷ Leatherman Original American Multi-Tool tours Wednesday and Friday 10am. Limit of 10 and must make reservations. 10109 NE Cascades Parkway. 503-408-5550.
- ▷ Hippo Hardware (have to see it to believe all the old and new housed in this store). 1040 E. Burnside Street 503-231-1444.
- ▷ Pittock Mansion - 1000 feet above the city's skyline. Surrounded by 46 acres of natural beauty. A glimpse of Portland's past; built 1909-1914 by owner of *The Oregonian*. 3229 NW Pittock Drive. \$10.00 self-guided tour.
- ▷ Portland Aerial Tram – this uncommon form of public transportation climbs 500 feet above Portland.
- ▷ Beverly Cleary Sculpture Garden – Life sized statues commemorate the characters created by this Portland author. N.E. 33rd Avenue & U.S. Grant Place 503-823-2525.





# fresh citations

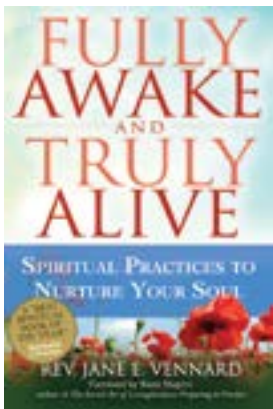
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## PRAYER & OTHER SPIRITUAL PRACTICES



### Fully Awake and Truly Alive: Spiritual Practices to Nurture Your Soul

Jane E. Vennard. Skylight Paths, 2013. 178p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-59473-473-1. Available as an ebook. [www.skylightpaths.com](http://www.skylightpaths.com) 204:4 Spiritual life.

"The glory of God is the human person fully alive." These words of Saint Irenaeus form the foundation of *Fully Awake and Truly Alive*. Jane E. Vennard invites believers, non-believers, and those seeking but unsure

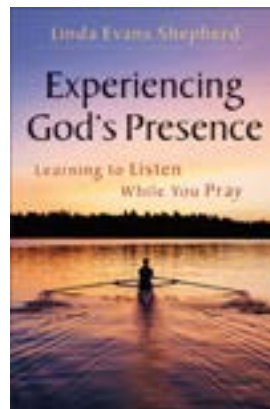
to enlarge their understanding of prayer and other spiritual practices.

Vennard focuses on eight practices: caring for your body, rest, silence, solitude, letting go, community, hospitality, and service. Each unit begins with a quotation and includes an invitation and guidelines for extended practice. She concludes with "The Fruits of Practice."

Vennard suggests reading her text by topic rather than in traditional linear style.

"The Practice of Letting Go" is worthy, with the theme broadened to include fasting, forgiveness, and nonattachment to outcomes as areas for letting go. In "The Practice of Service," the explanation of "hidden service," including compassionate listening, reminds us that everyone can serve purposefully.

Reading the text in its entirety provides broad perspective, and implementing the practices takes one far toward becoming a "nurtured soul." Recommended for church libraries and for readers interested in traditional and non-traditional spiritual disciplines. —*Carolyn Egolf*



### Experiencing God's Presence: Learning to Listen While You Pray

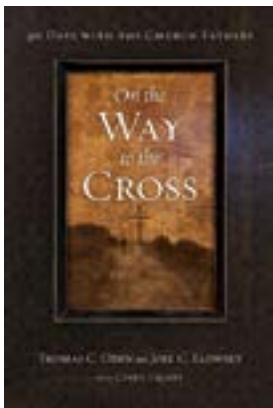
Linda Evans Shepherd. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 218p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2214-2. Available as an ebook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) 248:3:2 Prayer—Christianity.

Linda Evans Shepherd begins *Experiencing God's Presence* with this: "Today, I have a vibrant relationship with God, but this was not always the case . . . I knew I could talk to him in my

heart, but as far as I could tell, God either couldn't or wouldn't talk back." In a personal, easy-to-read style, Shepherd guides readers in an examination of various facets of God's presence in their lives. These include love, hope, healing power, and peace, among others. She uses her own experiences and those of other individuals to illustrate her themes.

Shepherd not only concludes each chapter with a prayer befitting its theme; she also provides prayers throughout her book. These are specific and personal, and they serve as excellent models to imitate. Each chapter also has a "Listening Prayer," passages of scripture that one is to read, then read again, and record one's thoughts in response. Shepherd suggests reading these thoughts to see whether God is speaking, noting that the exercise may need to be repeated before the answer can be discerned.

For Christians who feel dissatisfied with their prayer life, Shepherd's book will provide much help. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



### On the Way to the Cross: 40 Days with the Church Fathers

Thomas C. Oden and Joel C. Elowsky, with Cindy Crosby. InterVarsity, 2011. 129p. \$10.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8308-3567-6. Available as an ebook. www.ivpress.com 242.34 Bible. N.T. John—Devotional literature. Fathers of the church—Quotations. Episcopal Church. Book of common prayer (1979). Church year meditations. Lent.

Life works better when there are intentional rhythms, patterns, schedules, and disciplines. Lent is a time that

provides the focus for the rhythm of study—the cross of Jesus.

The devotional rhythm of *On the Way to the Cross* includes daily readings for Lent, each beginning with a

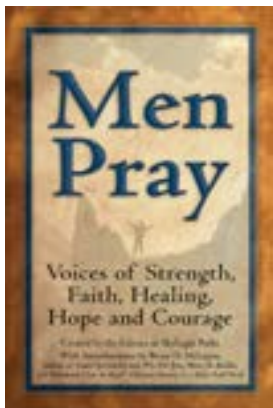
selected verse for the week, followed by a confession offered at the beginning and referenced regularly. Scripture readings, which are printed in the text, take the reader through the Gospel of John. Reflections from the church fathers are followed by a closing prayer—again from an early writer or from the Book of Common Prayer. Psalms are suggested for further reading.

Each entry takes only a brief time to read, but to ponder the texts and search one's soul requires time and discipline. The reward is a deeper, more introspective Lenten journey.

While designed for use during Lent, *On the Way to the Cross* provides valuable material for devotions any time of the year. Highly recommended for church libraries. —Carolyn Egolf

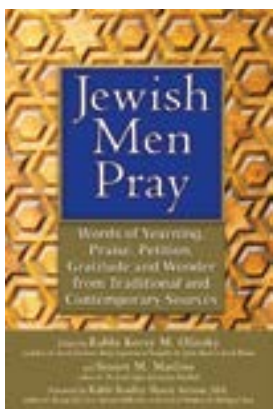
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**Men Pray: Voices of Strength, Faith, Healing, Hope and Courage**

Skylight Paths, 2013. 168p. \$16.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-59473-395-6. www.skylightpress.com 204:330811 Men—Religious life. Men—Prayers and devotions. Prayer.



**Jewish Men Pray: Words of Yearning, Praise, Petition, Gratitude and Wonder from Traditional and Contemporary Sources**

Kerry M. Olitzky and Stuart M. Matlins, eds. Jewish Lights, 2013. 364p. \$19.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-58023-628-7. www.jewishlights.com 296.45 Prayer—Judaism. Jewish men—Religious life. Jewish men—Prayers and devotions.

Most prayer anthologies offer something for everyone, and so do *Men Pray* and *Jewish Men*

*Pray*. Both books present a wide variety of prayers written by men, one with prayers from many traditions, the other with prayers by Jewish men. These volumes are welcome for a variety of reasons. First, they contradict the “macho man” notion that men should hold their emotions in and be strong for others. Rather, these books demonstrate that a man can be vulnerable, generous, and more. Second, these books appear against the background of numerous collections of women’s prayers, in itself a welcome phenomenon. These books for men add balance, reminding us of the different voices of male spirituality. Third, they help us connect traditional prayers and writings with contemporary ones. I appreciate that the editors chose to include prayers that span the ages. It reminds us that our prayer needs run deep.

*Men Pray* brings together a wide range of voices, and it is enlightening to see the way men from different traditions address similar concerns. The meditative selections that are included in this volume are worthy of attention.

*Jewish Men Pray* opens with a useful series of short essays on the purpose and structure of Jewish prayer. While the prayers included are not intended to serve in or replace the traditional liturgy, it is interesting as well to see how contemporary men have rewritten traditional prayers.

Both anthologies include brief background information on the contributors. The arrangement of prayers

**Classics Corner**

**Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret**

Judy Blume. Delacorte (an imprint of Random House), 2010. 149p. \$8.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-385-73986-3. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.randomhouse.com Fiction Teenage girls—Fiction. Religions—Fiction.

Margaret Simon’s family has moved from New York City to a New Jersey suburb. Margaret narrates as she enters sixth grade at her new school, makes friends, takes an interest in boys, copes with family tensions, and learns the hazards of gossip and untruthfulness. Margaret and her friends fret over their maturing bodies.

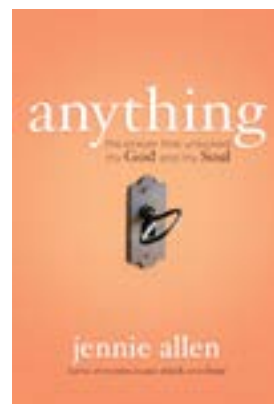
Margaret is also confused about religion. Her father was raised Jewish; her mother, Christian. Their families disapproved of the mixed marriage, and Margaret’s parents have not raised her in any faith. Margaret feels drawn to God but is unsure which religion to adopt. Most chapters end with Margaret’s prayers; God is her confidant, her confessor, and her comforter.

First published in 1970, *Are You There God? It’s Me, Margaret* is now something of a period piece. Teenagers had record players, not iPods; instead of texting, they talked with one another on their parents’ telephones; and when Margaret and her mother shop in a department store for Margaret’s first bra, a saleslady assists them. Yet the book is timeless; Margaret’s voice as a questioning, perceptive but uncertain adolescent is just right.

Margaret misses the adult she trusts most—her Jewish grandmother. Young readers will see, as Margaret does, that God can be their truest friend.

[May be available in hardcover library binding through amazon.com.] —*Monica Tenney*

by theme serves as a help in finding reflections that meet one’s need. These volumes are welcome additions to prayer collections. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



**Anything: The Prayer That Unlocked My God and My Soul**

Jennie Allen. Thomas Nelson, 2011. 193p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8499-4705-6. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.thomasonline.com 248 Christian life. Prayer—Christianity.

“God we will do anything. Anything.” To risk, allowing God to ask anything, is the challenge of this book. In its twenty brief units spread over three sections (“Everything Keeping Us from Anything,” “Praying Anything,” and “Living Anything”), Jennie Allen poses the question of readers: “What is your anything?”



The stance is evangelical, with appropriate scriptures and quotations. Stories of Bill Bright, Dwight Moody, and Jim Elliot exemplify themes of risk, effort, and impact.

The book's print is rather small, but its text will keep most readers engaged. Transitions happen quickly from story to scripture, quotation, and insight. Allen addresses the struggle between the American dream and God's call. She presents stories of people whose risk of "anything" meant adoption, service in Africa, and other "radical acts."

Despite the potential complexities of offering God "anything," and Allen's observation that doubts and disapproval are inevitable, freedom is the reward. Her enthusiasm and zest for living shine through. Her comforting reminder is to "Do your everyday and your ordinary. Godliness is found and formed in those places."

Recommended for church libraries and especially for readers who appreciate stories of personal faith journeys. —Carolyn Egolf

## SUFFERING & SURVIVAL



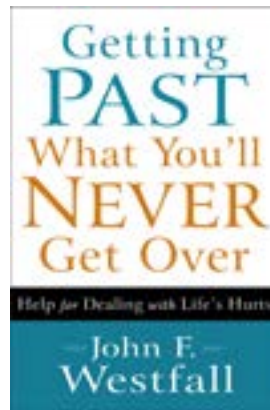
### A Soft Landing: How One Woman Survived a Collision Course with Death

Stacey Blake. Inkwater, 2014. 139p. \$16.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-62901-014-4. Available as an ebook. [www.inkwaterpress.com](http://www.inkwaterpress.com) 362.19699 Illness—Religious aspects—Christianity. Suffering—Religious aspects—Christianity. Cancer—Patients—Biography. Leukemia—Patients—Biography.

In *A Soft Landing*, Stacey Blake tells a moving story with simplicity and honesty that will deeply impress read-

ers. Blake was the busy CEO of a growing company when her life abruptly changed with a diagnosis of chronic myeloid leukemia. Her doctors began aggressive treatment that eventually included a stem cell transplant. Supported by her doctors, her husband, other family, and friends, Blake also felt the constant presence of God throughout her seemingly unending health battles. On several occasions, for example, she unexpectedly finds—with no apparent explanation—a white feather.

In a series of flashbacks, Blake tells how she first came to believe in God's love. *A Soft Landing* is powerful reading because of Blake's firm belief that "with God, all things are possible." This is an inspirational book for anyone suffering from a life-threatening illness or for anyone with a seriously ill loved one. It provides rare insight into what patients go through during treatment. —Mary Lou Henneman

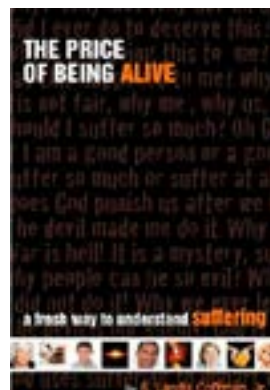


### Getting Past What You'll Never Get Over: Help for Dealing with Life's Hurts

John F. Westfall. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2012. 221p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2063-6. Available as an ebook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) 248.8'6 Suffering—Religious aspects—Christianity. Emotions—Religious aspects—Christianity.

John F. Westfall acknowledges his affliction with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, and his condition has caused him emotional pain. In *Getting Past What You'll Never Get Over*, Westfall has written an easy-to-read book about how past experiences can impede a person's ability to move on with life. He offers strategies for dealing with hurt, fear, regret, guilt, anger, bitterness, and the "myth of normal." We must realize, Westfall maintains, that there are some things that happen in life that we will never get over. Westfall describes, however, ways to get past these as he cleverly draws biblical parallels into life. He intersperses anecdotes from his own experiences with many statements that will remind readers of the classic writings on positive thinking. Westfall also presents a concise overview of the four stages of grief from Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's *On Death and Dying*.

Westfall is pastor of Harbor Church in Seattle. Congregational libraries will find his book useful, since he also suffered from issues it addresses. —Ralph Hartsock

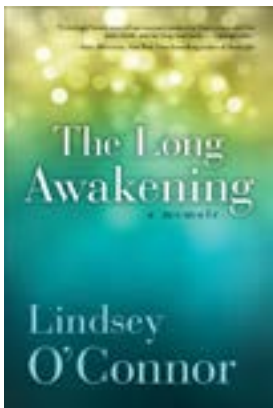


### The Price of Being Alive: A Fresh Way to Understand Suffering

R. Landis Coffman, Jr. Huff Publishing, 2013. 92p. \$12.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-615-58706-6. [www.priceofbeingalive.com](http://www.priceofbeingalive.com) 202.118 Suffering—Religious aspects—Christianity. Suffering—Religious aspects—Judaism.

Is suffering inevitable—like death and taxes? R. Landis Coffman, Jr., pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, an ELCA congregation in Akron, Ohio, offers readers of *The Price of Being Alive* a new way to think about suffering. He begins by explaining his basic belief that God is loving and just. Illustrating with stories and imagery, Coffman guides readers into a new understanding of how they can turn to God for help when confronted with suffering in its various forms.

This slender book is perfect for Christian, Jewish, or interfaith discussion groups. Each chapter ends with a question to inspire dialogue and new insights. —Mary Lou Henneman



### The Long Awakening: A Memoir

Lindsey O'Connor. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 237p. \$17.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8007-1876-3. Available in paperback and as an ebook. [www.revell-books.com](http://www.revell-books.com) 362.1968 Coma—Patients—Biography.

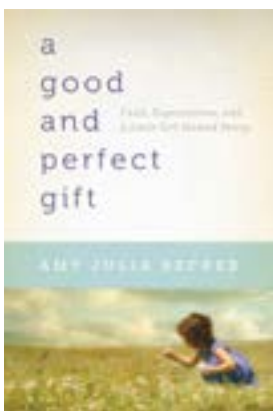
Anyone with doubts about people's innate will to live should read Lindsey O'Connor's memoir, *The Long Awakening*. In the early hours of August 30, 2002, Lindsey

and Tim O'Connor eagerly went to the hospital for the birth of their fifth child. A healthy daughter, Caroline, made her appearance that afternoon. Caroline's mother, however, was not as fortunate.

*The Long Awakening* is the riveting account of O'Connor's forty-seven days in a drug-induced coma and her hundred days in the hospital. An enormous loss of blood during delivery and two emergency surgeries left the new mother with oxygen deprivation and other problems. The extent of brain damage could not be determined until—and if—she emerged from the coma. O'Connor emphasizes that coming out of a coma is not like it is portrayed in movies. Although the process is different for each individual, it takes days, weeks, or months. It was an arduous path for her; even two years later, she was still experiencing aftereffects.

O'Connor lost part of herself forever, and for a long time she struggled with knowing who she was. By the time she wrote *The Long Awakening*, she had learned. —Beverly M. Bixler

## FAMILY MATTERS



### A Good and Perfect Gift: Faith, Expectations, and a Little Girl Named Penny

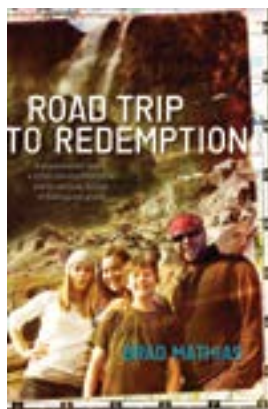
Amy Julia Becker. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2011. 237p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0917-8. Available as an ebook. [www.bethanyhouse.com](http://www.bethanyhouse.com) 618.92 Becker, Penelope Truesdell, 2002- Becker, Amy Julia—Family. Down syndrome—Patients—Biography. Children with mental disabilities—Biography.

Amy Julia Becker and her husband were looking forward to the birth of their first child.

When they learned that their precious daughter had Down syndrome, they were tossed into an unknown realm. *A Good and Perfect Gift* is a powerful memoir by Becker, who as the mother of Penny learned the importance of relying on Christ as her anchor.

Becker discusses the steps in learning about Down syndrome and the various ways she and her husband learned to help Penny. Even though the expectations for their daughter necessarily changed in terms of her physical and mental capabilities, Becker still sees joy in her daughter's eyes. Both parents, as well as all who meet Penny, feel blessed to see the way she loves life.

Becker writes her story with sensitivity, honesty, and love. This is a tremendous book for parents, relatives, or friends of someone with Down syndrome. —Mary Lou Henneman



### Road Trip to Redemption: A Disconnected Family, a Cross-Country Adventure, and an Amazing Journey of Healing and Grace

Brad Mathias. Tyndale House, 2013. 257p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4143-6394-3. [www.tyndale.com](http://www.tyndale.com) 248.4 Parent and child—Religious aspects—Christianity. Families—Religious life. United States—Description and travel. Canada—Description and travel.

Brad Mathias writes that he is not a fan of "formulaic how-to books for Christian living."

Instead, his aim in *Road Trip to Redemption* is to encourage families in crisis or whose members feel detached from one another. He offers help to families for reconnecting with one another "at heart level."

Mathias, a pastor at Four Winds Anglican Church in Spring Hill, Tennessee, and president of a group that ministers to preteens, accomplishes his goal as he tells of learning to follow Christ's lead in his everyday thoughts, words and deeds, especially with his family.

When Mathias's middle child, Bethany, became moody and withdrawn, he assumed the cause was merely teenage growing pains. Soon, however, Bethany's parents discovered a darker reason for the change. In the midst of this crisis, Mathias turned to Christ and to fellow Christians to help his family recover.

The first section *The Road Trip to Redemption* covers Mathias's spiritual growth as a husband and father who wants to protect his wife and children. The book's second part covers his family's travels from Tennessee to parts of Canada as they reconnect with each other and with their faith. The author's honesty and sincerity comes through as he connects Christ's teachings with living today. This book will appeal especially to Christian men. —Mary Lou Henneman

### Hope for Today, Promises for Tomorrow: Finding Light Beyond the Shadow of Miscarriage or Infant Loss

Teske Drake. Kregel, 2012. 141p. \$11.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8254-4218-6. Available as an ebook. [www.kregel.com](http://www.kregel.com) 248.866 Death—Children.

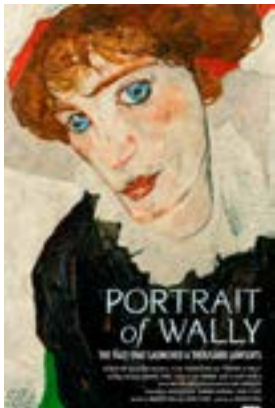
Teske Drake is well qualified to write about the



subject indicated in the subtitle of *Hope for Today, Promises for Tomorrow*. She has a doctorate in human development and family studies, has taught those subjects, and has personally experienced the loss of three babies. She shares her experiences as well as the stories of other mothers who have lost infants to miscarriage or other difficulties. She builds each chapter around a direct or implied promise from God, such as God's goodness, purpose, comfort, peace, hope, and eternity. Drake includes in each chapter appropriate verses from scripture as well as a prayer and questions or statements to explore in journaling.

In 2007, Drake founded Mommies with Hope, a Bible-based support ministry for women who have lost infants. —*Beverly M. Bixler*

## JUDAICA



### Portrait of Wally (DVD)

P.O.W. Productions/Seventh Art Releasing, 2012. 90 minutes. \$350 universities and colleges/\$99.00 public library and high school, DVD. Catalog # 7826. [www.7thart.com](http://www.7thart.com) 709.04 Art thefts—Europe. World War, 1939-1941—Art and the war. Schiele, Egon, 1890-1918.



### The Rape of Europa (DVD)

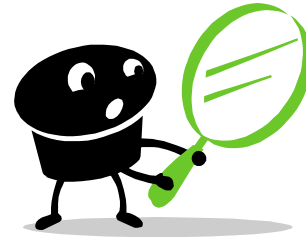
Menemsha Films, 2006. 117 minutes. \$19.95, DVD. 709.04 Art thefts—Europe. World War, 1939-1941—Art and the war.

Late in 2013, news reports told of the discovery of art stolen by the Nazis. Sixty-eight years after World War II ended, much of the art stolen from Jewish collectors, museums, and others still remains at large. The struggles that individuals and institutions have endured in

their quest to regain their rightful property have been long and difficult, and they continue.

These two films, *The Rape of Europa* and *Portrait of Wally*, address different aspects of this shameful story. They are both excellent videos, with stories that are complementary to one another and tell tales that are worth hearing. The producers have done a service to us all.

*Portrait of Wally* takes the more focused point of view. Its subject is one painting that expressionist portrait painter Egon Schiele made by and for his lover. The



## INDEX OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE WEB

Searching for just the right CSLA guide that might be helpful to you in your library ministry?

Check [www.cslainfo.org](http://www.cslainfo.org) for an index using topics common to librarians. Topics range from accessioning and circulation to memorials, posters and weeding.

If you don't have access to the internet, try your public library for internet access, or call Judy Janzen at 800-LIB-CSLA.

painting had been stolen from a Jewish art dealer, Lea Bondi, before her escape from Vienna. The video tells of the search for the painting and the decades-long legal struggle to have it returned to its legitimate owner. The story is a legal thriller but also an emotional roller coaster as the painting is found, then disappears, then comes into view again but is encumbered by a variety of lawsuits. In the end a settlement is reached.

*The Rape of Europa* tells the larger tale of plans that began even before the war. Adolf Hitler, the one-time art student, coveted the art of all Europe and schemed to take it all—from museums, from dealers, from collectors. He targeted not only Jewish dealers but also the grand museums, including the Louvre in Paris. Using newsreels and many interviews, this video tells the tale of Nazi plunder and the supreme effort that began after the war to recover and return works of art to their rightful places. The sheer size of this undertaking will leave viewers speechless.

Both videos are highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

### From Where I Stand: Life Messages from the Weekly Torah Reading

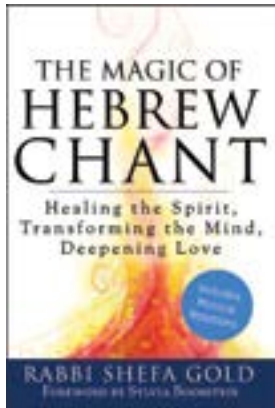
Yossy Goldman. KTAV, 2012. 229p. \$25.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-60280-225-4. [www.ktav.com](http://www.ktav.com) 296.47 Bible. O.T. Pentateuch—Criticism, interpretation, etc.

*From Where I Stand* is a collection of sermons from a leader of South Africa's largest synagogue. This book presents novel insights based on the annual cycle of Torah readings. Rabbi Yossy Goldman offers three or four brief essays on each of the fifty-four Torah por-



tions of the year. He is conversational and clear in his prose, using stories that are familiar and often humorous to make his point. It is refreshing that his insights have universal appeal and are not limited to a single approach to Jewish life. Indeed, Goldman's messages address our common human experience and should be of interest to all people.

This would be a good addition to a library that collects sermons. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



**The Magic of Hebrew Chant: Healing the Spirit, Transforming the Mind, Deepening Love**

Shefa Gold. Jewish Lights, 2013. 326p. \$24.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58023-671-3. Available as an ebook. www.jewishlights.com 782.3'6043 Jewish chants—Instruction and study. Cantillation—Instruction and study. Hebrew language—Accents and accentuation. Bible. O.T.—Accents and accentuation.

Rabbi Shefa Gold has revived the art of Jewish chanting.

Prayers and the Torah reading are traditionally chanted according to set patterns, but Gold has developed a broader practice using passages from the Bible and prayers to promote spiritual growth and personal transformation. Her chants are well known and used in many synagogues across the country. In this user-friendly book, she teaches the reader the process she follows to develop her chants. She also shares the rationale behind a wide range of her chants, along with their musical notation.

I found the first part of the book the most useful; I have wondered how one can deepen the prayer experience and what is involved in taking one phrase from the common prayer book to make it my own. Others, more musically talented, may prefer the later sections, where Gold explains aspects of the particular phrases she has used and provides musical notation to help readers learn the chants.

Regardless of whether you look to this book for instruction in how to create your own chants or for expanding your appreciation of the popular chants developed by Gold, *The Magic of Hebrew Chant* is a gift. Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

**One Hundred Great Jewish Books: Three Millennia of Jewish Conversation**

Lawrence A. Hoffman. BlueBridge (an imprint of United Tribes Media), 2011. 352p. \$16.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-933346-31-1. Available as an ebook. www.bluebridgebooks.com 016.296 Jews—Bibliography. Judaism—Bibliography. Jewish literature—Bibliography. Best books.

When I saw this book's title, I sighed, expecting a dull listing of culturally significant books. Instead, I found *One Hundred Great Jewish Books* enthralling. Rabbi Lawrence A. Hoffman argues that the grand conversation among Jews throughout the ages is recorded

in our books and that these books, taken as a whole, present the long, complicated, sometimes contradictory conversation. Truly, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

An overview of a period of history or an approach to Jewish existence precedes each section of *One Hundred Great Jewish Books*. Because the books reflect not just the musings of one author but also mark a point in a larger chapter of Jewish life, each is presented in its full historical and cultural setting. Each book is important for its subject, its author, its time, and its point of view. The full spectrum of Jewish opinion finds voice in this collection—traditionalists and reformers, mystics and rationalists, and more.

This is a great read, a wonderful resource and, for the most ambitious among us, a stunning curriculum for understanding the grand arc of Jewish experience from the first call to Abraham to the present. Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



**Festivals of Faith: Reflections on the Jewish Holidays**

Norman Lamm. David Shatz, ed. Orthodox Union, 2011. 347p. \$27.50, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-60280-174-5. www.ou.org 296.473 Fasts and feasts—Judaism. Jewish festival-day sermons. Jewish sermons, American.

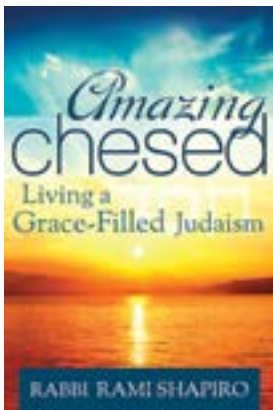
This collection of sermons spans the congregational career of one of the great Modern Orthodox leaders of our time, Rabbi Norman Lamm. *Festivals of Faith* collects fifty-

five sermons dealing with the holidays of the Jewish year.

Most of the sermons are from the 1960s, yet they retain their importance for several reasons. They are the work of a master unveiling perennial themes within the holiday cycle. They occasionally offer glimpses of Lamm's views on the issues of the day. They address issues of psychology and interpersonal relations. They remind us that living a religious life is always a challenge. They serve as a model for good sermon writing, a genre of its own.

This volume will be of interest to those who admire Lamm, to those who are curious about the approach of Modern Orthodoxy to Jewish holidays, and to rabbis and others who are looking for inspiration for their own holiday messages. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

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### Amazing Chesed: Living a Grace-Filled Judaism

Rami Shapiro. Jewish Lights, 2013. 147p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58023-624-9. Available as an ebook. www.jewishlights.com 296.3'114 God (Judaism)—Love. Grace (Theology). Bible. O.T.—Theology.

While grace is most often associated with Christianity, Rabbi Rami Shapiro wants to reclaim the term for Jewish theology. The Hebrew word, *chesed*, which may be trans-

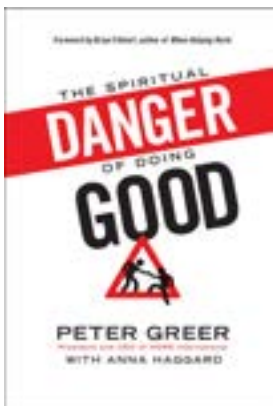
lated as grace or loving-kindness, is found in Torah as one of God's character traits and appears throughout the Kabbalistic tradition. Shapiro brings all of this and more to bear in describing a Judaism based on the idea of *chesed*.

Shapiro defines *chesed* as "God's unlimited, unconditional, unconditioned, and all-inclusive love for all creation." More simply, he describes it as God doing what God does—that is, being present and sending God-ness to all of creation constantly. If we all receive God's grace constantly, the only question is how we respond to that gift. Shapiro draws out the meaning and implications of this in his well-reasoned book.

Not solely theoretical, *Amazing Chesed* also includes two chapters on the practice of living gracefully. The theology comes to life in a daily practice of love and compassion.

This book will provoke discussion and reflection, and it may change your life. Enjoy. —Rabbi Louis A. Rieser

## CHALLENGES TO FAITH



### The Spiritual Danger of Doing Good

Peter Greer with Anna Haggard. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 189p. \$16.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1102-7. Available in paperback and as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 253.2 Service (Theology).

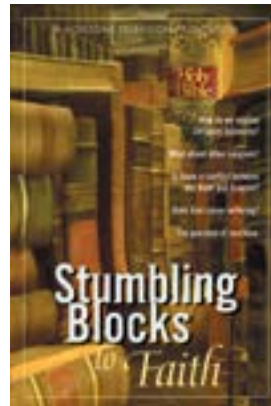
*The Spiritual Danger of Doing Good* provides a powerful wake-up call for Christians. Peter Greer, president and CEO of Hope International, urges readers to consider whether

they perform acts of charity for the wrong reasons. He reminds Christians to live a life that honors Christ rather than seeks personal reward or fame.

Greer realized the danger of doing good for the wrong motives when a friend took a picture of him on a mission trip to Africa. He saw himself smiling while surrounded by needy villagers. Greer recognized that

his focus was on others perceiving him as a good person, not on Jesus Christ. His response was to throw away the picture and change the way he was living his personal and professional life.

Each of this book's seventeen chapters demonstrates spiritual pitfalls and how to avoid them. The discussion questions and suggested videos on a variety of topics make this excellent for group studies. *The Spiritual Danger of Doing Good* should be required reading for all Christians whether they are involved in overseas missions or work in their own neighborhoods. —Mary Lou Henneman



### Stumbling Blocks to Faith (DVD)

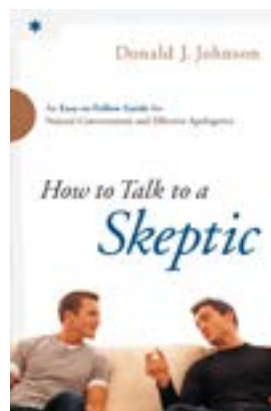
Horizons Television, Inc. Distributed by Vision Video. 95 minutes. \$19.99, DVD. Catalog #: 500889D. www.vision-video.com 248.4 Faith—Christianity. Hypocrisy. Bible and science.

What happens when people learn about the teachings of Christ and want to become Christians, but the words and actions of some Christians discourage them? *Stumbling Blocks to Faith* is an excellent

video for churches dealing with this tough issue. It examines how Christians do not always practice what they preach, and some are intolerant of people of other faiths and denominations. The video also covers such topics as the continuing debate between creationists and evolutionists, as well as the difficult reality that bad things happen to faithful Christians.

This study consists of five twenty-minute sessions, each led by pastors, scholars, or missionaries examining issues and using personal examples. The study guide provided is insightful and suggests resources for further reading.

*Stumbling Blocks to Faith* makes an excellent springboard for discussion by church members willing to consider whether their behavior encourages others to join them. —Mary Lou Henneman



### How to Talk to a Skeptic: An Easy-to-Follow Guide for Natural Conversations and Effective Apologetics

Donald J. Johnson. Bethany House, 2013. 268p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1122-5. Available as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 239 Apologetics. Witness bearing—Christianity. Communication—Christianity. Skepticism.

Many Christians feel ill equipped to witness to their beliefs. When other Christians or non-believers confront them with questions and

doubts, conversation can be difficult and even turn into an argument. Donald J. Johnson, president of Don Johnson Evangelistic Ministries, has degrees in Christian apologetics and theology. In *How to Talk to a Skeptic*, he provides readers with suggestions for discussing their faith. He teaches how to ask the right questions and how to listen to others before responding. With scripture passages and quotations from theologians, Johnson offers a guide for clearly communicating one's faith.

*How to Talk to a Skeptic* contains three sections that cover the framework for a conversation, a basic understanding of what skeptics need to know about God, and how to interpret the data. Johnson recognizes that even pagan cultures have some knowledge of God. He writes, for instance, that "Jesus is the fullest and clearest expression of God's truth, but other cultures and religions are not completely void of fact."

This is a good book for Christians who want to communicate their faith on a deeper level. The added notes are helpful for further study. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



**Tempted, Tested, True: A Proven Path to Overcoming Soul-Robbing Choices**

Arnie Cole and Michael Ross. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 254p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1085-3. Available as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 241'3 Temptation. Success—Religious aspects—Christianity.

Temptation exists every day in various guises and degrees. How should Christians respond? Arnie Cole and Michael

Ross are both in leadership roles at Back to the Bible, a nondenominational Christian ministry based in Lincoln, Nebraska. In *Tempted, Tested, True*, Cole and Ross focus on practical strategies to help Christians recognize a variety of temptations and face those challenges. Their book's ten chapters address numerous topics including the four stages of temptation, dan-

gerous choices, control, self-esteem, fantasy, gossip, materialism, anxiety, pornography and sex, living with alcoholic and drug-addicted parents, and releasing past problems and moving on. Each of the chapters is divided into a basic discussion of the problem and a "nudge" section with selected scripture readings, reflections on the scriptures, a memory verse, suggested ways to respond to God's nudges, and a prayer. *Tempted, Tested, True* contains clear explanations of its main points, and there are insightful worksheets and notes for further study. The book makes a good ten-week study for Christian adult discussion groups. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



**Unveiling Grace: The Story of How We Found Our Way out of the Mormon Church**

Lynn K. Wilder. Zondervan, 2013. 367p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-310-33112-4. Available as an ebook. www.zondervan.com 289.3 Religion—Denominations and sects. Latter Day Saints (Mormons).

Lynn and Michael Wilder both grew up in nominally Christian homes. During their college years, they seldom went to church; they married in 1974.

The Mormon missionaries who knocked on the young couple's door captured their interest. *Unveiling Grace* is Lynn Wilder's fascinating account of her family's history with the Mormons.

While raising their four children, the Wilders were dedicated, active Latter Day Saints, first in their native Indiana. After they moved to Utah, Lynn obtained her doctorate and taught at Brigham Young University.

In 2006, the Wilders' youngest son became the first in the family to profess a belief in Christ of the Bible, rather than Christ as viewed by Mormons. Two years later, his parents requested that their names be removed from the church's rolls.

Part of the appeal of *Unveiling Grace* is the intimate picture Wilder paints of the beliefs of the Mormon Church and how it operates. According to Wilder,

**THIS ISSUE'S REVIEWERS**

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*First Presbyterian Church*  
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Fort Wayne, Indiana

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Flower Mound, Texas

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*Church of the Good Samaritan*  
Paoli, Pennsylvania



because there is much secrecy and deception within the religion, this picture is one not normally available to people outside the Mormon Church.

This book includes a glossary of terms used by the Mormons and comparisons of passages from the Bible and those from Mormon scriptures. *Unveiling Grace* provides interesting, thought-provoking reading. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



### Die Young: Burying Your Self in Christ

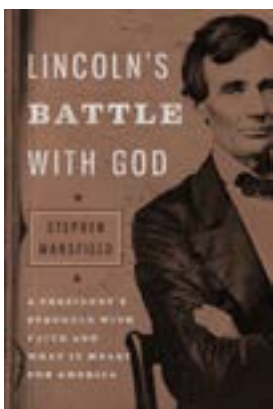
Hayley DiMarco and Michael DiMarco. Crossway, 2012. 189p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4335-3057-9. Available as an ebook. [www.crossway.org](http://www.crossway.org) 248.4 Christian life. Self-denial.

“To die young is to live for Christ and nothing else, to be set free from the bondage of sin and self, and to live a new kind of life.” This opening passage from *Die Young* may seem like an oxymoron, but it

is not. What and who should be the most important concerns for Christians? Hayley and Michael DiMarco clearly explain how to make God, not money or fame, the focus of one’s life. By using paradoxical statements (“death is the new life,” “down is the new up,” “weak is the new strong,” and others) to headline each chapter, the DiMarcos make clear the importance of changing from old ways to focusing on what God wants people to do in all aspects of their lives.

The authors support their premises throughout with quotations from scripture and examples from their personal experience. *Die Young: Burying Yourself in Christ* is a powerful book for mature teens and adults who want to learn how to live as truly faithful Christians. [See a review of *True Purity*, a book by the DiMarcos for teens and YAs, later in this issue.]—*Mary Lou Henneman*

## EMINENT FIGURES



### Lincoln’s Battle with God: A President’s Struggle with Faith and What It Meant for America

Stephen Mansfield. Thomas Nelson, 2012. 242p. \$22.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-59555-309-6. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.thomasnelson.com](http://www.thomasnelson.com) 973.7092 Lincoln, Abraham, 1809-1865—Religion. Presidents—Religious life—United States.

The religious beliefs of most American presidents are, with a few exceptions, seldom discussed. In *Lincoln’s Battle with*

*God*, Stephen Mansfield seeks to uncover the back-

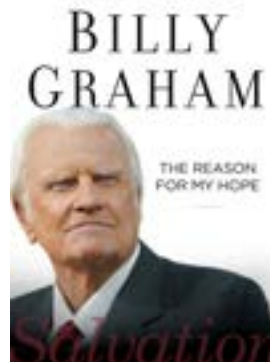
ground of Abraham Lincoln’s faith. For such a public figure, Lincoln’s faith was very private. His father was a frontier Baptist, but his son rejected much of Thomas Lincoln’s faith. Mansfield suggests that physical abuse by the father may have played a role in young Abraham’s turning from Christianity as he grew to manhood.

After his marriage to Mary Todd, Lincoln’s life changed. He attended a Presbyterian church in Springfield, often meeting with its pastor, and continued to attend Presbyterian churches in Washington after becoming president in 1861.

Lincoln said little about Jesus and was known to abhor some aspects of church life. However, anyone who has read Lincoln’s great speeches knows that, as president, he looked to God for guidance.

Mansfield has tried to be fair in his assessments, quoting friends of Lincoln who labeled him as unchristian as well as others who simply thought his faith was hidden beneath his burdens as a war president and as a father who had to bury two young sons.

Readers can learn much about the private Lincoln from this book, but much remains hidden. With footnotes, a brief bibliography, and several illustrations. —*Forrest Rice*



### The Reason for My Hope: Salvation

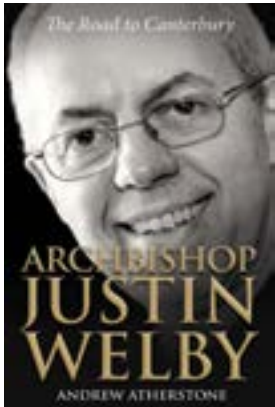
Billy Graham. Thomas Nelson, 2013. 207p. \$19.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8499-4761-2. Available in paperback and as an ebook or audiobook. [www.thomasnelson.com](http://www.thomasnelson.com) 234.25 Salvation—Christianity. Hope—Religious aspects—Christianity.

The Reverend Billy Graham emphasizes in *The Reason for My Hope: Salvation* that his message now is the same one he has preached for seventy

years. Humanity can be saved, Graham believes, if we accept Christ as Savior. The message has not changed, but Graham believes the need for it is increasingly urgent.

An interesting but disturbing chapter is “Defining Christianity in a Designer World.” Graham writes: “Society today reflects the culture’s craving for a designer world, one that suits every whim. We want things to go our way, according to our timeline, and at the pace of our own choosing.” Our desire for “designer” elements in our lives includes even religion, and Graham discusses the so-called “designer religions.” In these, he writes, “Social awareness has replaced the Spirit-filled life,” and “people would rather put their energies into ‘working for God’ than actively ‘believing in God and obeying him.’” Graham believes that such busyness is the devil’s playground if we do not make Christ the priority in our lives.

While Graham's message may not be new, the situations he uses to illustrate his points come straight from contemporary life. A thought-provoking book awaits readers in *The Reason for My Hope*. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



**Archbishop Justin Welby: The Road to Canterbury**

Andrew Atherstone. Morehouse (an imprint of Church Publishing Incorporated), 2013. 152p. \$20.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8192-2912-0. Available as an ebook. [www.churchpublishing.org](http://www.churchpublishing.org) Biography Welby, Justin Portal, 1956-. Anglicanism. Anglican communion—Clergy—Biography.

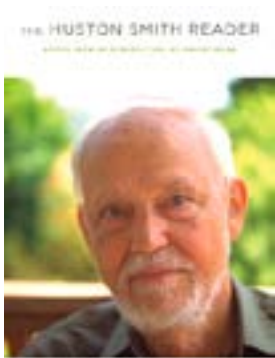
This slender book introduces Justin Portal Welby, who in March 2013 became the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury.

Andrew Atherstone, a faculty member at Oxford University, writes of Welby's family history, including his parents' early divorce and his boyhood being shuttled between various relatives. As a youth Welby attended Eton College and spent six months in Kenya on an evangelical missions project. It was at Cambridge University that he committed to "lifelong faithfulness to Christ." He felt unsuited, however, to be a clergyman.

Welby went to work in the oil industry, where his talent for leadership and management flourished and his concerns about financial ethics grew. By his early thirties, Welby could no longer ignore the call to ministry.

Atherstone traces Welby's pastoral career as parish rector to Dean of Liverpool and Bishop of Durham. He highlights Welby's evangelical stance, skills in conflict resolution, close ties with Christians in Africa and elsewhere, and willingness to take risks. An epilogue recounts Welby's public statement as Archbishop-designate in November 2012.

The book's print is rather small, but the text is thoroughly researched, footnoted, and indexed. Atherstone provides an excellent introduction to the man at the head of the worldwide Anglican Communion. —*Monica Tenney*



**The Huston Smith Reader**

Huston Smith. Jeffrey Paine, ed. University of California Press, 2012. 256p. \$31.95, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-520-27022-0. Available as an ebook. [www.ucpress.edu](http://www.ucpress.edu) 200 Religion. Religions. Smith, Huston, 1919-.

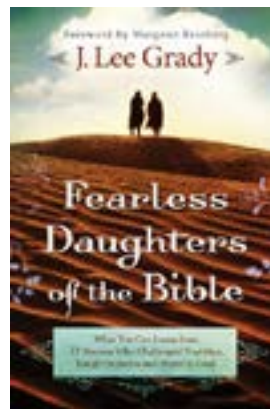
Huston Smith is a world-renowned expert in comparative religion. He has studied and written about the world's major faiths, including Native

American and tribal religions in Asia and Africa. Smith was the subject of a Bill Moyers PBS series, and his book *The Religions of Man* (now titled *The World's Religions*) was a standard college text for a generation.

Smith is now in his nineties. This volume is a compendium of articles, interviews, and book excerpts from the last forty years of his work. It is a book you can leaf through, read an interesting chapter, skip another, and then read more. Most of the chapters are short and cover topics like fundamentalism in a variety of faiths, prayer and meditation in Asian and Christian traditions, and the sacred dimensions of everyday living. The book also contains a biographical sketch of Smith and his views on current religious strife around the world. There is a bibliography and a list of Smith's writings.

*The Huston Smith Reader* will be a valuable addition to any library with a section on world religions. —*Forrest D. Rice*

**BIBLE LESSONS**



**Fearless Daughters of the Bible: What You Can Learn from 22 Women Who Challenged Tradition, Fought Injustice and Dared to Lead**

J. Lee Grady. Chosen (an imprint of Baker), 2012. 238p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-9531-3. Available as an ebook. [www.chosenbooks.com](http://www.chosenbooks.com) 220.92 Women in the Bible.

As a former magazine editor, current minister to women in foreign countries, and the father of four daughters, J. Lee

Grady is well qualified to write about biblical women in *Fearless Daughters of the Bible*. In addition to the women traditionally featured in such studies, Grady includes lesser-known women such as Achsah (Caleb's daughter), Jehosheba, and the four daughters of Philip the evangelist.

Each of the fifteen chapters opens with a quotation and proceeds with a theme related to courage. Stories of women today, women in history, and biblical women are interwoven. The perspective is Pentecostal, and the tone provides elevation, encouragement, and exhortation. Grady cites Miriam, Deborah, and Esther from the Old Testament and Mary Magdalene, the Samaritan woman, and Priscilla from the New Testament as examples of women who accepted risks and took action, rising above traditions, false teachings, and the opinions of others. The call is for women of today to do the same.

Points of emphasis are well organized, with scriptures, quotations, and facts presented to support



Grady's positions. While readers may not agree with him on all points, Grady commands respect for his reasoning. Recommended for church libraries and for personal or group study. —Carolyn Egolf



### The Big Story: How the Bible Makes Sense out of Life

Justin Buzzard. Moody, 2013. 179p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8024-0857-0. Available as an ebook. www.moodypublishers.com 230 Bible—Criticism, interpretation, etc. Storytelling—Christianity. Spiritual growth. Discipleship.

How would you answer someone if they asked you this: What does it really mean to be a Christian, and does it make a difference in how you live your life? When author

Justin Buzzard was in his mid-twenties, he felt a call to quit his job, move his family to Silicon Valley, and start a nondenominational church. In *The Big Story*, he gives insight into who God is, how the Bible impacts our lives in the twenty-first century, and how Jesus' message can give new meaning to lives. The mission statement of the church founded by Buzzard, Garden City Church, is "Making disciples to impact the city for Jesus." Garden City challenges members to put their faith into action in their communities. *The Big Story* has a powerful message for young adults searching for a connection between their own lives and the message of the scriptures. Buzzard highlights his main points by using the Bible as well as personal examples and quotations from famous men and women throughout history. This book challenges readers to learn about their faith and put it into action. —Mary Lou Henneman



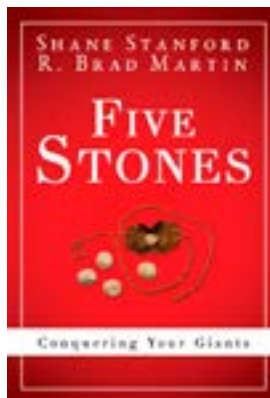
### You'll Get Through This: Hope & Help for Your Turbulent Times

Max Lucado. Thomas Nelson, 2013. 216p. \$24.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8499-4847-3. Available in paperback and as an ebook. www.thomasnelson.com 248.8'6 Joseph (Son of Jacob). Suffering—Religious aspects—Christianity.

At the beginning of *You'll Get Through This*, Max Lucado tells of several conversations with people who have revealed their troubles to him. His response: "You'll get through

this. It won't be painless. It won't be quick. But God will use this mess for good . . . With God's help you will get through this." Wondering to himself how he can dare say this to someone who is suffering, he asks, "Where did I get the nerve?" He answers his own question: "In a pit, actually. A deep, dark pit. So steep, the boy could not climb out." The boy is Joseph of the Old Testament. Lucado applies his talent for combin-

ing, with great clarity, the biblical with the contemporary, weaving the story of Joseph with the stories of modern-day people. From the time Joseph was an arrogant teenager, abandoned by his jealous older brothers, until he became the second most powerful man in Egypt, he endured much, but he survived and succeeded. In *You'll Get Through This*, Lucado writes that Joseph's story is in the Bible "to teach you to trust God to trump evil. What Satan intends for evil, God . . . redeems for good." —Beverly M. Bixler

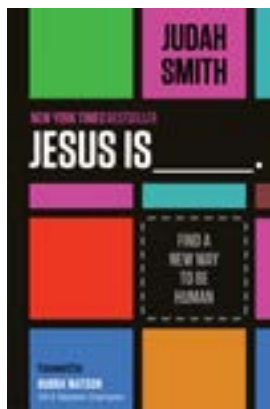


### Five Stones: Conquering Your Giants

Shane Stanford and R. Brad Martin. Abingdon, 2013. 192p. \$18.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-4267-7172-9. Available as an ebook. www.abingdonpress.com 221.83033 Leadership—Religious aspects. Perseverance (Theology). David, King of Israel. Goliath (Biblical giant).

Most Christians are familiar with the biblical story of David and Goliath, in which the young shepherd boy, armed only with a sling and five

stones, kills the giant. What relevance does this story have for us in the twenty-first century? In *Five Stones*, Shane Stanford, senior pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in Memphis, and R. Brad Martin, a retired business executive and former member of the Tennessee House of Representatives, use their personal stories to help others conquer modern giants. Each of five stones represents a different way to achieve the desired goal of overcoming a variety of problems: seeing a clear picture of the problem, using the right tools to solve the problem, making a plan, having the proper training to proceed, and having the strength to boldly act. The training manual provided includes weekly goals as well as daily scripture readings, training principles, questions, and prayers. This is a unique study; Stanford and Martin identify the sections they have authored and tell how, trusting in the Lord, they have fought their battles. Readers will see that they, too, can face their giants. Highly recommended, especially for Christian men. —Mary Lou Henneman



### Jesus Is \_\_\_\_\_: Find a New Way to Be Human

Judah Smith. Thomas Nelson, 2013. 203p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4002-0475-5. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.thomasnelson.com 232 Jesus Christ—Person and offices.

Christians may ask themselves what role Jesus plays in everyday life. Do they communicate with Jesus in prayer each day or only when they are facing a problem? Do they see Jesus

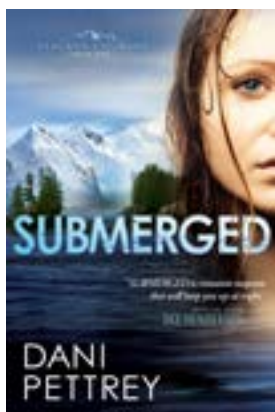


only on Sundays, or is Jesus an important part of their daily thought and activities?

Judah Smith, who with his wife, Chelsea Smith, pastors The City Church in Seattle, offers a message of hope to twenty-first century Christians who are searching for a clearer understanding of the role Jesus can play in their lives. Whether readers of this book are longtime church members or seekers new to faith, they will easily relate to Smith's clear discussion and examples. Readers will gain new insight into the meaning of Jesus and greater understanding of how Jesus is a friend, Jesus is grace, Jesus is here, and Jesus is alive. This is an excellent book for church libraries.

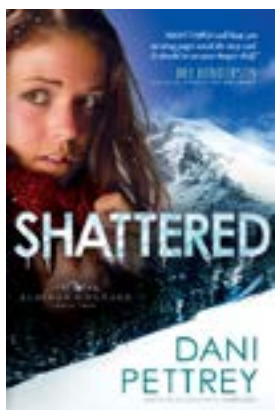
—Mary Lou Henneman

## FICTION



### Submerged

Dani Pettrey. Bethany House, 2012. 313p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0982-6. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.bethanyhouse.com](http://www.bethanyhouse.com) Fiction Murder—Investigation—Fiction. Alaska—Fiction. Series: Alaskan Courage.



### Shattered

Dani Pettrey. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 364p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0983-3. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.bethanyhouse.com](http://www.bethanyhouse.com) Fiction Brothers and sisters—Fiction. Serial murder investigation—Fiction. Alaska—Fiction. Canada—Fiction. Series: Alaskan Courage.



### Stranded

Dani Pettrey. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 344p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0984-0. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.bethanyhouse.com](http://www.bethanyhouse.com) Fiction Missing persons—Fiction. Alaska—Fiction. Series: Alaskan Courage.

Life can take unexpected twists and turns, and decisions we make can have repercussions for years. It takes the courage of faith to make changes necessary to move

forward. In her debut series, Alaskan Courage, Dani

Pettrey creates excitement for the McKenna family as they deal with past mistakes, present suspense, and hopes for future happiness.

In *Submerged*, Bailey Craig has a shady reputation not easily forgotten in a small town like Yancey, Alaska. When she returns to her hometown for the funeral of a loved one killed in a plane crash, it is unclear whether the death was an accident or murder. Cole McKenna, now a rescue diver, once cared for Bailey, but can he forget her past? They must put the past aside in order to solve the growing number of "accidents."

In *Shattered*, the story continues with Piper McKenna, who is thrilled when her brother returns home after a long absence. Her feelings soon turn fearful when he is arrested for murder. Deputy Landon Grainger loves Piper, but he has a duty to uphold the law and see justice served. How will she and the rest of her family prove their brother's innocence?

*Stranded*, the third book in the series, follows Darcy St. James, who is working undercover as a journalist aboard a luxury cruise liner. After a single brief meeting with Abby, her friend and contact, Darcy learns that Abby is missing. Ship personnel act as if nothing is out of the ordinary, but Darcy is suspicious. The last person she expects to see on the ship is Gage McKenna, who was hired to lead adventure excursions for wealthy passengers. Will they be able to find out what happened to Abby? What about others who have gone missing? *Stranded* keeps the Alaskan adventure going with even more exciting plot twists.

This series is a great addition to the fiction section of church libraries; the exciting stories transport readers into the beauty of Alaska. —Mary Lou Henneman



### The Letters: A Novel

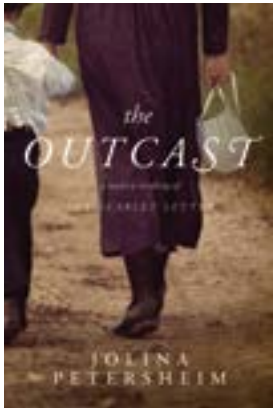
Suzanne Woods Fisher. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 316p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2093-3. Available as an ebook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) Fiction Amish—Fiction. Mennonites—Fiction. Bed and breakfast accommodations—Fiction. Amish Country (Pa.)—Fiction. Domestic Fiction. Series: The Inn at Eagle Hill.

In Suzanne Woods Fisher's *The Letters*, readers meet Rose Schrock. Newly widowed with children, Rose faces the challenge of supporting her family

and paying off her late husband's debts. Her strong faith in God, prayerful heart, and determination lead her to open a bed and breakfast in her home. As the story progresses, Rose ministers to her guests spiritually. Her faith offers inspiration to those who doubt and strength to those who are weak. Will Rose allow herself to be blessed?

Much is revealed in *The Letters* about Amish and

Mennonite culture and that of the “Englishers.” Themes of faith, trust, and forgiveness shine through. Recommended for libraries where there is interest in Amish fiction. *The Letters*, first in the Inn at Eagle Hill series, was inspired by a true story. The novel contains discussion questions that will be useful for book groups. —Virginia Webb



### The Outcast

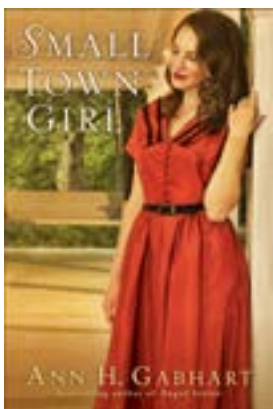
Jolina Petersheim. Tyndale House, 2013. 389p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4143-7934-0. Available as an ebook. [www.tyndale.com](http://www.tyndale.com) Fiction Mennonites—Fiction. Single women—Fiction.

Jolina Petersheim’s *The Outcast* is told in alternating chapters from the points of view of Rachel Stoltzfus, the female protagonist, and of Amos King, who has recently—and unexpectedly—died. King was the father of Tobias, the main

male character, who followed his father as bishop in the Old Order Mennonite community. King was also the father of Judah, who is another important figure in the story.

The unwed mother of a baby boy, Rachel has been shunned by the community. Although she has been living with her twin sister and Tobias, her sister’s husband, Rachel is now ordered by her brother-in-law to leave his home. When Rachel’s son becomes seriously ill, the nature of the illness threatens to make it necessary to reveal the identity of the baby’s father, which Rachel has previously refused to disclose. This news will bring more troubles for the sisters, the bishop, and, indeed, the entire community.

Library Journal named this retelling of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *The Scarlet Letter* one of the best Christian novels of 2013. —Beverly M. Bixler



### Small Town Girl: A Novel

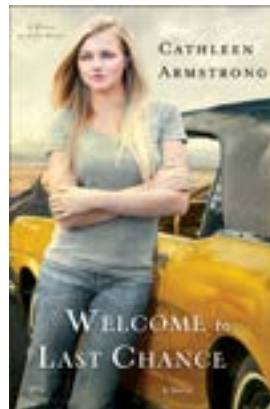
Ann H. Gabhart. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 395p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2184-8. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) Fiction Man-woman relationships—Fiction. Small town life—Fiction. United States—Social life and customs—1918-1945—Fiction.

Ann H. Gabhart, author of *Angel Sister*, revisits the Merritt family and the town of Rosey Corner in *Small Town Girl*. Kate Merritt is secretly in love—or

thinks she is in love—with Mike Champion, pastor of Rosey Corner’s Baptist Church. Now Kate will be the maid of honor as her older sister marries Mike. Jay Tanner, a longtime friend of the groom, has arrived to serve as best man. Jay has no intention of staying

in the small town, and Kate is coping with the end of her wished-for romance. In spite of themselves, Jay and Kate begin to feel an attraction. The longer Jay remains in Rosey Corner, the more their attraction to one another grows. However, Pearl Harbor and America’s entry into the war change lives and make everyone’s future uncertain.

Gabhart slowly and methodically creates strong, credible characters—minor ones and protagonists alike. —Beverly M. Bixler



### Welcome to Last Chance: A Novel

Cathleen Armstrong. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 284p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2246-3. Available as an ebook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) Fiction Self-realization in women—Fiction. New Mexico—Fiction. Small town life—Fiction. Series: A Place to Call Home.

Lainie Davis’s life in California is far from perfect. In her attempt to escape a rocky romantic relationship and find a new job in Texas, things go

from bad to worse when her car breaks down in Last Chance, New Mexico. Could the name of the town foreshadow what is to come? Here Lainie meets a town full of interesting characters that seem too good to be true. They offer her friendship and a place to stay. Lainie even finds a job. The catch? Elizabeth, the lady who opens her home to Lainie, has only one requirement—that she attend church, something Lainie is not eager to do.

This first book in the series *A Place to Call Home* promises more enjoyment to come; fans of Christian romance will love the Mayberry RFD-style warmth. Cathleen Armstrong won the American Christian Fiction Writers Genesis Award for Women’s Fiction for *Welcome to Last Chance*, her debut novel. —Mary Lou Henneman



### At Every Turn

Anne Mateer. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2012. 315p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0904-8. Available as an ebook. [www.bethanyhouse.com](http://www.bethanyhouse.com) Fiction Young women—Fiction. Automobile racing—Fiction. Charity—Fiction.

It is 1916, and young Alyce Benson is passionate about two things in life—her Christian faith and her love of driving automobiles. When two missionaries from Africa

visit her church seeking funds to support their work, Alyce, the daughter of a wealthy father, pledges three thousand dollars to their cause. Her father’s refusal to



provide the money and the minimal sum the townspeople donate leave her far short of her goal. What is a proper young lady to do?

Alyce puts her trust in the Lord and comes up with a plan that relies on her love of fast cars. She disguises herself as a male and enters auto races to win the money she needs. With the help of Webster, an employee of her father, she is able to pull off the charade—at least until the unforeseen happens.

As the title of *At Every Turn* suggests, there are many twists and turns in its plot. Author Anne Mateer weaves an exciting historical romance filled with adventure and intrigue as she accurately captures the time period. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



### **Tattler's Branch: A Novel**

Jan Watson. Tyndale House, 2013. 351p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4143-3915-3. Available as an ebook. [www.tyndale.com](http://www.tyndale.com) Fiction Women physicians—Fiction. Rural women—Fiction. Coal miners—Kentucky—Fiction. Abandoned children—Fiction.

In *Tattler's Branch*, Jan Watson has created an interesting story of life in the small coalmining town of Skip Rock, Kentucky, in 1911. Lilly Corbett Still, an intelligent, capable

woman, is the community's doctor. Her neighbor's husband, who works at the clinic, is away finishing his nurse's training. Lilly's husband is away also. Her mother has sent Lilly's flighty, seventeen-year-old sister to spend the summer with Lilly, hoping the teenager will find some direction. Lilly is beginning to feel overwhelmed, even before life in Skip Rock takes a bizarre turn.

Armina, Lilly's neighbor, witnesses something that greatly disturbs her. She becomes very ill and cannot remember the details of what she saw or how it is that she now has an abandoned baby in her house. One night, the doctor is ready to leave the clinic when a stranger enters and wants to be treated for stab wounds. He claims he got them when he was cleaning fish. Lilly treats him but is suspicious of his story. After further complications, Armina finally regains her memory. Problems are solved, but not without danger. —*Beverly M. Bixler*

## FOR YOUNG CHILDREN



### **When No One Is Watching**

Eileen Spinelli. Illustrated by David A. Johnson. Eerdmans, 2013. 26p. \$16.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5303-5. [www.eerdmans.com](http://www.eerdmans.com) [E] Bashfulness—Juvenile fiction. Best friends—Juvenile fiction. Friendship—Juvenile fiction. Stories in rhyme.

What can I do? I can play basketball, dance, be brave, growl, swing so high, sing, and do so much more *when no one is watching*. Young children have great imaginations, and

they dream of accomplishing great things. They are often too shy, however, to try different tasks in front of grownups or even other kids. This is a perfect book to help kindergartners and early grade-schoolers develop self-esteem and confidence. Young girls especially will enjoy the story by Eileen Spinelli and the clever illustrations by David A. Johnson of the young narrator and her best friend.

Use this simple story to help children see how much God loves them. It will allow them to challenge themselves and develop their talents, even when others are watching.

An excellent addition to congregational library collections for children. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



### **Creation's First Light**

Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. Indianapolis Business Journal, 2013. 32p. \$17.95, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-934922-94-1. [www.ibj.com/books](http://www.ibj.com/books) 221 Creation—Juvenile literature.

Although most of us have read versions of the Creation story many times, how many of us ever wondered about the light of the first day in comparison to that of the

fourth, when God created night and day? Apparently some ancient rabbis did wonder about it, and now, in an innovative update of old myths and legends, Rabbi Sandy Eisenberg Sasso uses her imagination to propose what may have happened to that first light.

Sasso writes with a lyrical appeal to children's sense of wonder, and Joani Keller Rothenberg's illustrations are majestic. Young readers explore places where that first day's light may have traveled and where it is today. As Sasso poetically suggests, "It winks at you in a meadow full of memories."

*Creation's First Light* ends with a two-page section addressed to parents and teachers. Sasso notes the six biblical figures mentioned in the text and the decisions or actions they took. She asks relevant



contemporary questions and cites appropriate passages from the Bible. Each page in this book provides a spiritual opportunity for adults to talk with children. Recommended for families with children aged 4 and up.

As of this writing, copies can be purchased directly from the publisher. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



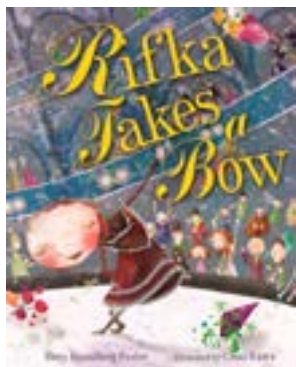
### **Don't Sneeze at the Wedding**

Pamela Mayer. Illustrated by Martha Avilés. Kar-Ben, 2013. 32p. \$7.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4677-0429-8. Available in hardcover. [www.karben.com](http://www.karben.com) [E] Sneezing—Juvenile fiction. Weddings—Juvenile fiction. Jews—Juvenile fiction.

It is the morning of Aunt Rachel's wedding, and Anna, the flower girl, wakes up with a cold. Ah-Choo! She says she feels fine, but several adults give her advice on what to do so she doesn't "sneeze at the wedding." Anna keeps reminding herself of all the instructions she has received: press a finger to her lip, wiggle her ear lobe, whisper "pineapple," tap her forehead between her eyes, pinch her nose, and hold her breath. That is a lot for a young girl to remember, but Anna keeps practicing. Will any of these remedies work when the special moment arrives?

Read this delightful story by children's librarian Pamela Mayer, charmingly illustrated by Martha Avilés. Jewish wedding customs are referred to in the text and brief explanations are provided on the last page.

Recommended as a light-hearted yet educational story for children aged 3-7. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



### **Rifka Takes a Bow**

Betty Rosenberg Perlov. Illustrated by Cosei Kawa. Kar-Ben, 2013. 32p. \$7.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7613-8128-0. Available in hardcover. [www.karben.com](http://www.karben.com) [E] Theater, Yiddish—Juvenile fiction. Jews—United States—Juvenile fiction.

Rifka's mama and papa are actors in New York's Yiddish theater at the turn of the twentieth century. Rifka enjoys seeing them use makeup

and props to transform themselves into different characters. One day they take her with them to the Grand Theater. They ride on the subway, and Rifka eats pie at the automat. Later, she watches the cast in the dressing room as they prepare for their roles. Just before the performance begins, Rifka decides to take a walk around and winds up on stage. The audience asks her to say something and, to their delight, she responds with an expression she has heard her father use. The audience applauds, and Rifka takes an elegant bow. She knows now that she wants to become an actress!

This idyllic story, written by nonagenarian Betty Rosenberg Perlov, whose mother was a Yiddish actress, nostalgically depicts a bygone era. Whimsical illustrations by Cosei Kawa add to the dream-like quality of the tale.

*Rifka Takes a Bow* serves as a child's introduction to the Yiddish theater and to the magic of the entertainment world. Recommended for ages 4-8. —*Evelyn Pockrass*

## **FOR OLDER CHILDREN & TEENAGERS**



### **A Girl Called Problem: A Novel**

Katie Quirk. Eerdmans, 2013. 243p. \$8.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5404-9. [www.eerdmans.com](http://www.eerdmans.com) Fiction. Tanzania—History—Juvenile fiction. Villages—Juvenile fiction. Sukuma (African people)—Juvenile fiction. Healers—Juvenile fiction. Farm life—Tanzania—Juvenile Fiction.

Middle school readers will enjoy learning about Tanzania in this exciting fictional account by Katie Quirk in her debut novel. Shida's name

means "problem," and this reflects how the people in her village treat her. They are highly superstitious and believe she was the cause of her father's death. They also think that Shida's mother is a witch.

Shida is now thirteen years old and a healer. Her life changes when she and all the other members of her village move to the new community of Njia Panda. Their new village has a school, a health clinic, and a community center. Shida is especially excited because Julius Nyerere, the first president of Tanzania, has a dream to educate all children, including girls, in local schools. However, there is dissent among some of the people. Bad things begin to happen, and everything is blamed on how upset the ancient ancestors are with the changes.

*A Girl Called Problem* involves themes of education for all children and how natural remedies and modern medicine can work together. This is a good book for allowing young readers to see life in a very different part of the world. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



### True Purity: More Than Just Saying “No” to “You-Know-What”

Hayley DiMarco and Michael DiMarco. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 184p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2068-1. Available as an ebook or audiobook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) 241:6640835 Christian teenagers—Religious life. Christian teenagers—Sexual behavior. Sex—Religious aspects—Christianity. Christian teenagers—Conduct of life.

When asked what purity means to them, many Chris-

tian teenagers will say it means abstinence from sex. As indicated by the subtitle, Hayley and Michael DiMarco mean that true purity is devoting your life in every aspect to God. Each chapter of *True Purity* will guide mature teens and young adults in how to realistically commit their lives to Christ.

Topics covered include love and sexual relations, the true meaning of friendship, how to choose a friend, how to stay pure and true to oneself in both thought and action, and the importance of having faith in God. The DiMarcos’ discussion is honest and clear as well as firmly supported by biblical excerpts.

What will make *True Purity* especially compelling to teens and young adults are the sidebars in which the authors tell of their own personal struggles and spiritual growth. This is a powerful book for young people who want to act faithfully in all aspects of their lives. —Mary Lou Henneman



### First Date

Melody Carlson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 212p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2131-2. Available as an ebook. [www.revellbooks.com](http://www.revellbooks.com) Fiction Dating (Social customs)—Fiction. Teenagers—Fiction. Series: The Dating Games

Devon spent her freshman year at a rough public high school, but now she is a sophomore and attends a private school. Devon cannot believe how little contact there

is between the guys and girls in her new school. When she learns that a certain teacher discourages the guys from dating, Devon enlists the help of her friends to break the barrier between the sexes and get dates for the homecoming dance. With Abby, Bryn, Cassidy, and Emma, Devon forms a club known as DG (Dating Games) with rules to make sure everyone will get dates for the big dance.

Will the girls follow the rules and support each other? How will they find guys who fit their criteria? The Dating Games is Melody Carlson’s intriguing new series for Christian teens who are experiencing the highs and lows of dating for the first time. She brings up such issues as communicating with parents, dating with no strings attached, supporting friendships, and fashion. Carlson never lets her readers down; she lets teenaged girls know that Christianity, dating, and fun can make a perfect trifecta. —Mary Lou Henneman

## 10 books nominated; more nominations needed for awards

BY GLENDA STROMBOM  
CHAIR, AWARDS COMMITTEE

### RODDA AWARD UPDATE

Thank you for the ten nominated books for the Children’s Category of the Rodda Award. All were wonderful nominations and the Committee is busy reading and working on the final decision for the award winning selection. Chapter members, please be thinking about volunteering to be a member of the Rodda Award Committee and Chair of the Committee. Contact Cheryl Cutchin or fill out the Awards Committees Volunteer/Serving Form on the CSLA website.

### ADDITIONAL AWARDS NEED NOMINEES!

The Committee is still waiting for nominations for the following categories: Outstanding Congregational *Librarian*, Outstanding Congregational *Library*, Outstanding *Contribution* to Congregational Libraries, Helen Keating Ott Award for Outstanding Contribution to *Children’s Literature*, and Pat Tabler Memorial Scholarship for a librarian who has *established or re-established* a congregational library within the last year. The DEADLINE for receiving nominations is March 31. The nomination form is on the CSLA website. Chapter Members please consider volunteering to be a member of the CSLA Awards Committee and Chair of the Committee. Contact Cheryl Cutchin or fill out the Awards Committees Volunteer/Serving form on CSLA website.

## Mark your calendar for 2014 conference

BY JUDY JANZEN  
Administrator




Happy New Year Everyone!  
I trust you all had a wonderful holiday time and are now ready to get back into your regular routine!  
Be sure to put the 2014 conference on your calendar.—to be held JULY 30 - AUGUST 1, 2014, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Lake Oswego just south of Portland. The theme is: "Return to the Oregon Trail." Be sure to schedule several extra days as you will discover lots of wonderful places to visit. Oh yes, be sure to bring along a pair of good walking shoes; you will need them when you visit some of the most beautiful sites in the world.

Be sure your membership dues are paid for 2014 so that you will continue to be able to access the members-only section of the website. If you have a new email or home address please be sure that I get that information to enable me to update the database.  
We have several positions that need to be filled on the National Board: 1st Vice President, Treasurer, Finance Chair, Rodda Book Award Chair. Please consider helping us out by volunteering for one of these positions. We need new people and ideas to help our organization grow and prosper.

## Remember to submit nominations for awards


It is time to submit nominations for the annual library awards that will be presented at our annual conference in Oregon, July 30 through August 1. Many of you are doing outstanding things in your libraries that you consider ordinary but are in reality magnificent. Many of us are looking for ideas for automation, renovation, and programs for our libraries. CSLA would like to recognize the creative work that you do for your congregations. Help us share the good news and submit a nomination for one of the awards. The guidelines and form can be found on the CSLA website. If you have questions, contact Glenda Strombom, Awards Chair, for more information.—*Cheryl Cutchin*




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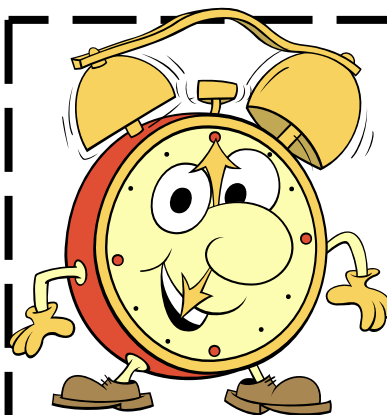
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