

congregational libraries *today*

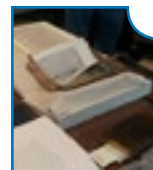
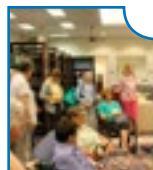
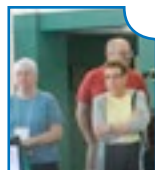


SERVING CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARIES OF ALL FAITHS SINCE 1967

CSLAINFO.ORG | THIRD ISSUE 2015

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Tour participants at the annual conference enjoyed four beautiful libraries plus a luncheon.

North Texas welcomes CSLA

CSLA's 48th annual conference at the University of North Texas in Denton was a delightful whirl of activity, from tours and guest speakers to authors, vendors and workshops.

Besides enjoying the inspiring libraries of Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, Wilshire Baptist Church and All Saints Catholic Church, tour attendees were treated to a presentation by the special collections staff of Southern Methodist University's Bridwell Library. The Bridwell boasts many beautiful rare books and manuscripts as well as Methodist historical documents, including a collection of John Wesley's original letters.

Tour guests also were treated to a delicious luncheon served in an idyllic setting at Wilshire Baptist Church.

Among the special presentations was a lecture on the Dead Sea Scrolls by Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis and a glimpse into the creation and evolution of a Honduran mission

school library by Rev. Bill Laucher.

Wednesday evening's ecumenical worship service was an inspiring musical presentation by Adam La Spata with additional UNT students and staff performing under his direction. Catherine Weiskopf and Lisa Worley shared how they turned



Dr. Celestine Bennett, left, accepts the Outstanding Congregational Librarian award. Joy Cryer, far right, accepts the Outstanding Congregational Library award on behalf of Tallowood Baptist Church. Debbie Scott gave the presentations. See Awards web page for details.

For those of you who were not able to journey to Texas, we urge you to make a special effort to attend next year's conference in Kent, Ohio. You don't want to miss what promises to be another outstanding event.



Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis

their own difficult life experiences into Pearls of Promise, a ministry that helps women facing emotional trauma and abuse.

It would take a volume much larger than this journal to detail all the venues of the conference, the opportunities to fellowship with and, yes, to pick the brains of our fellow librarians, the joy of discussing the writing process with published authors and the pride and pleasure of honoring this year's award recipients.



Cheryl concludes two years of service as CSLA president

CHERYL CUTCHIN
PRESIDENT, CSLA

CSLA is about supporting congregational librarians and helping them succeed. The success of the organization is built upon the willingness of everyone to give a little extra of themselves for the benefit of all.

It has been a pleasure serving as your president the past two years. Working with the CSLA Board has allowed me to really get to know members who give willingly to the organization through their expertise in a variety of areas. CSLA Board members continue to work diligently to provide support to the membership through conference workshops and speakers, the CSLA website, publications such as *Congregational Libraries Today* and the instructional guides and bibliographies. Even though they live hundreds or thousands of miles from one another in the east, west, north and south, they work together as one to meet the goals of CSLA. I have appreciated their wisdom and unending support.

This year's conference provided many opportunities to network with other congregational librarians, and I continue to learn ways to make my library a better place for church members. Several of the CSLA Advisory Board members were able to attend, and two presented informative workshops.

Visiting the local congregational libraries through conference tours remains a great treat, and I always see ideas to implement in my own library. This year's tour included a visit to the Bridwell Library on the beautiful Southern Methodist University campus. Invariably, I come away from the conferences rejuvenated, excited,



Marcia Trauernicht (left) accepts gavel from outgoing president Cheryl Cutchin.

and ready to get started with the new ideas I learned from workshops and other conference attendees.

CSLA is about supporting congregational librarians and helping them succeed. The success of the organization is built upon the willingness of everyone to give a little extra of themselves for the benefit of all. During my time as president, I have seen the CSLA spirit of helping through activities of the CSLA Board, conference attendees sharing with one another, Advisory Board members giving of their time, and exhibitors supporting the association. My best wishes go to our new President, Marcia Trauernicht, as she becomes the recipient of the time and talents of members continuing in the CSLA tradition of serving others.



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Workshop RECAPS

CATALOGING SHEET MUSIC

Even if the majority of a church's musical scores reside in the music director's office, most church libraries also include sheet music as well as recorded music and hymnals in their collection. Ralph Hartsock, Senior Music Catalog Librarian of the University of North Texas, provided an overview of cataloging procedures with (thank you, Ralph!) printouts of RDA MARC records and helpful web addresses, such as [Best Practices for Music Cataloging](#).—*Susan Sponaas*

than one title in this bibliography as she wanted to provide a diversity of viewpoints. She also noted award winners, availability and cost. Part of the session was open to questions and answers and that piqued our interest in adding the new bibliography to our collections.—*Evelyn Pockrass*

CSLA WEBSITE FOCUS GROUP

Although we missed hearing Craig Kubic speak to us about financing our libraries, the cancellation turned out to be a blessing for our Technology

RESOURCEMATE (JAYWIL)

Denise Mastalerz from ResourceMate gave a very helpful question-and-answer presentation of the ResourceMate library software. One of many tips: assign barcodes to items even if your library does not use barcodes for circulation—it helps with inventory. Additional information about this popular software system was available throughout the conference at the vendor exhibit area.—*Carol Meisinger*

3 R'S OF RDA

Many of us are beginning to adjust to using RDA instead of AACR2 for cataloging books, but cataloging media such as DVDs and CDs remains a challenge. Scott Dutkiewicz of Clemson University reviewed RDA cataloging of audiovisual media with great “cheat sheet” handouts of commonly encountered media types.—*Susan Sponaas*

OPALS (MEDIA FLEX)

Harry Chan discussed enhancements Media Flex has made to their OPALS software during the past year which make it possible for librarians to customize their online catalog's home page without requiring knowledge of website programming. Since few small libraries have access to the websites of their parent organizations, this provides much greater flexibility on how a library presents its services. He also mentioned that Media Flex has not charged customers for training, which is primarily made available through online webinars customized to the library's needs.—*Pat Shufeldt*

PINTEREST FOR LIBRARIES

Visual examples of creative and informative ideas abound in the free online bulletin board site, Pinterest <http://pinterest.com/>. Joy



Workshop attendees appreciated the excellent technological capability and comfort of the Willis Library meeting spaces.

BASIC BOOKS

Ellen Bosman, CSLA's incoming Media Review Editor, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the background of her new bibliography, *A Basic Media List for Church Libraries*. This bibliography replaces Deitrick's *A Basic Booklist for Church Libraries* and includes 215 resources, 86% of which are in print and 14% Internet resources. *Books in Print* was used to verify availability of books. Titles, which have entry numbers, are also referenced by subject matter and authors. Ellen said there were very few authors who have more

Committee. Technology Chair Debbie Scott used the time to hold a focus group session on the functionality of the website, which had been quickly recreated following a crash in early July. All the pages of the site were examined, and members shared their thoughts on improvements and increased functionality. These will be taken into consideration by the Technology Committee in developing an even better site in the coming months.—*Technology Committee*

Cryer graciously stepped in at the last minute to facilitate the session and share her knowledge and experience with Pinterest. For each idea or topic, just create a “board,” search the site for the topic and “pin” or select anything that is of interest. If you have multiple boards, you do need to be careful when pinning, but you can always move items if they end up in the wrong location. You can follow others on this site if they provide new ideas that you like on a regular basis. Other functions: copy a pinned item to multiple boards, send a pinned item to individuals, and share a pin on Face-book. This workshop provided a good introduction to the basics of Pinterest and opened a world of ideas on crafts, displays, how-to directions and more to the participants. If new ideas are needed for displays, library events, storage options and interior designs, Pinterest is a good place to start. —*Marcia Trauernicht*

CLASSIC RELIGIOUS BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

There was a lot of lively discussion and excitement when favorite titles were mentioned in the discussion of the bibliography, *Classic Religious Books for Children*, newly updated by Carol Campbell and Evelyn Pockrass. Participants quickly wrote down titles to add to their own congregational library collections when the facilitators, Carol and Evelyn, along with Jeri Baker, highlighted specific print and e-book titles. Participants each had a copy of the guide to use during the session and the arrangement of the guide by subject with author and title indexes made it very easy to use. The session was a valuable reminder of the terrific religious resources available for children. —*Cheryl Cutchin*

DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Dr. Elizabeth Figa (CSLA Advisory Board member) and Rita Nix co-presented “Digital Storytelling.” This workshop integrated the principles of storytelling to motivate congrega-

tions to preserve their corporate and personal histories. Evaluation criteria for storytelling and basic methods for collecting oral histories were shared.—*Scott Dutkiewicz*

DEWEY CLASSIFICATION TABLES DEMYSTIFIED

No magician wants to perform a trick without a magic wand. Fortunately for participants in Susan Snyder’s workshop, a clear picture was presented about how to navigate through the Dewey tables with logic and understanding as if a magic wand was in action. Susan’s discussion of



The Forum, Willis Library’s main meeting space, provided plenty of room for general meetings, banquets, and the silent auction.

how and when tables are utilized gave everyone a wonderful and demystified look at how Dewey numbers are arrived at by cataloging services. As in any challenge, understanding leads to competence and competence leads to confidence. Thanks to Susan Snyder for help with our challenges. —*Jane Hope*

DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY

Maristella Feustle, Music Special Collections Librarian, UNT, gave an excellent presentation that reminds us to think beyond the cataclysmic disasters such as fire, natural floods and earthquakes, and to remember that our collections may be ruined by much more common things such as flooding from a leaky pipe, mold,

insect infestation, and fading from natural and fluorescent light. Some essential steps: have a written plan in place and widely distributed, including current contact information of people to notify and emergency help; keep an up-to-date inventory that includes values of media and equipment for insurance purposes; inspect your collection regularly to nip potential disasters in the bud. The new CSLA guide *Disaster Management Planning for Small Libraries*, by Laura Dallas, is a good source for creating your own plan.—*Susan Sponaas*

FUNCTIONAL FUTURE FOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL

In “The Functional Future for Bibliographic Control,” Dr. Shawne Miksa of UNT described the changing landscape of cataloging. In her workshop she supplemented ideas and concepts presented earlier in the conference by Scott Dutkiewicz and Ralph Hartsock. Miksa described the Bibliographic Framework (BibFrame), RDA, and FRBR. This included Linked Data and the Semantic Web. The future also holds more interaction between librarians and users; social cataloging and social tagging will allow the user to add data to the system.—*Ralph Hartsock*



DOING DEWEY

CLASSIFICATION NUMBERS

FOR GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

BY SUSAN SYNDER
 ssnyder44147@gmail.com

900 Numbers Commonly Found in Congregational Libraries	
904	Specific events, such as accounts of accidents and natural disasters
909	World history, including history of specific racial or national groups not limited by locality (Example: world history of the Jews) and comprehensive materials on civilization
910	Geography and travel – General works
912	Atlases
913-919	Geography of, and travel within, specific places
920	Biography and autobiography
921-928	Optional numbers for biographies
929	Genealogy, names, and insignia, including flags
930-990	History, or combined history and geography, of specific places
930	History of the ancient world, including archaeology
932	Ancient Egypt
933	Ancient Palestine
935	Ancient Mesopotamia, including the Babylonian Empire
937	Ancient Italian Peninsula and adjacent territory, including the Roman Empire
938	Ancient Greece
940	European history
945	Italy, including Rome and the Vatican
947	Eastern Europe, including the former Soviet Union
950	Asian history
953	Arabian Peninsula and Arab states
956	Middle East history, including Israel and Palestine
970	North American history
972	Mexico, Central America, the West Indies and Cuba
973	United States as a whole
974	Northeastern United States, including Appalachia

Most congregational libraries have at least a few books dealing with travel and more dealing with history, especially the history of the regions and communities in which their faith traditions developed. Most congregational libraries also include biographies. Books on geography, travel and history are classified in the 900s, and biographies are also classified there unless they are simply alphabetized by the name of the biographee.

Geography and travel: To form a number for a book about geography of, or travel in, a specific place, start with the base number 91. Then add the notation from Table 2 for the specific place and insert a decimal point after the third digit. For example, a book about travel in the United States would have the number 917.3.

Biography: Individual biographies are placed either in 920 or under B for biography and further arranged alphabetically by the name of the biographee. (Some libraries may choose to use a longer abbreviation instead of B, such as BIO, BIOG or BIOGR.) Biographies of more than one person (collective biographies), if not placed in CB, may be classified in 920 and its subdivisions. If biographees are all associated with the same subject, a library may wish to use the optional numbers for people associated with that subject. These optional numbers are formed by adding the number for the general subject after 92. For example, 922 may be used for collective biography of religious leaders, thinkers, and workers, including saints. 929 is used for genealogy, names and insignia, including flags.

History of a specific place in the medieval or modern world: Books on the history, or the combined geography and history, of specific places are classified in 930-990. To form a number, start with the base number 9. Then add the number from Table 2 in the Dewey manual for the specific place, and insert a decimal point after the third digit. The number for World War II is 940.53, a specific number assigned as part of the chronological history of Europe as a whole.

CHAPTER Chatter

Marcia Trauernicht,
Chapters Coordinator



Marcia Trauernicht congratulates the Houston Texas Chapter, represented by Jane Hope (left), for its 30th anniversary.

INDIANA

The Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library was the featured topic at the April 18, 2015, spring workshop of the **Indiana Chapter**. The library contains many materials from Vonnegut's life and work, and provides research facilities, educational events and tours focusing on the author's writing and American culture in general. Corey Michael Dalton, volunteer coordinator of the library, described his involvement with the library, created in 2010. For more information, please go to the library's website at <http://www.vonnegutlibrary.org/>. Did you know that Vonnegut was an Indianapolis native and that that city was an important influence in his work?



Susan Snyder (right) accepts the 40th anniversary recognition certificate given to the Northeastern Ohio Chapter at Annual Conference.

NORTHEASTERN OHIO

April 18 was a popular date for chapter meetings! "Make your Library Sparkle and Shine" was the theme of the **Northeastern Ohio Chapter's** spring 2015 meeting. Facilitated by Mary Lou Henneman and Connie Altomare, members exchanged ideas on how to showcase their libraries. Meghan Harper, Kent State University, presented a workshop on "Helping Those Who Hurt: Resources for Adults Who Work with Children in Congregational Libraries." She provided an overview of the CSLA guide of the same title, selection criteria for appropriate materials, and directions on how to use picture books to approach difficult experiences that some children or youth have had. Guest speaker Jill Hardie described how she developed her books *The Sparkle Box* <http://www.thesparklebox.com/> and *The Sparkle Egg* <http://www.thesparkleegg.com/>.

SAN JOSE BAY AREA CHAPTER

At the June 1 **San Jose Bay Area Chapter** meeting, members gathered for lunch in Los Altos and discussed the Reach Potential Movement (RPM), among other topics. RPM serves children and their parents in many ways to encourage a supportive home structure. One idea from RPM: "The Bookshelf in Every Home" project, providing a bookshelf filled with donated books. For more information about RPM, please go to its website at <http://www.reachpotential.org/>. The chapter meeting concluded with visits to two local bookstores.

SOUTHWEST PENNSYLVANIA

A summer tour of Calvary Presbyterian Church, Graystone Presbyterian Church and the Jimmy Stewart Museum, all located in Indiana, Pennsylvania, was enjoyed by members of the **Southwest Pennsylvania Chapter** on August 13. If you happen to be in the area in the future, the unique architecture of these churches and the museum about one of America's famous actors may be of interest.

VIRTUAL CHAPTER

Bookstore + Library? Bookstore vs. Library? Those were the questions discussed at the spring meeting held on May 22. The main agenda topic was based on a current situation occurring at a member's congregation. The board has been

>> *article continues on page 7*



Everyone enjoyed Wednesday night's musical program at the annual conference.

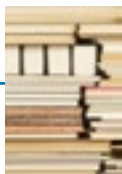
CHAPTER Chatter

>> article continued from page 6

interested in creating a bookstore within the church, containing current and general materials, and is looking at the current library space as a possible location.

Brainstorming among the group occurred, providing possible options on various locations for all or part of the library, how to share space with a bookstore, and how the staffing of the library and bookstore should be handled. Everyone agreed that more information about the congregation's desire for a bookstore and financial data on supporting a bookstore are needed.

The summer meeting of this chapter occurred during the July conference, providing an introduction to new members, assignments of meeting duties for the future, and a discussion of future opportunities in general.



Organizing a Library or Resource Center: Creating a Policy and Procedure Manual.

by Carol Campbell, Dianne Oswald and Glenda Strombom (2010). Revised and compiled from three CSLA publications: *A Policy and Procedure Manual for Church and Synagogue Libraries*; *Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries*; and *Setting Up A Library*. This new publication provides a simple method of developing a working manual for organizing and operating a congregational library. \$13/\$14 + S&H.

CSLA GUIDE

Naomi H. Kauffman

1937 - 2015

BY MARJORIE SMINK

Naomi H. Kauffman, one of the finest gifts ever given to the Church and Synagogue Library Association, passed away suddenly on July 8, 2015. From the time she became a member of CSLA in the 1970s until her last breath she was a strong champion of our organization and the positive impact it can have on congregational libraries and librarians.

I first met Naomi when I was a new member of the Delaware Valley Chapter (DVC) of CSLA in the early 1990s. She was a workshop leader at the first chapter workshop day I attended, and her instruction on promoting your library was excellent. It was evident upon meeting her that she cared deeply about CSLA, knew and prepared her material well, and gladly mentored members to become the best congregational librarians they could be. In return, all those who experienced her caring and competence revered her.

CSLA was founded in Philadelphia in 1967, and the Delaware Valley Chapter was chartered as the organization's first chapter in 1970. Historically, DVC members have felt a strong responsibility for leadership and service to the organization. Naomi personified that leadership/service mentality. She was a national leader of CSLA as well as a DVC leader when I met her. She had successfully chaired the 20th annual conference at Haverford College in 1987 and was moving through positions on the association's Board of Directors: Library Services, Nominations and Elections, and Continuing Education Chairs.

Because Naomi did such a commendable job with the 1987 conference, she was rewarded by being asked to chair the 30th annual conference in 1997 in Valley Forge! Serving as CSLA's President in 2004, she also picked up the lagging reins for the 2005 conference in



Portland. She was asked again to co-chair the 40th annual conference with me in 2007 back in the Valley Forge area. After that conference she eased into retirement except for her support of the local chapter. Retirement didn't last long for Naomi. I urged her to co-chair the 2013 annual conference with me at Lake Junaluska, and she accepted!

In addition to her CSLA involvement, since 1967 Naomi was the librarian at Perkasio Mennonite Church in Perkasio, Pennsylvania. She nurtured her collection's growth from one bookcase to thousands of books, journals and audiovisual materials and continually provided many new library services to her congregation. CSLA honored Naomi at the 1982 conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, as Outstanding Congregational Librarian, an annual award given to a librarian in recognition of distinguished library service to one's congregation. She also was responsible for bringing together the congregational librarians of the Franconia Mennonite Conference with DVC librarians, resulting in enhanced programs for both groups.

Over the years we had a wonderful time working together on many CSLA endeavors, and I relished our time together and cherished our friendship. Naomi was the epitome of quiet strength, attention to detail, consideration of others and loyalty. She never stopped believing in CSLA and was preparing to help celebrate its 50th anniversary. We will miss you, Naomi, dear friend and leader.

Ruth Schluchter Smith CSLA's First President

Ruth Smith, one of the founders and the first president of CSLA, died peacefully on December 24, 2014, in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

Ruth received her Bachelor of Arts degree at Wayne State University and her Library Science degree from the University of Michigan. She served as Lt. j.g. in the WAVES during World War II with duties as reference librarian in the Bureau of Ordinance Technical Library in Washington, DC. Following the war, she continued to reside in the Bethesda, Maryland, area and had a long and distinguished career as a librarian, consultant, and author on library and information services in both government and private industry.

A busy career did not stop Ruth's volunteer activities. She was a founder of the Church Library Council in the Washington area and, as mentioned, helped to found CSLA and serve as

its first president in 1967-1968. Ruth was CSLA Publications Chair from 1969 to 1975 and authored several of CSLA's early guides: *Workshop Planning*, *Cataloging Books Step by Step*, *Cataloging Made Easy*, *Running a Library*, and *Getting the Books off the Shelves*. She also was the founder and first librarian of the Bethesda United Methodist Church library.



Monica Tenney, outgoing editor of media reviews for CSLA, remembers Ruth as a loyal reviewer and an astute judge of materials. "Ruth always sized a book up perfectly, and her reviews

told librarians what they needed to know." At Monica's first CSLA annual conference 15 years ago in Kansas City, she attended Ruth's workshop on cataloging. "Ruth not only knew her topic inside and out," Monica recalls, "she was generous in sharing what she knew for the benefit of all."

Found among Ruth's notes from 1968 is the following statement: "The role of CSLA is to advance the nation's church and synagogue library program by providing leadership... extending and improving educational programs... [and] assisting church and synagogue librarians and others in carrying out their library programs." Ruth would be pleased to see that the role she envisioned for our association 47 years ago is still our guiding purpose.



Ruth lived a life that made a difference and was a blessing to us all.




Disaster Management Planning for Small Libraries

By **Laura Dallas**. (2015) Disaster can strike at any time. This is an excellent guide for producing a plan to be ready when "IT" happens. Succinct and to the point. \$10/\$12 + S&H


CSLA GUIDE

A Basic Media List for Church Libraries:

An Annotated Bibliography
by **Ellen Bosman**. (2015) Updated approach to *Basic Books* that utilizes all media that should be available in congregational libraries. Carefully selected by our new Media Review Editor. \$14/\$12 + S&H

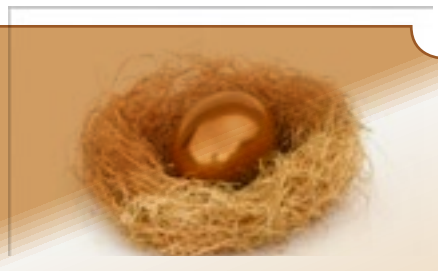
CSLA BIBLIOGRAPHY



Classic Religious Books for Children:

An Annotated Bibliography
by **Carol Campbell & Evelyn Pockrass**. (2015). Completely redone from the previous edition. Carefully researched with helpful annotations and notes. Here are the very best children's religious books from several faith traditions. \$14/\$12 + S&H

CSLA BIBLIOGRAPHY



PIONEERS ENDOWMENT FUND

The Pioneers Endowment Fund was established in 1998 to provide support now and in the future for the operating expenses of the Church and Synagogue Library Association. It is a permanent fund gifted by memorial donations, unrestricted bequests and general donations to the fund.

The fund is invested in a Schwab Liberty Income Fund. As of June 30, 2015, the investment was valued at \$16,818.12.

Contributions have come in the form of cash or stocks and have ranged from \$10.00 to \$4000.00. The CSLA Finance Committee is responsible for making investment decisions, subject to the board's approval.

Our goal is to have the endowment fund increase to an amount that will provide security for the financial stability of the organization. We are thankful for those members and friends of CSLA who have been able to give generous gifts, as well as their time and talents. We encourage others to remember CSLA when planning your future donations and bequests.

Jesus: First-Century Rabbi wins 2015 Rodda Award

The Rodda Book Award committee is proud to announce that the recipient of the 2015 Rodda Award for an adult book most suited for church and synagogue libraries published within the past three years is *Jesus: First-Century Rabbi* by Rabbi David Zaslow (Paraclete, 2014). This book was selected by the committee for its excellence in writing and its spirituality in offering thought-provoking, well-researched ideas that contribute to a deeper understanding of one's own, as well as diverse, beliefs.

Rabbi Zaslow of Havurah Shir Hadash Synagogue in Ashland, Oregon, has researched and documented the life and meaning of Jesus in a manner that both Jews and Christians can appreciate. He points out the influences that the Jewish and Christian religions have made upon each other and the beliefs and goals they hold in common. *Jesus: First-Century Rabbi* encourages dialogue between Jews and Christians.

Rabbi Zaslow, a keynote speaker at last year's CSLA conference, presented

a thought-provoking acceptance speech via Skype during the 2015 conference Awards Banquet. He stated that "Jewish theology and Christian theology are not in competition with each other." Rabbi Zaslow also said "the theological view should be separated from the historical view of Jesus." This message is underscored throughout his book.

The Rodda Award, named for lifetime CSLA member Dorothy Rodda Sargent, is presented annually on a rotating basis for adult, teen/young adult and children's books. Thanks are extended to the members of the 2015 committee for their work in reading and evaluating the nominations submitted by the CSLA membership. Committee members were: Ellen Bosman, Liz Evans, Betty Grypp, Mary Lou Henneman, Amy Ownbey and Chairman Bev Etzelmueller.



Will you join us?

Your membership renewal and donations help us provide the latest information to assist you in your library ministry. *Congregational Libraries Today* is the best quarterly journal to help YOU as a congregational librarian with informative articles, media reviews, information about publishers, software, our excellent guides and bibliographies, as well as our annual conference. We have several of our guides and bibliographies in process of revision to make sure that you will have the latest and best information available.

ANNUAL DUES

Individual - \$50

Individual Canadian - \$55usd

*Congregational/Resource Ctr - \$70

*Canadian/Int'l/Resource Ctr - \$75usd

Student - \$20

*Affiliate - \$100

fresh citations

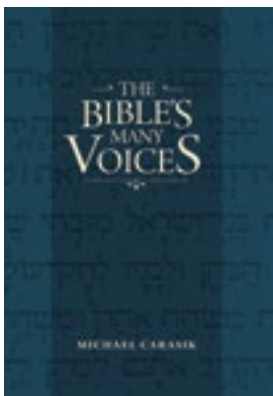
new media for your library



topics

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THE BIBLE



The Bible's Many Voices

Michael Carasik. Jewish Publication Society and University of Nebraska Press, 2014. 365p. \$31.95, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8276-0935-8. Available as an e-book. www.jps.org 221.6 Bible—Old Testament—Criticism, interpretation, etc.

One way to read the Bible is by listening for its many distinct voices. It is in part a matter of hearing the nuances in the translations (or in the original if your skills are well tuned). It

includes an awareness of the different strata, such as the Deuteronomic versus the priestly. Women's voices as well as foreign influences emerge from the text. These voices collectively create a portrait of the Bible from its origins through its final composition. That is the focus of *The Bible's Many Voices*.

Others have written on the origins of the Bible with their suppositions about who the final editor might have been. Michael Carasik, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, applies the best of current scholarship to help the attentive reader discern the sometimes-competing voices that make the Bible such a complex collection of documents. Carasik leads us gently through the texts to discover contradictions between the multiple versions of the Ten Commandments or unravel the mystery of who really killed Goliath. He helps us appreciate the difference between historical books that focus on the lives of the Israelites and the wisdom literature that addresses universal human concerns. The Bible gains a new vibrancy as we encounter more complexity and nuance.

Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



A Doubter's Guide to the Bible: Inside History's Bestseller for Believers and Skeptics

John Dickson. Zondervan, 2014. 217p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-310-51843-3. Available as an e-book. www.zondervan.com 220.6'1 Bible—Introductions.

The reason the Bible is the best-selling book in history, John Dickson believes, is that it rings true. "When you read the Bible," he writes, "it reads you." Dickson, an Australian scholar of religious history and frequent author, offers in *A Doubter's Guide to the Bible* a tour of scripture, from the creation story to the apocalyptic visions of Revelation. His book is suitable for readers new to the Bible or those needing a refresher.

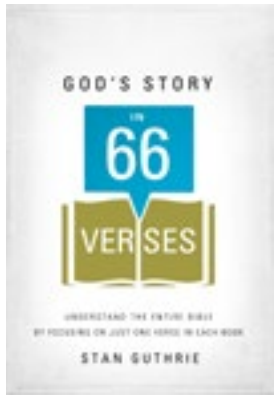
Dickson's lively text starts with the "ode to the Creator" that begins Genesis, relates major events and describes key figures of the Old Testament, and explains how, for Christians, the Old Testament foreshadows the Christ of the New Testament.

Dickson's text is loaded with scriptural excerpts (from the New International Version) and relevant references and quotations from other authors. These include Richard Dawkins and other atheist writers, whom Dickson counters on specific points.

There are frequent "Book Notes" in which Dickson highlights other volumes, classic and contemporary, that he recommends for further study. Graphic timelines help readers comprehend the sequence of important events.

This small (5" x 7") volume will be a useful addition to church libraries; both doubters and firm believers will appreciate Dickson as a guide from Genesis to Revelation.

—*Monica Tenney*



God's Story in 66 Verses: Understand the Entire Bible by Focusing on Just One Verse in Each Book

Stan Guthrie. Nelson (an imprint of Thomas Nelson), 2015. 239p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4002-0642-1. Available as an e-book. www.thomasnelson.com 220.6"1 Bible—Introductions.

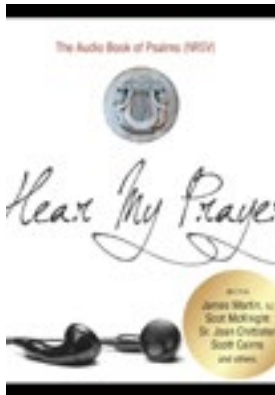
Stan Guthrie credits his fifth-grade Sunday school students for sparking the idea that became *God's Story in 66 Verses*—to introduce the Bible in a simple and engaging way. Guthrie, an editor for *Christianity Today* magazine, felt certain that each book of the Bible has at least one verse that summarizes it or captures its essence. He presents those verses, along with a few pages of context and explanation for each.

Guthrie's ambitious project yielded a volume that deserves a place in church libraries. For congregation members who need a quick introduction to—or refresher on—say, Obadiah or Habakkuk, this book delivers. As a start-to-finish read, it provides an excellent overview of the Bible's "unified, variegated message to mankind for our good." By necessity, much is omitted, but Guthrie includes an impressive amount of information in the brief entries. He communicates poetry and lore that come to us from the Bible. His Christian view includes the anticipation in Old Testament times of the coming of the Messiah and, with the arrival in the New Testament of Jesus, the fulfillment of prophecies.

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version. End matter includes a list of Guthrie's chosen verses, a bibliography and notes. —*Monica Tenney*

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Hear My Prayer: The Audio Book of Psalms (NRSV)

Paraclete, 2015. Approximately 5 hours. \$39.95, 4 audio CDs. ISBN: 978-1-61261-580-6. www.paracletepress.com 223.2 Bible. Psalms—Audio recording.

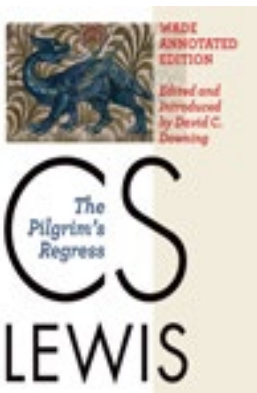
On the four audio CDs comprising *Hear My Prayer*, listeners hear every one of the Bible's 150 psalms read in sequence. A wide variety of individuals lend their voices. Some are authors whose

names may be familiar: James Martin, Paula Huston, Jon M. Sweeney, Joan Chittister, Albert Haase and Scott Cairns. Other readers of one or more psalms will be unknown to most listeners: assorted clergy, academics, and a few employees at Paraclete Press. No music or other extras distract; each reader simply announces the psalm, then reads it.

An insert with *Hear My Prayer* suggests that listeners first experience the entire set straight through. Listening to the psalms in succession affords a sense of their timeless power and poetry. The cumulative effect of the succession of various readers—male and female, in differing accents and tones—suggests a chorus of voices and heightens awareness of the universality of these verses.

The presentation in *Hear My Prayer* of these ancient songs of praise, lament, supplication, and celebration will be a useful tool for private meditation. It will perhaps be especially valuable for people with vision impairments or other difficulties with reading the printed word. —*Monica Tenney*

CHRISTIAN HERITAGE



The Pilgrim's Regress: Wade Annotated Edition

C. S. Lewis. Edited by David C. Downing. Eerdmans, 2014. 239p. \$25.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7208-1. www.eerdmans.com 823'.912 Pilgrims and pilgrimages—Fiction. Christian fiction. Allegories.

C. S. Lewis achieved notable firsts with his 1933 writing of *The Pilgrim's Regress*. It was the first book of fiction he wrote after his conversion to Christianity

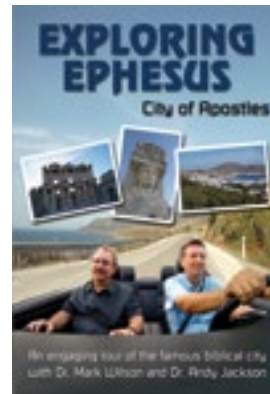
and the first published under his own name. Composed in only two weeks, it may be the least-read of all Lewis's works, possibly due to its many obscure references and quotations.

Fortunately for modern readers, a student once asked Lewis to annotate a copy of the work so he could understand it better. This annotated copy is in the hands of

the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College in Illinois. With the excellent editorial skills of David C. Downing, the published version now offers scholars easier access.

Lewis's satire, modeled on John Bunyan's allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*, reflects the theological and literary context of his time. This volume's powerful black and white illustrations by Michael Hague bring characters to life. Sidebars connect with underlined words and phrases in the text. The book contains a map, bibliography, notes, and general and scriptural indexes. Especially noteworthy is Lewis's afterword explaining his motives for writing *The Pilgrim's Regress*.

Highly recommended for Lewis scholars. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Exploring Ephesus: City of Apostles (DVD)

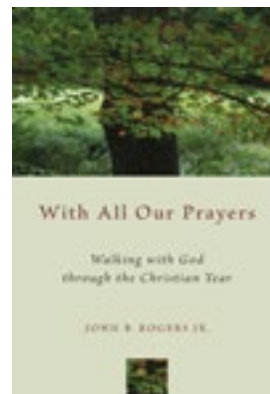
Christian History Institute, 2015 Distributed by Vision Video. 58 minutes. \$14.99, DVD. Catalog # 501629D. Available in digital download. www.visionvideo.com 913'.923 Ephesus (Extinct city). Biblical history. Apostles.

What better way is there to study the New Testament than to tour the places where the apostles walked and preached? Join Andrew Jackson and Mark

Wilson, historians and tour guides, as they travel through Turkey visiting landmarks mentioned by both Paul and John in their writings. Highlights include stops at the seven churches of Paul's three-year ministry and the island of Patmos where John received the apocalyptic visions described in the Book of Revelation.

The cinematography is spectacular and transports the audience back in time to envision the architecture of long ago. Jackson and Wilson clearly describe each site and intersperse scripture readings to enhance the tours.

Highly recommended for all Christians for making the New Testament scriptures come alive. Bonus features include further explanations of the Book of Ephesians, the Seven Churches of Revelation, a series of lessons for today and a music video. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



With All Our Prayers: Walking with God through the Christian Year

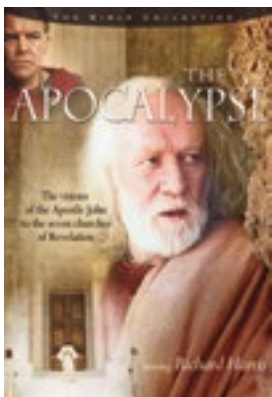
John B. Rogers, Jr. Eerdmans, 2015. 114p. \$15.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7191-6. Available as an e-book. www.eerdmans.com 264'.13 Pastoral prayers. Prayers. Church year—Prayers and devotions. Public worship.

Any Christian who has difficulty praying will benefit from reading *With All Our Prayers*. Retired pastor John B. Rogers, Jr., acknowl-

edges that most of the prayers in his book come from his time as minister of the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. The prayers, arranged in chapters that follow the liturgical calendar, are excellent models both in style and in content. They are personal, and it is obvious that one does not need affected vocabulary to create successful prayers. Rogers couches his prayers in down-to-earth language with genuine sincerity, and the result is a beautiful elegance. An example:

Some of us come to you ill and afraid. Help us to fear most of all a loss of confidence that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us; and for the rest, O God, remind me of your promise: When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. (Isa. 43:2, NRSV)

—Beverly M. Bixler



The Apocalypse: The Visions of the Apostle John to the Seven Churches of Revelation (DVD)

Lube Productions, 2015. Distributed by Vision Video. 96 minutes. \$14.99, DVD. Catalog #: 501623D. Available in digital download. www.visionvideo.com Fiction Bible films. John, the Apostle, Saint—Drama. Church history—Primitive and early church, ca. 30-600—Drama. Series: The Bible Collection

Dramatizing life during the early years of Christianity helps

a modern audience better understand the dedication of Christ's followers and the challenges they faced in the years after his death and resurrection. The time is 90 A.D., when Domitian became emperor of Rome and began persecuting anyone who refused to worship him as the one true god. It is through the perspective of the early Christians who attempt to find John, the last surviving apostle, that we see their struggle to keep faith amid brutality and doubt.

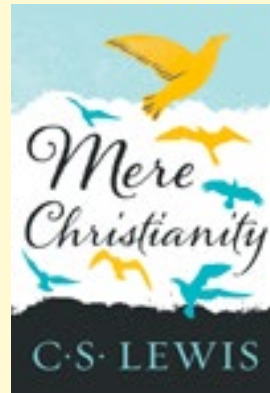
Richard Harris, in one of his last performances before he died in 2002, skillfully plays the role of John. Other plotlines concern the love between Irene and Valerius and the attempted escape of the prisoners on the island of Patmos.

The cinematography in *The Apocalypse* is striking, and the presentation of John's visions is dramatic and powerful.

Recommended viewing to prompt discussion of the early church. —Mary Lou Henneman

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CLASSICS CORNER



Mere Christianity: A Revised and Amplified Edition, with a New Introduction, of the Three Books, *Broadcast Talks, Christian Behavior, and Beyond Personality*

C. S. Lewis. HarperOne (an imprint of HarperCollins), 2015. 227p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-06-065292-0. Available in hardcover and as an e-book or audio download. www.cslewis.com 230 Theology, Doctrinal—Popular works. Apologetics. Christian ethics—Anglican

authors. Lewis, C. S. (Clive Staples), 1896-1963—Religion. Series: C. S. Lewis Signature Classics

In the year 2000, *Christianity Today* magazine named *Mere Christianity* the best religious book of the 20th century. C. S. Lewis, who famously converted from atheism to become a committed Christian, presents this manifesto of faith, sounding the call for Christians to be “little Christs.” Originally presented as radio broadcasts during World War II, these essays reflect their time and place. Lewis speaks to all as “men” and refers to Muslims as “Mohammedans.”

Lewis discusses morality, psychology, sex, marriage (some will not enjoy his thoughts on who “rules”), divorce, forgiveness, and the sin of pride. Lewis argues against the view of Christ as merely a great teacher; we must, he writes, consider Christ either the Son of God or a madman. Dismissing theological arguments about the Crucifixion, Lewis thinks its importance is that Christ “disabled death itself.” Lewis writes of a God beyond time, of spreading the “good infection,” and of hope for a better world.

Lewis's views are firm, but he assures readers they are simply his views as a layperson. He accepts the existence of other Christian views and other cherished faiths.

Mere Christianity is unlikely to be the most popular book in your library. Reading it requires patience and focus, and few readers will agree with Lewis on every point. Even so, no church library should be without it.

—Monica Tenney

Planning a Congregational Archives Center.

Curtis D. Howard, PhD. (2011). This is a great reference book on processing, preserving, storing and exhibiting your archives. It offers tips on what to include in your archives and discusses their importance to your congregation. \$12/ \$14 + S&H.

CSLA GUIDE

JUDAICA

All the World: Universalism, Particularism and the High Holy Days

Lawrence A. Hoffman, ed. *Jewish Lights*, 2014. 269p. \$24.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-58023-783-3. Available in paperback or as an e-book. www.jewishlights.com 296.4'31 High Holidays. Universalism. Particularism (Theology). Series: Prayers of Awe

Are the Jewish High Holy Days solely for the Jews, or does their observance speak for all people? While it may seem obvious that these are specifically Jewish holidays, their liturgy speaks universally. It marks, after all, the birth of the world, a universal event, not a solely Jewish occasion. This is the puzzle addressed by the essays collected in this volume.

All the World is the fifth volume in a series examining prayers and themes of the High Holy Days. This book is especially appealing because it addresses a tension that runs through many aspects of Jewish life and theology: the competing pulls of universalism and particularism. The opening essays help the reader appreciate the multiple ways in which universalism and related concepts may be understood and how they can impact us theologically, ritually, ethically and behaviorally.

Three prayers focus the discussion: V'khol Ma'aminim (All believe), Uv'khen (Therefore), and V'ye'etanu (All the world). The essays consider these prayers not only as liturgy and literature but also as philosophical and ethical statements. The essays (or sermons) in the last half of the book apply these ideas to our contemporary world.

All the World will enhance understanding and experience of the High Holy Days. It offers much to consider, whatever your religious persuasion. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

Swimming in the Daylight: An American Student, A Soviet-Jewish Dissident, and the Gift of Hope

Lisa C. Paul. Skyhorse, 2014. 288p. \$16.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-62873-671-7. Available in hardcover or as an e-book. www.skyhorsepublishing.com 947'.0049240092 Paul, Lisa C. Meiman, Inna Kitrosskaya. Meiman,

Inna Kitrosskaya—Health. Americans—Soviet Union—Biography. College students—United States—Biography. Jews—Soviet Union—Biography. Dissidents—Soviet Union—Biography. Refuseniks—Soviet Union—Biography. Immigrants—United States—Biography. Friendship—Case studies.

A nanny seeking language lessons is not notable, unless she is in Soviet Russia and the bond she builds with her teacher has international impact. In 1984 Inna Kitrosskaya Meiman, a "refusenik" (a Jew denied permission to leave the Soviet Union), was recommended to Lisa C. Paul as a tutor. So began a story of love, activism and persistence that galvanized American efforts and earned Meiman her freedom.

Paul's clear narrative draws readers into the relationships she established with friends in Moscow. We come to appreciate the barriers erected by the Soviet government. Mostly, we come to share Paul's love and respect for Meiman.

Meiman needed medical treatment for cancer. The treatment was available in the West but not in the Soviet Union. Paul resolved to help, and when she returned to America sought a way to fulfill that commitment. In December 1985, she engaged in a 25-day hunger strike on Meiman's behalf. Her supporters included national human rights agencies, several senators and Congressional representatives. Paul garnered widespread press coverage. She succeeded.

This makes a complicated and moving story sound much too simple. The drama of *Swimming in the Daylight* is in the details. Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

Judaism and Health: A Handbook of Practical, Professional and Scholarly Resources

Jeff Levin and Michele F. Prince, eds. *Jewish Lights*, 2013. 404p. \$50.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-58023-714-7. Available in large print paperback or as an e-book. www.jewishlights.com 296.3'76 Health—Religious aspects—Judaism. Healing—Religious aspects—Judaism. Medicine—Religious aspects—Judaism.

This excellent volume brings Jewish teaching and spirituality to bear on a wide range of contemporary health

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concerns. While there are books that address individual issues, *Judaism and Health* is the most comprehensive collection I have seen. It deals with physical and psychological issues, spiritual dimensions of both disease and caregiving, and more. Some chapters are touchingly personal, while others offer surveys of relevant literature. The breadth of this book is what makes it so valuable.

Do not confuse the volume's breadth with a superficial approach. I appreciate that there are chapters that are more accessible to practicing professionals than to me. At the same time, there are informative chapters that help me better understand caregiving and Judaism's contribution to a deeper, more spiritually grounded approach. The last three chapters go further in addressing policy issues that affect the entire country.

This certainly should be a ready reference for professionals in these fields. I recommend it to rabbinic colleagues, regardless of the focus of their work. In truth, anyone with an interest in the multitude of issues facing our system of health care will find absorbing reading in *Judaism and Health*. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

Recovery, the 12 Steps and Jewish Spirituality: Reclaiming Hope, Courage & Wholeness

Paul Steinberg. Jewish Lights, 2014. 149p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58023-808-3. Available as an e-book. www.jewishlights.com 296.3'8 Jews—Alcohol use—United States—Attitudes. Jews—Alcohol use. Alcoholism—Religious aspects—Judaism. Twelve-step programs—Religious aspects—Judaism. Spiritual life—Judaism.

Some Jews who abuse drugs and other substances have a hard time entering twelve-step programs because of a perceived Christian bent to their principles. For those individuals, this book is a must. It is a clear examination of Jewish teachings that are important to the recovery process. Chapters that align the teaching of Alcoholics Anonymous, in particular, with comparable Jewish values are quite useful, as is the final section that pairs classic Jewish texts with each of the twelve steps. If that were all this book offered, it would be enough, but there is more.

Rabbi Paul Steinberg shares his story: his path into using and his road to recovery. It is a moving account that stands as an example to those who are in denial. It is a story of courage. I applaud his forthrightness in publicly sharing his journey so that it might help others who are in need.

I also recommend this thin volume to those who do not abuse substances but who can learn how powerfully Jewish values can impact our daily lives for the good. Every person faces his or her "demons" in some way. All of us need to engage in repentance. The values that Steinberg so clearly explains will benefit every reader.

—*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

LIVING IN FAITH

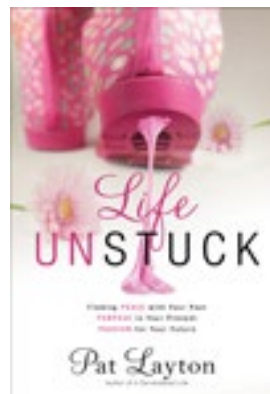
God, Where Are You?: Practical Answers to Spiritual Questions

Enzo Bianchi. Paraclete, 2014. 156p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-61261-574-5. Available as an e-book. www.paracletepress.com 231.7 God—Biblical teaching. Bible. Old Testament—Criticism, interpretation, etc.

Enzo Bianchi is an Italian friar who in 1965 founded the Bose Community, a monastery that welcomes followers and visitors of various Christian traditions. Bianchi has written *God, Where Are You?* with the intention to "seek only to echo stories of encounters between God and human beings, between God and those whom he chose, called and loved because they had sought God, prompted, dare one say, by God himself."

Stories include those of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Elijah and Isaiah. Bianchi's writing is thought provoking and examines the stories from a fresh perspective. This is an enjoyable book but not one to read straight through. It takes time to read and contemplate each chapter.

God, Where Are You? is appropriate for clergy, congregational and academic libraries. —*Sharon T. Hinton*



Life Unstuck: Finding Peace with Your Past, Purpose in Your Present, Passion for Your Future

Pat Layton. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2015. 251p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2638-6. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com 248.8'43 Christian life. Christian women—Religious life.

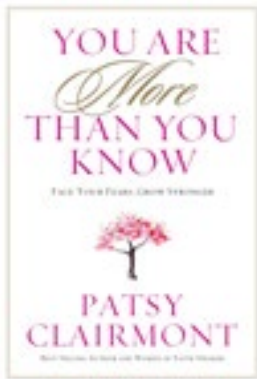
Do you feel stuck in feelings of loneliness and insecurity? Are you plagued by guilt over some of the poor decisions you made

in the past? Pat Layton, author, speaker and founder of Life Impact Network, has lived through her own personal struggles and now offers advice and support to other Christian women.

With Psalm 139 as a basis, Layton guides readers in each of her book's four sections: imagining life being unstuck; dealing with past problems and memories; facing present situations honestly; and looking to the future as we want to see ourselves. In each chapter Layton provides personal narrative, describing how she opened her heart and accepted the guidance she found in Christ.

Especially noteworthy are her 24 "unstuck truths." Examples of these are: "When we turn to God with the pain of our past, we are met by the God who has plans for our future" and "God can do what He needs to do through you—without your help!"

Life Unstuck is a powerful book for Christian women. The sidebars and highlighted quotes are inspirational. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



You Are More Than You Know: Face Your Fears, Grow Stronger

Patsy Clairmont. Worthy, 2015. 178p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-61795-325-5. Available in audio CD or as an e-book. www.worthypublishing.com 248.8'43 Christian life. Self-actualization (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. Fear. Christian women—Religious life.

If you are a woman who appears on the outside to be absolutely in control but who feels shaky and uncertain on the inside, then Patsy Clairmont can offer you a new perspective for putting your life on the right track. Known for her effervescent presentations at Women of Faith retreats as well as for her books and mentoring sessions, Clairmont writes in *You Are More Than You Know* about her own fears and how she has overcome them. Her story will help other Christian women look to the Lord for their strength and put their faith into daily action.

Some of the topics covered in this book's 11 chapters include anxiety, control of situations and other people, and self-esteem. Each chapter begins with a quote and ends with a Bible verse, along with questions that will prompt contemplation, discussion or journaling. Clairmont addresses difficult issues with characteristic humor and sensitivity as she reaches out to Christian women of all ages.

Highly recommended for individual or group study. —
Mary Lou Henneman



Heartfelt: A Woman's Guide to Creating Meaningful Friendships

Joneal Kirby. Worthy, 2014. 223p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-61795-422-1. Available as an e-book. www.worthypublishing.com 248.8'43 Christian friendship. Female friendship—Religious aspects—Christianity.

Whether they work outside or in the home, women crave the fellowship of other women. Female friendship provides not

just social companionship but also help with spiritual growth. Dr. Joneal Kirby, director of Heartfelt Ministries, has created a plan modeled on the early Christian practice of gathering in small groups in one another's homes. The process involves an intergenerational mix, based on the passage in Titus 2:3-5, with older women guiding younger ones in their faith and family lives.

The first part of *Heartfelt* contains nine chapters centered on themes such as compassion, hospitality and spiritual maturity. It also includes a personal narrative by a mentor and her mentee about their experiences,

specific directions on how to plan and conduct group sessions, and a "heart check" with insightful questions, a biblical quote and a final prayer.

The second part contains specific information for Christian women who want to start such a group in their own communities. The program asks for a commitment of time, but the benefits will bring joy through new friendships and a deeper understanding of Christ's love for each sister. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Calling & Clarity: Discovering What God Wants for Your Life

Doug Koskela. Eerdmans, 2015. 120p. \$15.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7159-6. Available as an e-book. www.eerdmans.com 248.4 Vocation—Christianity. Discernment (Christian theology).

The subtitle, *Discovering What God Wants for Your Life*, suggests the struggle many young adults face: balancing plans for future careers with putting their

Christian beliefs into practice. Author Doug Koskela, a professor of theology at Seattle Pacific University, offers guidance and clearly explains the differences between missional calling, direct calling, and general calling for choosing a life path both for profession and avocation.

Students will find direction on examining their gifts and passions in light of the scriptures and in making wise decisions on how to pursue future goals. As Koskela writes, "Your job is not to make the kingdom of God a reality on God's behalf; your job is faithfully to live as a sign of God's reconciling work in the way you have been called." Highly recommended for serious Christian young adults and to those who counsel them. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Astonished: Recapturing the Wonder, Awe, and Mystery of Life with God

Mike Erre. David C. Cook, 2014. 239p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4347-0537-2. Available as an e-book. www.davidccook.com 231.7 God (Christianity).

When were you last amazed by God's creation or surprised by God's presence and power? In 13 chapters, Mike Erre challenges individuals and churches to be

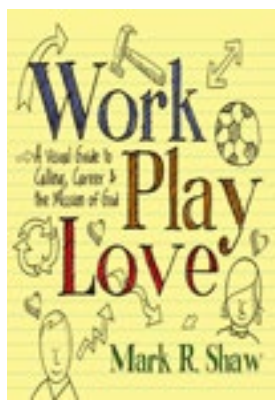
aware, look again, and rethink assumptions and patterns that block wonder and awe.

The first section of *Astonished* focuses on the nature of God and reasons we sometimes do not see God. Faith is the theme of the second section. Biblical passages throughout the text and Erre's personal experiences validate his observations. An insightful and challenging

chapter is “On Trust and Fear,” where earthly and heavenly treasures are contrasted. Worry results when we focus on earthly treasure as what we value.

Churches’ acceptance and promotion of American values is questioned with the observation, “God cares more about the fruit of your spirit than He does the fruit of your ministry.” That statement may bring comfort, as will permission to doubt, lament and hold “knowledge and mystery together in tension,” Erre’s definition of faith. The concept of lament is clarified with examples from the Psalms.

Astonished is a much-needed call to wake up, see what God is doing, and be astonished in the process. Highly recommended for church libraries and for individual or group study. —Carolyn Egolf



Work, Play, Love: A Visual Guide to Calling, Career, and the Mission of God

Mark R. Shaw. InterVarsity, 2014. 240p. \$16.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8308-3673-4. Available as an e-book. www.ivpress.com 248.4 Christian life. Self-actualization (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. Vocation—Christianity.

With themes of calling, delight, mission, play and wisdom, Mark R. Shaw develops the “wisdom

worker” model and urges balance in his book *Work, Play, Love*.

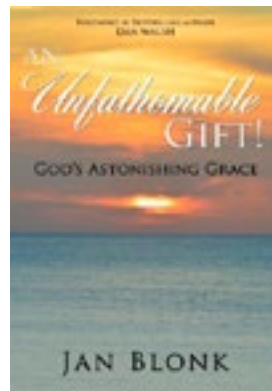
Readers of all ages will find rich content, even though Shaw directs his text at millennials. Even if one peruses only Shaw’s “back of the napkin” sketches and captions, one can learn much. Read with intention, the text offers scripture, history and research.

Beginning with Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 8, Shaw takes us to Eden, where the call to work is brok en with her opposite, Dame Folly. Further chapters feature biblical figures and their calls. “The Abraham Call to Believe,” “The Isaiah Call to Wow,” “The Jesus Call to Dance,” and “The Acts Call to Change the World” are examples.

The book’s positive, hopeful tone continues through the last chapter, which describes both the early church

and congregations thriving today in Kenya, New York, and wherever “wisdom workers” are living their callings—and finding delight.

Chapters conclude with “Think It Through” questions and suggestions for “Taking Action.” Highly recommended for personal or group study and for church libraries. —Carolyn Egolf



An Unfathomable Gift!: God's Astonishing Grace

Jan Blonk. Crosslink, 2014. 88p. \$10.25, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-63357-004-7. Available as an e-book. www.crosslinkpublishing.com 242 Devotional literature.

“Always be prepared to give an answer ... for the hope that you have.” (1 Pet. 3:15 NIV)

In each two-to-three-page entry, Jan Blonk sincerely and convincingly explains God’s

grace. The introduction provides the framework, and the evangelical stance is reflected in words such as redemption, justification and reconciliation. Scriptures and well-chosen quotes indicate the author’s scope of knowledge and underscore his ideas.

While Blonk is careful to define religious words, readers who are seeking or new to faith would benefit from a mentor or being part of a group study. Readers steeped in faith will find reassurance, challenge, and a summary of the Gospel.

The title of each devotional exercise is derived from its featured scripture. Many entries conclude with a call to faith, and Blonk’s recommendation that one entry be read per day is apt. The uniqueness of Christianity is a theme woven throughout.

Readers might consider, upon concluding the text, “Could I condense my beliefs with the conviction and clarity evidenced by Blonk? Do I find God’s grace astonishing? Am I prepared to give an answer for my hope?”

Recommended for church libraries in evangelical congregations. —Carolyn Egolf



Developing an Effective Library: Ways to Promote Your Congregational Library.

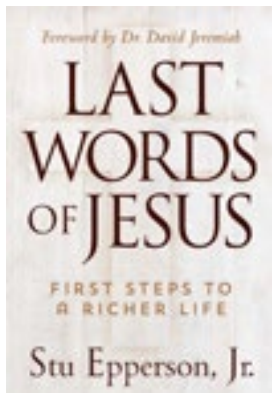
Lois H. Ward. (2004). All aspects of promoting the congregational library and publicity ideas for inside and outside your congregation. Planning

and budgeting, creating ownership, programs that will get your members in the door, and how to use all the publicity tools available to you. \$10/\$12 + S&H.

CSLA GUIDE



Authors greet members and sign books at the annual conference.



Last Words of Jesus: First Steps to a Richer Life

Stu Epperson, Jr. Worthy, 2015. 158p. \$15.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-61795-477-1. Available as an e-book or audiobook. www.worthypublishing.com 232'.9635 Jesus Christ—Crucifixion.

Last words matter. The last words of Jesus, much studied since spoken from the cross, are given a fresh and timely approach by Stu Epperson, Jr.

His writing in *Last Words of Jesus* is crisp, compelling and practical.

The subtitles of the seven chapters suggest themes: prayer, pardon, paternity, pain, passion, perfection, and peace. Each chapter opens with the scripture of focus, and within the text are woven scriptures, quotes from past and current writers, and hymn texts. Certain material is sharpened by presentation in list form. Chapters conclude with scriptural reflections and with discussion questions called "Last Words, First Steps."

In the fourth chapter, forsakenness is addressed, not only as Jesus experienced it but also in its timely application in today's culture. That relevance could be applied to the entire text. The fifth chapter speaks to the cruelty of crucifixion, and one can visualize the scene, even as Epperson notes that "I Thirst" is the only mention Jesus makes of physical pain.

THIS ISSUE'S REVIEWERS

BEVERLY M. BIXLER

First Presbyterian Church
Ashland, Ohio

CAROLYN EGOLF

Lincolnshire Church of the Brethren
Fort Wayne, Indiana

MARY LOU HENNEMAN

Boardman United Methodist Church
Boardman, Ohio

SHARON HINTON

Floydada United Methodist Church
Floydada, Texas

EVELYN POCKRASS

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation
Indianapolis, Indiana

RABBI LOUIS A. RIESER

Boynton Beach, Florida

MONICA TENNEY, MEDIA REVIEW EDITOR

Maple Grove United Methodist Church
Columbus, Ohio

An extensive notes section reflects the range of materials referenced, and "For Further Study" provides additional resources.

Highly recommended for church libraries and for personal or group study, especially during Lent. —*Carolyn Egoal*



Divine Attunement: Music as a Path to Wisdom

Yuval Ron. Oracle Institute, 2014. 174p. \$16.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-937465-16-2. Available as an e-book. www.theoracleinstitute.org 781.1'2 Music—Religious aspects. Music—Health aspects. Spirituality. Mysticism.

The author of *Divine Attunement* is a musician whose roots are in the Middle East. He is on a mission to cultivate peace in that region. The Yuval

Ron Ensemble aims to alleviate national, racial, religious and cultural divides by uniting the music and dance of the people of the Middle East into a uniquely inspiring musical celebration.

This book is best sampled in small doses, with ample time to contemplate its message. Ron draws on the spiritual and mystical stories of Muslims, Christians and Jews, especially those of Sufis and Hasidim. Readers learn about music, soul, the art of listening and the gift of an open heart.

The stories, many from traditional sources, explore the power of music, the mystery of creativity and the power of traditional wisdom. Ron also shares experiences from his concert tours. All of this serves the greater goal of attuning readers to discover wisdom in unexpected places. Particularly enlightening are discussions of the nature of sound and harmony and the emotional power of various musical modes, including many that have been lost to the Western ear.

Music is the foundation of this book, but the message is of wisdom, harmony and peace. Regardless of the reader's tradition, it will inspire. Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

CSLA Promotional Kit [for public libraries]. The kit, delivered in a pamphlet shelf file box, may either be displayed as a set or shelved as individual items. The kit contains six CSLA guides: Cataloging and Classification, Developing An Effective Library (promotional), Fundamentals of Financing Your Congregational Library, Organizing a Library or Resource Center, Selecting a New Library Cataloging and Circulation Computer System and Subject Headings. \$65 + S&H.

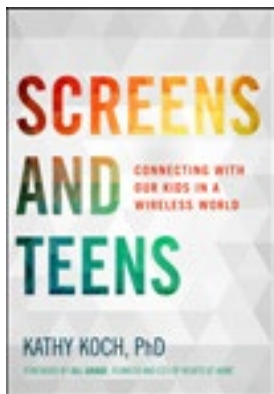
CSLA GUIDE

Selecting a New Library Cataloging and Circulation Computer System. by Bill Doole, edited by Jeri Zulli (2012). A carefully thought-out process for choosing the right library software program for your congregational library. \$12/\$14 + S&H



CSLA GUIDE

FAMILY MATTERS



Screens and Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in a Wireless World

Kathy Koch. Moody, 2015. 249p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8024-1269-0. Available as an e-book. www.moodypublishers.com 302.231'085 Social media—Christianity. Internet and children. Christian life. Christian family.

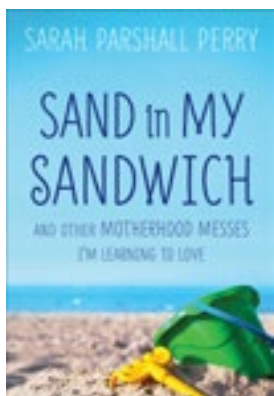
Social media has more influence on many teenagers than their own families do. Teens often turn to their iPhones, iPads,

YouTube, Twitter and Face-book but ignore the humans in the same room with them. How can Christian parents bring back the art of communicating face-to-face? How can social media be a tool in young peoples' lives without controlling them?

Dr. Kathy Koch, founder of Celebrate Kids, Inc., works with teenagers and parents to establish clear guidelines for better family relations. She writes, "Christian parents cherish hopes that their teens will ultimately have the need for security met deeply, once and for all, by God." By bringing back alternative activities, such as playing board games, family meals, listening to music, and reading, all in a "screen-free" environment, families can experience togetherness and recapture the art of conversation about important issues, including faith.

Koch, who earned her doctorate in reading and educational psychology from Purdue University, addresses the five lies technology uses to control teens. She counters with five elemental truths based on a strong relationship with Christ.

This book is highly recommended for Christian families who want to use technology as a tool without being controlled by it. *Screens and Teens* comes with a free nine-session video download. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Sand in My Sandwich: And Other Motherhood Messes I'm Learning to Love

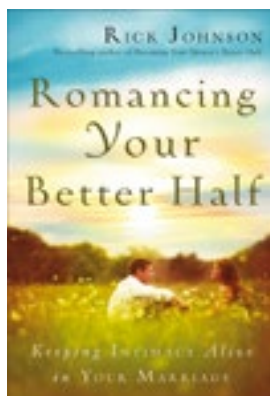
Sarah Parshall Perry. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2015. 218p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2410-8. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com 248.8'431 or 618.9'28588 Parents of autistic children. Autism—Personal narratives. Christian life. Parenting—Religious aspects—Christianity.

Sarah Parshall Perry knew she was smart, having earned a law degree from the University of Virginia. She was married to a wonderful, caring husband and had her life nicely

organized. Her smarts and skills were tested, however, when it came time to raise her three beautiful children, Noah, Grace and Jesse.

The challenges began when both of Perry's sons were diagnosed on the autism spectrum. Symptoms, although different for each of the boys, included those associated with Asperger's and Tourette's syndromes. In *Sand in My Sandwich*, Perry describes with humor and sensitivity the chaos of her daily life.

Perry credits her faith in God and unconditional love for helping her make sense of it all. She writes, "When we stand the tallest is when we hold someone else up for a while." The care and compassion evident in Perry's writing make this book a must-read for anyone who has or knows special-needs children. As Perry demonstrates, we can learn much from seeing them as God does. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Romancing Your Better Half: Keeping Intimacy Alive in Your Marriage

Rick Johnson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2015. 202p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2234-0. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com 248.8'44 Marriage—Religious aspects—Christianity. Intimacy (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity.

If you have been married a few years, you may sometimes wonder what happened to the

romantic sparks you felt when you were first dating or before kids and work became your focus. Do you want to recapture the romance in your marriage? Rick Johnson, founder of the Better Dads group and a popular speaker at parenting and marriage conferences, advises Christian marriage partners on keeping love alive.

In *Romancing Your Better Half*, Johnson covers topics such as the purpose of marriage, basic communication skills, and the meaning of love, romance, intimacy and sexuality. He also addresses overcoming past hurt feelings. The chapters "His Needs (For Her)" and "Her Needs (For Him)" offer each partner insight into what the other is thinking and why they act in certain ways. Chapters are clearly set up to address their topics and are supported by scriptural references. There are sidebars that effectively highlight special topics such as working through problems, divorce-proofing your marriage, and creating intimacy. Recommended for Christian couples. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

CHURCH CHALLENGES

Change & Conflict in Your Congregation (Even If You Hate Both): How to Implement Conscious Choices, Manage Emotions & Build a Thriving Christian Community

Anita L. Bradshaw. Skylight Paths, 2015. 150p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-59473-578-3. Available as an e-book. www.skylightpaths.com 254 Church management. Change—Religious aspects—Christianity. Conflict management—Religious aspects—Christianity.

The Rev. Anita L. Bradshaw notes that, even though many churchgoers enjoy singing “They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Love,” peace and harmony are sometimes not in evidence. Bradshaw, a United Church of Christ minister who has taught at Yale Divinity School and elsewhere, works as a consultant for congregations experiencing conflict. She reminds readers that conflict and change are both inevitable and normal.

In *Change & Conflict in Your Congregation (Even If You Hate Both)*, Bradshaw guides pastors and other church leaders in resolving conflicts and managing change. Bradshaw gives church leaders much to ponder, including reasons that change and conflict can be so difficult for churches, lessons from church history (she notes that Protestant churches arose out of conflict), and Bible stories and teachings. She explains levels of conflict, stages of change, and the prevalence of denial, dualistic “either/or” thinking, and clashes between traditionalists and innovators.

Bradshaw shares stories of congregations grappling with conflict and change. She supplies an impressive array of practical strategies and pointers. Throughout her book, she encourages church leaders to see conflicts as occasions for growth.

End matter includes notes and a list of suggested resources (including the 1999 book by John Paul Lederach; see below). —*Monica Tenney*



Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians

John Paul Lederach. Herald (an imprint of MennoMedia), 2014. 191p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8361-9903-1. Available as an e-book. www.heraldpress.com 248.8'6 Conflict management—Religious aspects—Christianity. Reconciliation—Religious aspects—Christianity.

True to his Anabaptist roots, John Paul Lederach has devoted his working life to mediating conflict in Nicaragua, Somalia, the Philippines and elsewhere. He has seen hatred, suffering and violence. *Reconcile* is about “restoring and healing the torn-apart web of relationships.” Lederach has thoroughly updated his book, originally published in 1999 as *The Journey Toward Reconciliation*, to include recent events, experiences and resources.

Lederach believes that conflicts, though painful, are opportunities for spiritual growth. He describes how Jesus embodied the compassion that is necessary for reconciliation and explains in helpful detail the three “core reconciliation arts.”

In a chapter addressing strife within congregations, Lederach draws from scriptural guidance, spiritual disciplines, and experience with churches in conflict, providing sensible and practical suggestions. He reminds us that eating together is a universal leveler and emphasizes the importance of active listening.

Reconcile closes with resources useful in congregational and other settings. Among them is an exercise Lederach employs in workshops; he offers it here as a scripted drama. Other resources include a spectrum of behaviors associated with conflict, guidance for communicating, suggestions for confronting and solving problems, and a generous list of publications and organizations. Not to be missed is Lederach’s tongue-in-cheek “Unspoken Commandments” for church conflict (from number 8: “thou shalt blame the pastor”).

Reconcile is highly recommended. —*Monica Tenney*

Farewell and thanks from outgoing Media Review Editor

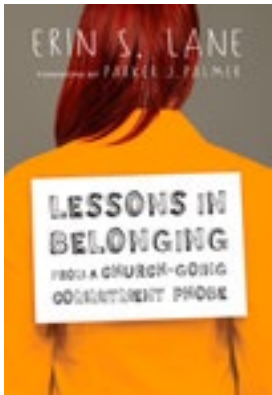
BY MONICA TENNEY

This issue is my last as CSLA’s Media Review Editor. It has been my great pleasure to serve in this role during the past dozen years. I am grateful to every one of the reviewers, past and present, who have contributed time and talent to highlighting new materials for our

libraries. I also thank Judy Janzen, our faithful CSLA administrator, the CSLA board, and especially Evelyn Pockrass for her steadfastness during the transition period. Evelyn and her committee have ensured that the review section will be in capable hands as CSLA goes

forward.

Finally, I thank all of you, congregational librarians who support and encourage and learn from one another. You have supported and encouraged and taught me. I wish each of you blessings in your library ministry.



Lessons in Belonging from a Church-Going Commitment Phobe

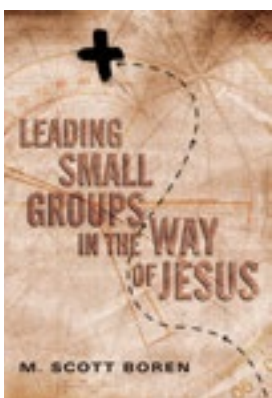
Erin S. Lane. InterVarsity, 2015. 207p. \$16.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8308-4317-6. Available as an e-book. www.ivpress.com 250 Church. Belonging (Social psychology.)

Erin S. Lane grew up in church, received her master's degree in theology from Duke Divinity School, married a pastor, and

works as an assistant director of programs for clergy and congregational leaders. She is well qualified to discuss with young adults whether to join a church, which congregation suits them, how to participate in study groups without losing personal identity, and how to maintain both faith and a social life.

Through this collection of personal stories, Lane takes readers along on her own spiritual journey, mixing past experiences and relationships with questions about what it means to be a member of the body of Christ. She writes, "I need the church to remind me what's real." "What's real? It's a question too big to answer but too big not to try." Lane amply prepares her readers to take on the challenge.

The questions for reflection are insightful, and Lane provides a helpful list of sources. *Lessons in Belonging from a Church-Going Commitment Phobe* is recommended for Christian millennials who will appreciate the validation that learning to live in faith is a process, and not often a quick and easy one. —Mary Lou Henneman



Leading Small Groups in the Way of Jesus

M. Scott Boren. InterVarsity, 2015. 217p. \$16.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8308-3681-9. Available as an e-book. www.ivpress.com 253.7 Church group work. Small groups—Religious aspects—Christianity.

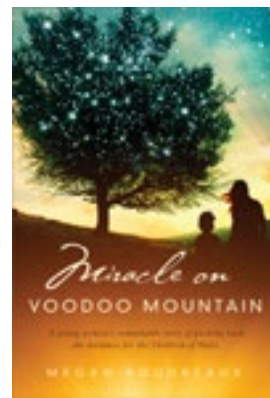
In the first centuries after the death and resurrection of Jesus, the followers of Christ met together in small groups—mostly in private homes where they

prayed together, ate together, and shared stories of Jesus as their faith grew. In the 21st century, small groups may struggle with problems such as conflicting personalities and opposing beliefs. What are the principles that served small groups well in early Christianity?

M. Scott Boren, president of the Center for Community and Mission, speaks directly to leaders in *Leading*

Small Groups in the Way of Jesus. Keeping Christ and his teachings at the fore, Boren gives practical guidelines for reestablishing the basic focus of prayer, study of scripture and fellowship. He introduces eight **basic practices**: rhythms of the Jesus way; gathering; leading collaboratively; being true to yourself; time in community; making a difference; learning how to "fight"; and focusing on Christ. These eight practices, Boren writes, help each member become part of a cohesive unit.

This book is designed both for new leaders and for seasoned veterans. It guides readers in forming effective groups as well as in getting groups back on track if they become derailed. Highly recommended for all churches seeking to revitalize small group studies. —Mary Lou Henneman



Miracle on Voodoo Mountain: A Young Woman's Remarkable Story of Pushing Back the Darkness for the Children of Haiti

Megan Boudreaux. W (an imprint of Thomas Nelson), 2015. 203p. \$22.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-5291-1094-7. Available as an e-book or audiobook. www.thomasnelson.com 266.0237307294 Church work with children—Haiti—Gressier. Missions—Haiti—Gressier. Boudreaux, Megan. Christianity and other religions—

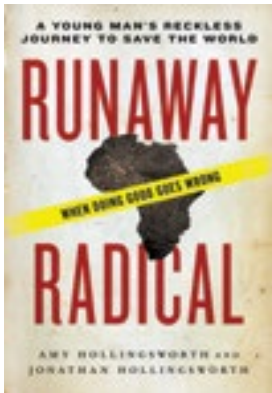
Vodou. Vodou—Relations—Christianity.

When Megan Boudreaux was 24 years old, she felt God calling her to mission work in Haiti. *Miracle on Voodoo Mountain* is the inspiring story of this young woman who quit her job, sold her possessions and travelled to a land recently devastated by an earthquake. There she cared for children who were poor, who had been denied an education, and who were often treated as household slaves.

At first Boudreaux needed a translator, but she soon learned the Creole language by immersion as she lived among the Haitian people. Her dedication led to the founding of Respire Haiti, a nonprofit organization that has freed thousands of child slaves.

In beautiful prose, Boudreaux demonstrates her ability to see a problem and find the right solution by listening in her soul for God's direction. What she has accomplished, from building a school to establishing a safe place to nurture children, is a powerful story for all.

Miracle on Voodoo Mountain is essential reading for all Christians who are considering mission work and for those who are currently at work in foreign countries. —Mary Lou Henneman



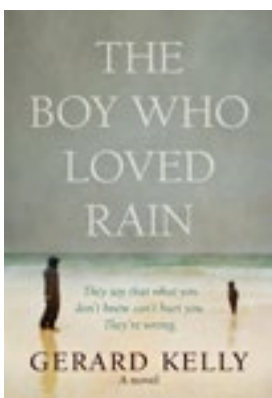
Runaway Radical: A Young Man's Reckless Journey to Save the World

Amy Hollingsworth and Jonathan Hollingsworth. W (an imprint of Thomas Nelson), 2015. 213p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7180-3123-7. Available as an e-book or audiobook. www.thomasnelson.com 277.3 Christian converts—United States—Biography. Church work—West Africa. Radicalism.

Picture yourself as a young Christian who has heard a call to minister in the mission fields, through word and action bringing the love of God to the people of West Africa. What happens when your experiences are less than perfect and your own faith is tested—not by the people you are trying to help but by the Christian leaders who are supposed to give you direction in your mission?

Runaway Radical is a wake-up call for groups and especially for individuals who wish to undertake mission work, whether locally or in a foreign country. Co-written by Jonathan Hollingsworth and his mother Amy Hollingsworth, this is a sensitive handling of how faith can be challenged, especially far from home. This book presents not a negative view but a realistic one. It provides guidance in understanding cultural differences and in thoroughly checking out organizations that put missionaries to work. *Runaway Radical* is highly recommended for all churches currently involved with missions or for those with plans for future missions. —Mary Lou Henneman

FICTION



The Boy Who Loved Rain

Gerard Kelly. Lion Hudson, 2015. Distributed by Kregel. 320p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-78264-129-2. Available as an e-book. www.kregel.com Fiction Mothers and sons—Fiction. Fathers and sons—Fiction. Youth—Psychology—Fiction.

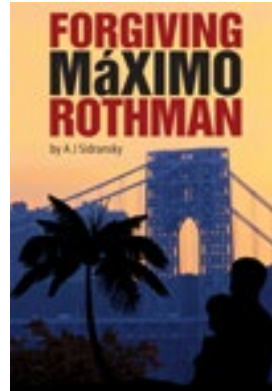
In *The Boy Who Loved Rain*, poet Gerard Kelly offers his debut novel. It opens with 14-year-old Colom's panic-stricken awakening from a recurring nightmare

in which he unsuccessfully tries to save his sister from drowning. In fact, Colom has no sister.

It soon becomes obvious that Colom, the only son of Fiona and David Dryden, has psychological problems that are steadily worsening. His parents disagree on treatment for their son. They have not shared important information with him or with one another, and this worsens the family's dysfunction.

Colom's friend commits suicide, and Fiona finds her

son's alarming note about it. She takes Colom to France with her longtime friend, who has counseling experience, hoping to solve the problem. Fiona eventually must acknowledge that Colom's treatment by her and her husband is part of the trouble. As more obstacles arise, Fiona has reason to wonder whether her hope will ever be fulfilled. —Beverly M. Bixler



Forgiving Máximo Rothman

A. J. Sidransky. Berwick Court, 2013. 306p. \$16.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-9889540-0-7. Available as an e-book. www.berwickcourt.com Fiction Jewish refugees—Dominican Republic—Fiction. Jewish refugees—New York (State)—New York—Fiction. Murder—New York (State)—New York—Fiction. Jews—Fiction. Fathers and sons—Fiction. Detective and mystery stories.

The victim in this murder mystery, Max Rothman, fled from Nazi Europe to Sosua, a little-

known haven in the Dominican Republic. For reasons that unfold in the novel, Max lost his faith, but his son is a *Baal Teshuva*, one who returned to an Orthodox lifestyle. The two have trouble communicating. Max's murder is investigated by Anatoly Kurchenko, a Jewish refugee from the Soviet Union who sees parallels between Max's life and his own.

A finalist for a National Jewish Book Award, *Forgiving Máximo Rothman* provides a good whodunit. It succeeds in other ways, too. The little-known story of how President Trujillo welcomed Jewish refugees to the Dominican Republic is fascinating (the author's aunt and uncle were among those saved), as are the difficulties they endured. A. J. Sidransky's telling of the struggles encountered by refugees, whether from the Nazis or the Soviet Union, is revealing. The author conveys the tension that can exist between an older generation that has lost religious belief and a younger generation that has found it.

This is an enjoyable read that delivers as a mystery and as a historical novel. —Rabbi Louis A. Rieser



Travelers Rest: A Novel

Ann Tatlock. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2012. 344p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-0810-2. Available as an e-book. www.bethanyhouse.com Fiction Iraq War, 2003-2011—Fiction. Man-woman relationships—Fiction. Veterans—Fiction.

The need for patience, forgiveness, healing (physical and emotional) and trust in God are four strands woven throughout Ann Tatlock's novel, *Travelers*

Rest. Jane Morrow is spending the summer in Asheville, North Carolina, tending to the house and pets of friends

who are vacationing in Europe. This allows Jane to spend time with Seth Ballantine, her fiancé, who is receiving treatment in the Veterans' Hospital after being wounded while fighting in Iraq. It is not surprising that the severity of his condition has given Seth a very negative attitude.

At the hospital Jane meets Jon-Paul Percy, a lawyer who sometimes plays the piano in the hospital's atrium. She also meets Dr. Truman Rockaway, an elderly gentleman whose early life was marred by the Jim Crow laws of the South. As the summer progresses, the three become good friends. The two men give Jane much-needed support.

Tatlock creates strong, credible characters in her story told mainly through dialogue. *Travelers Rest* shows that God is in control of our lives. Its characters would have been unable to solve their problems satisfactorily without God's guidance. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Mercy's Rain: An Appalachian Novel

Cindy K. Sproles. Kregel, 2015. 263p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8254-4361-9. Available as an e-book. www.kregel.com Fiction Fathers and daughters—Fiction. Young women—Crimes against—Fiction. Man-woman relationships—Fiction.

"Married and widowed at thirteen, a mother and childless at fifteen. Ain't nobody should have to learn life like I did." Those

two sentences open Cindy K. Sproles's powerful novel, *Mercy's Rain*, and introduce us to Mercy Roller. Set in the mountains of Tennessee in the final years of the 19th century, the action shows that sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse, as well as murder, are not just contemporary problems.

Nearly 20 years old when the story begins, Mercy has lived in a home ruled by an abusive father, ironically the community's pastor. He commits unspeakable acts against not only his wife and daughter but also members of the community.

After the pastor's death, Mercy's mother orders her to get out. On her wandering to the other side of the mountain, Mercy encounters individuals, including a young preacher, whose lives and treatment of her exemplify Christian behavior. But the young woman's bitterness and anger are so entrenched that she has a monumental struggle when faced with God's efforts to bring about her redemption.

Strong characters and riveting situations make *Mercy's Rain* difficult to put down. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Hidden Agenda

Lisa Harris. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2015. 305p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2192-3 Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Crime—Fiction. Criminal investigation—Fiction. Man-woman relationships—Fiction. Series: Southern Crimes

After an intense eight-month investigation, undercover cop Michael Hunt finds that his cover has been blown and the leader of a criminal cartel has targeted

him for killing. However, two unlikely people become his rescuers: Olivia and Ivan Hamilton—the children of the man who wants to kill him. Attempting to clear Michael's reputation, Olivia and Ivan escape from a private island off the coast of Georgia.

Michael's family thinks he died in an explosion months ago. Other people have died because of him. Can Michael get help from his family without putting them in danger? Can he trust Olivia and her brother?

Hidden Agenda is a great thriller, filled with action and intrigue. It also presents an absorbing Christian romance. Michael and Olivia rely on their faith as they develop their romantic relationship and work together to unveil the elusive cartel boss. Christy Award-winner Lisa Harris keeps the excitement growing in the third book of the Southern Crime series.

Recommended for young adults and adults. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

The Patchwork Torah

Allison Ofanansky. Illustrated by Elsa Oriol. Kar-Ben, 2014. 32p. \$7.95, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4677-0427-4. Available in hardcover library binding and as an e-book. www.karben.com [E] Torah scrolls—Juvenile fiction. Scribes, Jewish—Juvenile fiction. Grandfathers—Juvenile fiction. Jews—United States—Fiction.

David's grandfather taught him to be a *sofer*, a scribe who handwrites certain ritual documents as well as the five scrolls of the Torah. A *sofer's* profession requires meticulous attention to detail, and a scroll takes many months to complete.

Over the years, David accumulates Torah scrolls that have been damaged: one in the Holocaust, one in a fire in the synagogue, and one in Hurricane Katrina. Now David is a grandfather, and his granddaughter Leah asks if he can patch the damaged scrolls together to make one perfect scroll.

David completes the painstaking task just in time for Simchat Torah, the holiday celebrating the end of the yearly cycle of Torah reading and the beginning of reading it again. In the ceremony that includes carrying the Torah around the pews in the synagogue, David holds this unique Torah written by three different scribes and himself.

Allison Ofanansky's inspiring text is complemented by Elsa Oriol's moving paintings of David, his family and the patchwork Torah. The publisher recommends this award-winning book for ages 4-8.

See Eric Ray's *Sofer: The Story of a Torah Scroll* (Torah Aura, 1998) to learn more about the intricate work and skill required of scribes. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



The Yes

Sarah Bee. Illustrated by Satoshi Kitamura. Eerdmans, 2015. 32p. \$16.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5449-0. www.eerdmans.com [E] Optimism—Juvenile fiction. Self-confidence—Juvenile fiction. Determination (Personality trait)—Juvenile fiction.

British journalist Sarah Bee presents in her first book for children a "Great big orange thing called the Yes." The Yes is a

lovable lump of a figure with a positive outlook.

The Nos are everywhere, teeming and seething in thick clouds.

The Yes encounters difficulties. He feels hungry, but a fruit-laden tree seems at first too tall to climb. A bridge might be too flimsy to cross. A dark wood looks too scary to enter, and a hill too steep to climb. Each time, the Nos swarm around the Yes, raining down their negativity. The cheerful Yes gamely meets each challenge, however, accomplishing what the Nos said he could not.

With inventive and playful language, Bee breaks rules and invents a few words of her own. The book's assorted fonts become extensions of the characters, their size and shape reflecting timidity versus boldness, courage versus fear. Satoshi Kitamura's vivid color illustrations will delight young ones as they enjoy the daring of the Yes amid the chorus of Nos.

Although *The Yes* has no religious content, it will capture imaginations and bolster spirits. Recommended for children 4-8. —*Monica Tenney*



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FOR OLDER CHILDREN & TEENAGERS



MELODY CARLSON

First Date

Melody Carlson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2013. 212p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2131-2. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Dating (Social customs)—Fiction. Clubs—Fiction. Friendship—Fiction. High schools—Fiction. Schools—Fiction. Christian life. Series: The Dating Games



MELODY CARLSON

Blind Date

Melody Carlson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 216p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2128-2. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Dating (Social customs)—Fiction. Clubs—Fiction. Friendship—Fiction. High schools—Fiction. Schools—Fiction. Christian life. Series: The Dating Games



MELODY CARLSON

Double Date

Melody Carlson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2015. 228p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2129-9. Available as an e-book. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Dating (Social customs)—Fiction. Clubs—Fiction. Friendship—Fiction. High schools—Fiction. Schools—Fiction. Christian life. Series: The Dating Games

Abby, Bryn, Cassidy, Devon and Emma are typical high-school girls, each with a unique personality, who attend a Christian

school. What brings them together is their desire to experience all the fun of being teenagers, and that includes dating. After a teacher takes the boys in the school aside to talk to them about their responsibilities as young Christian men, the boys are afraid to ask the girls out.

To solve this dilemma, the five girls decide to form the Dating Games Club, a secret sisterhood to help each other get dates for events held at their school.

In *First Date*, the girls want to break through the barrier between the sexes and get dates for the homecoming dance. Will the girls follow their club's rules and support each other? How will they find guys who fit their criteria?

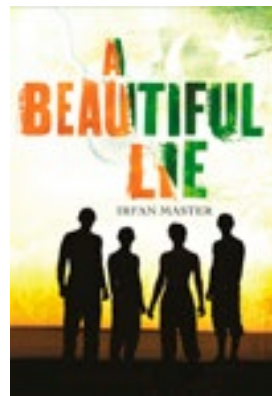
In *Blind Date*, the girls prepare to attend the Halloween dance, where each person must come masked as his or her favorite literary character. The fun begins when each

girl in the group must choose another girl's name and secretly select a date for her. What happens when two girls like the same guy? Do they try to sabotage a friend by pairing her with a "geek"? How do the guys feel when they are told only what character they will dress as but won't know the identity of their date until the night of the dance? Will the girls abide by the club's rules, and will their friendships survive?

In *Double Date*, the girls plan to take the least popular event at the school, the Christmas Ball, and turn it into a fundraiser for underprivileged children. Also, the club wants to expand its membership by adding a new girl, so they can double date for the event. More serious issues arise, including sexting, underage drinking, and discovering what true friendship really means.

In these first three installments of the Dating Games, Melody Carlson provides another winning series for Christian teens. The books address such challenges as communicating with parents, dating with no strings attached, and learning how to support one other with fashion, fun and Christian friendship.

Look for *Prom Date*, the next book in the series. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



A Beautiful Lie

Irfan Master. Albert Whitman, 2012. 301p. \$16.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8075-0597-7. Available in paperback and as an e-book. www.albertwhitman.com Fiction India—History—Partition, 1947—Juvenile fiction. Pakistan—History—20th century—Juvenile fiction. Fathers and sons—Juvenile fiction. Honesty—Juvenile fiction. Terminally ill—Juvenile fiction.

Bilal, a 13-year-old Hindu boy, is devoted to his father, who is dying. There is great political tur-

moil during the last few months leading up to the 1947 partition of India, and Bilal develops an elaborate plan to keep away anyone who might bring distressing news to their small house. His best school friends, Chota, Manjeet and Saleem, unquestioningly prove their devotion by helping Bilal in the elaborate scheme.

In the first-person narrative of this debut novel, Irfan Master sensitively portrays the struggles Bilal faces. Is there ever a right reason to lie? Why can't people—Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, everyone—live together in peace? Can young people really trust adults, especially the ones they think will refuse to listen? Who are your true friends, and how far will they go to help you?

A Beautiful Lie is a good historical novel geared to students in grades 5 to 9. Congregations can use it as a tool to teach about tolerance, peace, true friendship and strong bonds between parents and children. The glossary, maps and historical notes will transport readers to Bilal's world in India. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

Note that we have three new guides available

BY JUDY JANZEN, *Administrator*

Our conference in July was a great success; however, I would have loved to see many more of you there. The workshops, speakers and tours were enjoyed by all. Be sure to mark your calendars now for the **2016 conference in Kent, Ohio, July 27-29**. Many CSLA members live in Ohio or nearby states, so this is a great opportunity to fill your car with fellow librarians and drive to the conference. Driving to our conference site can save money, and a road trip with like-minded people can be lots of fun!

We have three new guides that I know you will want to purchase and use for your library. Look on **page 8** in this issue for more information about *Disaster Management Planning for Small Libraries* by Laura Dallas, *A Basic Book List for Church Libraries* by Ellen Bosman and *Classic Religious Books for Children* by Carol Campbell and Evelyn Pockrass.

It is the time of year to renew your CSLA membership for 2016. Also, please consider giving an end-of-the-year donation to CSLA to help fund current expenses. We also have an interest-bearing fund called the Pioneers Endowment Fund, which is a wonderful way to have your memorial gift keep on giving. Just include "Pioneers Fund" in the memo line.

Our website is being redesigned and rebuilt. It is a work in progress, and we will be incorporating members' suggestions for improvements in the future. Be sure to check it regularly, and don't forget to go through www.cslainfo.org to order your material from Amazon. Amazon gives us a percentage of all sales that originate from our website.



Calling For Nominations 2016 Rodda Award

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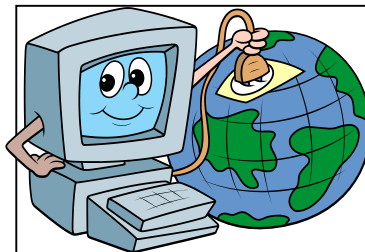
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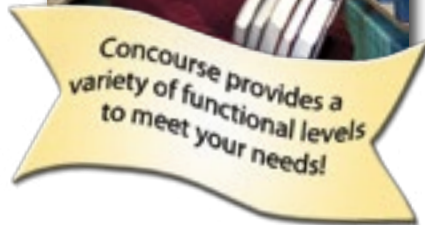
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