

congregational libraries *today*



SERVING CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARIES OF ALL FAITHS SINCE 1967

CSLAINFO.ORG | FOURTH ISSUE 2016

WEEDING—the frequently neglected chore

BY SUSAN SPONAAS, WITH CAROL CAMPBELL AND PAT SHUFELDT

Weeding is one of those essential but frequently neglected chores required by any library, but especially congregational libraries. Why? It is *especially needed* because many congregational libraries are small with limited shelf space. They simply do not have room for unneeded material.

Weeding is *especially difficult* for congregational libraries because money for purchasing replacements is limited, material is often plated as a gift from or in honor of a beloved congregation member, and content tends to be relevant longer than, for instance, material focusing on science or technology.

EFFECTIVE WEEDING IS NOT HAPHAZARD; IT REQUIRES A PLAN.

The very first step is to have a written weeding policy in place. This is usually a part of the library's collection development policy. A well-written, well thought out policy not only gives the librarian guidelines that are relevant to that particular library, it also protects the library from adversity. Issues that should be included in the policy are:

1. Criteria for weeding – This not only should be physical criteria (i.e. the pages are yellowed, brittle or falling out) but also be a mirror of the criteria for selection. If the item would not be added to the collection due to dated information, falling outside the collection's scope, or unneeded



- duplication, why should it be kept?
2. Disposal of material – How will plated material be disposed of? Does your congregation require or expect special disposal of scripture? Should ownership labels be removed or over-stamped? May weeded material in usable condition be resold or offered to another charitable organization? The next step is to decide how

and whether to communicate the weeding project to the congregation. If the librarian weeds on a regular basis (recommended), special communication is probably not needed. However, a major weeding project that will be noticed by the congregation should be publicized in advance to avoid questions such as, “The last time I was in the library the shelves were full. Now they are half empty. What happened to all the books that we gave good money to buy?”

Rebecca Vnuk, in “Weeding without Worries,” recommends that this publicity should be couched in positive terms. “...explain that the library is making room for new materials, making the shelves easier to navigate, and replacing outdated information with current information.” (*American Libraries*, May 2, 2015)

>> continued, page 2

Inside this issue

Learn more about weeding	3	Answering your questions about your CSLA Board	8
President's Message: Libraries change lives	4	Fresh citations: New media for your library	9-25
Update on anniversary gifts received	4	Hartsock: How CSLA can help you	25
Doing Dewey: Classification numbers for humorous materials	5	Membership renewal form	26
Recognize excellence: Make your awards nominations	6	Administrator's report: Plan to attend the 50th anniversary conference	27
Long-time member Ruth Turney dies	7	Reviewers needed for <i>Congregational Libraries Today</i>	27



Finally, you are ready to actually weed. Before getting into the advice gleaned from the CREW website (see table at right), here are some basic tips that are generally understood by library professionals but may not be obvious to novice volunteers.

- If your library has a computerized circulation system with good sorting capability, run a report of items that have not circulated in the past X number of years, the X determined by your library's general circulation rate. If the item has not been checked out in the past five years, chances are it won't be checked out in the next five!
- Take each item off the shelf and physically examine it. A book with a jacket in good condition may be riddled with mold or have torn or insect-eaten pages. (This is also a good time for close inspection of the shelves. Does the wall behind

>> *continued, page 3*

Weeding criteria

Here is a synopsis of weeding criteria pulled from the Texas State Library's CREW weeding manual. (CREW—continuous, review, evaluation, weeding.) Comments relevant to congregational libraries have been added in italics by this article's author. A link to the CREW manual is also available on the CSLA website, www.clsainfo.org.

POOR CONTENT

Content is outdated or obsolete. *(If the item is of importance to the history of the congregation it may be placed in the congregation's archives or otherwise removed from the regular circulating shelves but retained by the church or synagogue.)*

Content is biased, racist, or sexist. *(This is subjective. Most congregational libraries are biased toward the faith of their parent congregation. Inclusiveness and exclusiveness are part of the library's scope and should be addressed in the collection development policy.)*

Content is irrelevant to patron needs

Content is too mature/immature for patrons. *(The item may be too scholarly for the congregational library but appropriate for a regional resource center.)*

POOR CONDITION

Resource has irreparable damage.

Resource is dirty or smelly.

Resource would not survive further circulation.

POOR CIRCULATION, AND LACK OF IN-LIBRARY USE

Resource is not being used by patrons in a certain timeframe.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Library has multiple copies that are not needed.

Library has enough other resources on a particular subject.

Consider whether the item should be replaced and the cost of replacement.

Consider the visual appeal of item (including artwork).

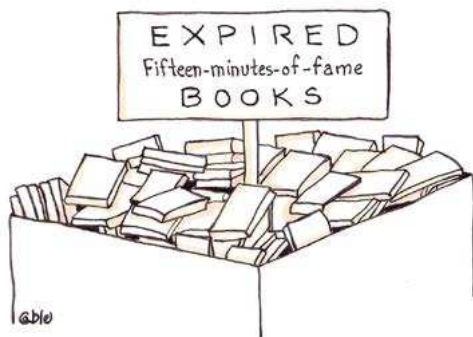


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the books appear damp? Has a small book been “lost” behind the others? Are there rodent droppings? Is the “rodent” a dust bunny? Many congregational librarians weed with a dust cloth beside them. Just don’t get so busy cleaning that you stop weeding!

- Keep sticky notes handy. As an item is pulled for weeding, jot down any special instructions and put it with the item. For instance, make a note to replace a heavily used item being withdrawn due to damage. This is also the time to decide if additional, similar titles or a newer edition should be purchased. Other examples of are “plated—contact family” or “duplicate copy—book sale.”
- Do not let emotional criteria determine selection for weeding. A book that was a favorite teen read thirty years ago but is never read by today’s teens does not belong in a small library. It is also hard to weed that expensive item that was selected “knowing” that one’s congregation would love it only to discover that no one does. It hurts, but say goodbye and let it go!



- After pulling the item for weeding, be sure to withdraw it from the library catalog so that it no longer shows available.
 1. Most computerized library catalogs are designed so that an item can be withdrawn without removing the bibliographic record. If the withdrawn item is the only copy and it will be replaced, keep the bibliographic record in the catalog until a replacement copy is acquired.
 2. If the library catalog consists of traditional printed catalog cards or is a “homemade” catalog using a database such as Excel **and** if the withdrawn item is the last copy the library owns with no plan to replace it, be sure to pull all the tracings. (In a traditional card catalog the tracings include the subject heading cards for that item.) Don’t forget to pull the shelf list card. Mark the copy withdrawn in the accession book if your library maintains one.
 3. It is a good idea to stamp the item “withdrawn.” This keeps helpful dumpster divers from returning the book with a shocked, “Guess what someone threw in the trash!”



Recommended sources to learn more about weeding

Larson, Jeanette (2008), *CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*, Revised and Updated (PDF), Austin, TX: Texas State Library and Archives Commission, retrieved October 7, 2014. This manual was developed by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. It gives the six benefits of weeding: You save space, You save time, You make the collection more appealing, You will enhance your library’s reputation, You will keep up with collection needs, and You have constant feedback on the collection’s strengths and weaknesses. A link to the 106 page pdf manual may be found under the “Members Only” section of the CSLA website. Pages 15 -22 are especially very useful and would benefit members of your library committee. This would also make a good basis for a chapter workshop.

Weeding without Worry, by Rebecca Vnuk, American Libraries, May 2, 2016. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2016/05/02/library-weeding-without-worry/>. A particularly good source for avoiding public relations problems that may arise during a weeding project.

Wikipedia has a brief but surprisingly good article on weeding, which includes a summary of criteria taken from CREW. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weeding_\(library\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weeding_(library))

Weeding Library Collections: A Selected Annotated Bibliography for Library Collection Evaluation. ALA Fact Sheet 15. <http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet15>. This is an American Library Association bibliography of books and articles that provide help in all aspects of weeding, but especially in writing a collection development policy that includes weeding. While owning copies of these books may not make sense for a small congregational library, they may be available for loan from a local public library or through its interlibrary loan department.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: LIBRARIES CHANGE LIVES

DIGITAL INCLUSION—LIFELONG LEARNING—SOCIAL INCLUSION



Marcia Trauernicht,
CSLA President

Libraries change lives. That's the title of the European organization **Public Libraries 2020** website <http://librarieschangelives.eu/>.

Though geared toward public libraries in the European Union, I found the site's main categories very applicable to our congregational libraries.

Digital Inclusion—Lifelong Learning—Social Inclusion: all three categories contain stories of individuals who found the library to be an integral part of their lives.

The site is in English, so take a few minutes to go through it. (As an aside, "*Libraries change lives!*" was also the presidential initiative theme of the 2013 American Library Association president, Barbara Stripling.)

How does your library address these three areas? Of course, you can examine your collection and determine if any gaps need to be filled for specific age groups and for certain categories of religious education and spiritual support for living. Having a useful and pertinent collection provides tools for lifelong

learning, but does your library actively encourage its use? What types of promotions do you do to connect your congregation members with the materials in your library, and to have them think of your library as a "place to go when you want to know!" Even if your physical library is tiny, do you hold special events to encourage its use?

The latter plays into the concept of social inclusion: how do you go about not only creating a welcoming environment in your physical library by establishing a pleasant and comfortable setting (and of course cheerful and helpful staff), but also creating a socially inclusive environment for all? Establishing participatory activities such as book discussion groups, intergenerational reading groups, current events discussions, guest author or speaker programs, etc., can provide your congregation with many options for gathering together for fun, learning, and social interaction. Partnering with your religious staff can expand these offerings and address many

interests and needs.

Digital inclusion may be the toughest category for us to address. Many of us do not have automated library catalogs or access to the internet within our libraries. However, we can be aware of how our congregation uses technology and social media and learn how these things are integrated into people's lives. Partnering with congregational members who have those skills and also partnering with your local public librarians can help give insight into ways to provide digital access to those without it. Believe me; the digital age is not in decline at all! Perhaps we should think of "digital outreach" as a goal to work towards.

CSLA continues to work in all three categories to provide *you* with lifelong learning opportunities, a social community of support, and digital avenues of information dissemination and communication, because *libraries change lives!*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

BY CAROL CAMPBELL, FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Thanks to all for the donations given to CSLA for the \$50 for 50 Anniversary Celebration. As of this writing, 38 friends have donated \$2,200. This is a wonderful way in which you may give thanks for all that CSLA has done for you and your ministry. Donations will continue through 2017.

Do you have photos from your CSLA past?

We are especially looking for ones which have not been given to the CSLA office in the past. This might include ones you took while on a tour, with a group sitting at your hotel or ones from your CSLA chapter. If you have photos, send them to Judy Janzen at the CSLA office. Please include names and dates of the photos. Larry Stowers has agreed to have a display of photos during the 50th anniversary conference. We will also be gathering photos for him from the archives collection.



\$50
for
50



DOING DEWEY

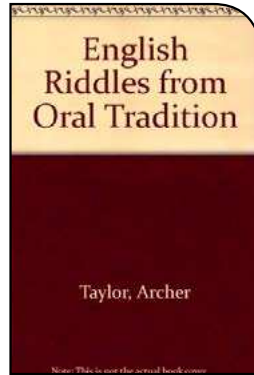
DEWEY CLASSIFICATION NUMBERS FOR HUMOROUS MATERIALS

BY SUSAN SNYDER
 snyder44147@gmail.com

Some time ago, a reader of this column suggested that I write about classifying humorous materials. After all, most congregational libraries have at least some humorous materials.

I put off addressing this subject until I had finished my “tour” of the Dewey Decimal Classification schedules and tables because there are several ways that humorous materials may be classified, and these involve different schedules and tables.

Riddles are one type of humorous material, and even these may be classified under several Dewey numbers depending on whether they are considered a type of puzzle or game (793.735), anonymous folklore (398.6), or literature. Collections



398.6 - The oral tradition aspect is of primary importance.

classified in 808.88 as a collection of miscellaneous writings from a variety of languages.

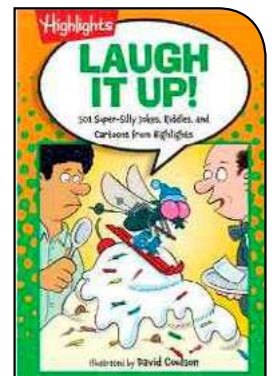
If all of the riddles or jokes in a collection were originally written in

of riddles by known authors are most often classified in literature numbers. If a collection includes riddles and/or jokes originally written in a variety of languages, it is therefore

the English language by American authors, then the Dewey number would begin with 81 for American literature in English. Add -8 from Table 3 for miscellaneous writings, including jokes and riddles. The resulting number would be 818.

If all of the riddles or jokes were originally written in the English language by authors from places outside the Americas, such as the British Isles or Australia, the Dewey number would begin with 82, for English literature with -8 added for miscellaneous writings. The resulting number would be 828. This same pattern is followed for collections of jokes and riddles originally written in other languages. Some libraries, even large public libraries, choose to reduce the scattering by classifying all of their collections of jokes and riddles in the literature numbers.

Sometimes congregational libraries have works of humorous literature, or collections of humorous literature, that are longer than riddles or jokes. Classify these according to the original language and type of literature. Humorous American plays should be classified as American plays. If there are several types of humorous prose literature in a collection, begin with the base number for the language in which they were originally written and



808.87- A typical joke and riddle classification.

>> continued, page 8

Classifying riddles and other humorous material

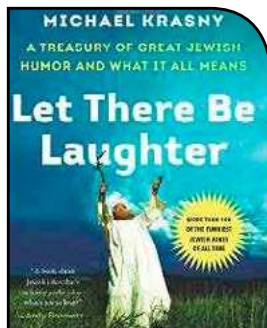
This table makes it easy to see that humorous material can be placed in a wide variety of Dewey numbers, depending upon the specific nature of the humor

398	Folklore or folk literature
.6	Riddles (anonymous, from oral tradition)
793	Indoor games and amusements
.7	Games which do not include action
.73	Puzzles and puzzle games
.735	Riddles
808	Rhetoric and collections of literary texts from more than two literatures
.8	Collections of literary texts from more than two literatures
.88	Collections of miscellaneous writings, including riddles
81-	English-language literature from North or South America (including geographically associated islands)
818	Miscellaneous writings, including jokes and riddles (Table 3)
82-	English language literature from any country except North or South America
828	Miscellaneous writings, including jokes and riddles (Table 3)
320	Political science (when entire content is political humor)
.02	Miscellaneous humorous writings (Table 1)

Adapted from Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index, devised by Melvil Dewey. Edition 15, Dublin, OH: OCLC, 2012.

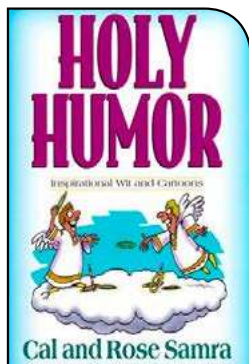
add -8 from Table 3 for miscellaneous writings.

If a collection of humorous literature by one author includes both poetry and prose, also begin with the base number for the original language and add -8 for miscellaneous writings. If a collection of humorous and/or satirical literature by more than one author



809.79 - Despite being a collection of Jewish humor from more than two languages (808), the literary criticism and history aspect (809) is given priority.

includes both poetry and prose, begin with the base number for the original language and add -7 from Table 3 for humorous and satirical literary collections.



242.0207 - In this instance, Library of Congress decided that 242 (Christian devotional literature) was appropriate since the humor is intended to be inspirational.

Further add 008 if the collection is not from a specific time period. Classify collections of multiple types of humorous prose literature originally written in various languages in 808.88, and collections including humorous poetry and

prose originally written in various languages in 808.87.

In some books, an author uses humor to express a serious point of view. Political satire is one example. Classify books like this with the subject, and add -02 from Table 1 for “Miscellany,” including “humorous treatment.”

Make your awards nominations now

— RECOGNIZE EXCELLENCE

BY JOY CRYER,
AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR

Our congregational libraries are filled with unsung heroes, people who have made exceptional contributions to their libraries and/or the faith-based library field. Many of you are also aware of libraries that can provide inspiration to CSLA’s membership. Recognize them!

Go to www.cslainfo.org and click on the Conference tab, then on the Awards submenu. There you will find links to past winners, descriptions of the awards and a printable (pdf) awards nomination form. There is also a separate form to volunteer to be on the Awards Committee. Your help will be appreciated.



Rabbi Ron Isaacs and Karen Rostoker-Gruber won the 2016 Helen Keating Ott Award for Outstanding Contribution to Children’s Literature.

CSLA is seeking nominations of individuals and libraries who should be considered for one of the following categories:

Outstanding Congregational Library

Outstanding Congregational Librarian

Outstanding Contribution to Congregational Libraries

Helen Keating Ott Award for Outstanding Contribution to Children’s Literature

Pat Tabler Memorial Scholarship Award

Don’t wait until the March 31, 2017, deadline to submit your nomination. Beginning work early gives you time to obtain a letter of recommendation and to pull together any other documentation or photos that may be required or simply helpful. [Nomination Form.](#)

Long-time member Ruth Turney – 1928 - 2016

CSLA has lost another longtime member with the passing of Ruth Anderson Turney. We think Ruth and her husband, Austin, have the longest record of attendance at our annual



conferences—42 consecutive years.

She had key roles in several national conventions: two in Hartford, Connecticut, one in Kansas, one in Missouri, and another in Denver, Colorado, where she established the special event we have come to love—the silent auction. Apparently she was CSLA's first treasurer prior to Dot Rodda's taking over as administrator.

Ruth was a native of Massachusetts who earned an A.B. from Brown Uni-

versity in mathematics and worked for a New York bank until she and Austin were married. They moved to Connecticut and later she earned an MA in English literature and an MS in library science. She was a cataloger of music and foreign language materials at the Stamford, Connecticut, Ferguson Library.

According to her fellow Connecticut and CSLA friend, Beverly Manning, "Ruth is the only person I know who became a church librarian, then decided to go to library school and became a professional librarian."

Ruth taught many workshops over the years. Her classes were always well attended and sometimes had to be taught twice. Her topics were intriguing. *Holy Terrors* was about mystery stories and like material suitable for religious libraries. In another on

Cultivating Spirituality in Gardening, she explained how planting and growing your own garden can become a spiritual exercise and how the books she was exhibiting were suitable for congregational libraries.

She did show one "coffee table" book that she said was "so overdone and tacky that one couldn't help but love it!" There is one of her surprise witticisms.

She once gave two workshops two years apart on the *Inklings*. The first year was on C. S. Lewis and Owen Barfield. The second workshop was about J. R. R. Tolkien and Charles Williams. According to longtime friend Carol Campbell, these workshops were taught with no notes which struck her class with awe. Once in a workshop that included the author Lew Wallace, Ruth had everyone laughing as she remarked, "He was such a rascal!"

Here is a lesson for all congregational librarians in a tribute to Ruth from Beverly Manning: "Like many other church libraries, Ruth's at Trinity did not have a good location. It was located on an upper floor of the church school building. Ruth would take a truck of books and CDs down to the coffee hour, display them on a table, and talk them up to the members. Ruth knew the value of promoting the library. She persuaded some friends from church, who were the publishers of Walker Books (large print books) to add religious titles to their list, and sold them on consignment to make people aware of their existence."

After their retirement, Austin and Ruth moved to Lawrence, Kansas, where she revitalized her own church library and volunteered for a prison library.—Dottie Lewis degewis@gmail.com

The family requests that memorials be made to Church & Synagogue Library Association or National Alopecia Areata Foundation.

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- Temple Shalom Library

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Answering your questions about your **CSLA BOARD**

BY EVELYN POCKRASS, INTERIM TREASURER

Curious about the Church and Synagogue Library Association Board of Directors? Who are they? What do they do? How do they make decisions? When do they meet? Why should I be curious?

Although it may seem that being on a “board” is hard to contemplate for oneself, being a CSLA Board member is not as far-fetched as you may imagine.

CSLA Board members are volunteer and professional librarians like you who feel strongly about the importance of libraries that are spiritual and educational assets to their congregations. They want to share such feelings and commitment with others. Being a CSLA Board member is part of that goal.

My involvement started in 1998 when I received a phone call from Barbara Mall, then CSLA president, asking if I would chair the CSLA Awards Committee. The first board meeting I attended was in Cleveland at that summer’s annual conference.

Since then, with the exception of 2010-2011, I have been a member of the board, and that has been a most rewarding experience.

Having served in various board positions—Awards Chair, Library Services Chair, Finance Chair, First Vice-President, President, Past-President, Ad Hoc committee chair, Interim Treasurer, Conference Co-Chair—I have had the opportunity to participate on the ground level

in planning many of the wonderful services and activities that CSLA affords its members.

Most of all, I have gained knowledge from networking with congregational librarians from all over the United States and Canada. This has helped me in serving my own congregation and in understanding congregational librarianship with greater depth and devotion.

CSLA Board members are

support your efforts as congregational librarians.

In 2017 CSLA will be celebrating its first 50 years. The board looks forward to starting the next 50 with you and raising the association to a higher level. New members on the board contribute new ideas, new creativity, and new aspirations. Presently, two board positions have interim leadership: Treasurer and Finance Chair. Other positions will be



2016-17 CSLA BOARD MEMBERS INSTALLED AT ANNUAL CONFERENCE. From left, Maria Isabel Garcia, 1st Vice President; Ralph Hartsock, 2nd Vice President; Dorothy Lewis, Archives; Cheryl Cutchins, Past President; Carol Campbell, Fund Raising; Marcia Trauernicht, President; Debbie Scott, Technology Chair; Susan Sponaas, Publications Chair.

committee chairs or officers and they have specific job descriptions. Some positions not mentioned above include Second Vice President for Membership and chairs for Publications, Fundraising, Continuing Education, Technology and Chapters Coordinator.

We used to meet twice annually at the conference site but now only convene there once; our other meeting is held during the winter via telephone conference call. Each board member reports on activities during the previous six months.

We discuss issues openly and hold democratic votes on motions. Whether we meet by telephone or in person, we work to guide and

open in July 2017 as board members rotate off.

The only way these positions can be filled is if YOU step up and volunteer to serve the organization that has been serving you.

Feel free to ask questions about these and other positions. Always know that we need You and You and You to keep CSLA functioning as a vibrant and dynamic organization.

Contact Cheryl Cutchin, Immediate Past President, cherylcsla1@gmail.com, or Marcia Trauernicht, President, marciatmail@gmail.com, for more information about specific positions and how you and CSLA can work together in the years ahead. Curiosity will bring you rewards!

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

fresh citations

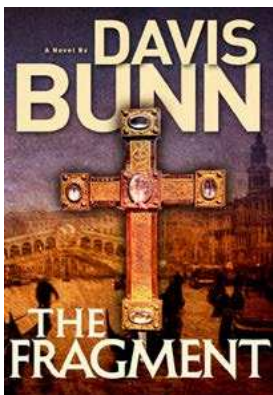
new media for your library



topics

FICTION ▷	9
MEDIA ▷	15
FAITH AND SPIRITUAL LIFE ▷	16
SACRED TEXTS ▷	17
PRAYER AND DEVOTIONS ▷	18
GENDER IDENTITY ▷	19
CURRENT EVENTS ▷	20
POLITICS ▷	20
MINISTRY ▷	21
WORSHIP SERVICES ▷	22
MARRIAGE ▷	23
BIOGRAPHY ▷	23
SAINTS ▷	24
CHRISTMAS ▷	24
CHILDREN ▷	24

FICTION

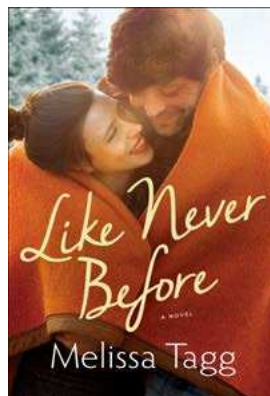


The Fragment

Davis Bunn. Franciscan Media, 2016. 167p. \$20, hardback. ISBN: 9781632530844. www.FranciscanMedia.org. FIC Young women – Fiction. Holy Cross – Fiction. Historical fiction. Christian fiction.

It is the spring of 1923, and the nation is still reeling from the aftermaths of World War I and the devastation of the Spanish flu. Muriel Ross, who has just turned 23, finds herself in a

remarkable position. In her quest to be an independent woman, she has landed a job as a researcher with the Smithsonian Institute and now is in Paris, France to photograph antiquities at the request of U.S. Senator Tom Bryan, her mentor on this adventure. Why was she chosen? What role does her strong Christian beliefs play in this choice? When it is revealed that one of the objects she is photographing is a piece of the True Cross of Christ, the suspense grows as it takes Muriel and Tom from the Cathedral of Notre Dame to Turkey. It is their mission to safeguard the relic and protect it from those who want to diminish its significance. This is a fast-paced historical fiction filled with dynamic well-written characters revealing how the horrors of war can affect them throughout their lives. Davis Bunn delivers the right blend in this faith-based thriller. Highly recommended for Christian libraries.—*Mary Lou Henneman*



Like Never Before

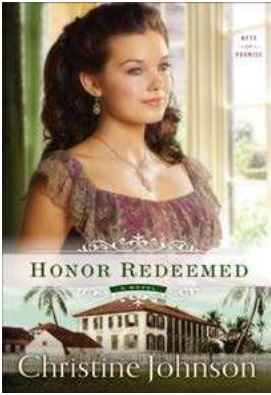
Melissa Tagg. Bethany House, 2016. 346p. \$14, paperback. ISBN: 9780764213083. bakerpublishinggroup.com/bethanyhouse FIC Newspapers – Iowa – Fiction. Iowa – Fiction. Christian fiction. Romance fiction.

Amelia Bentley is a reporter and editor at the Maple Valley News in Iowa. The staff was aware the owner was in discussions with another paper to sell just before he died. Now

the ownership of the paper is unclear.

Logan Walker grew up in Maple Valley and worked at the paper for a while before moving to Los Angeles to start his own company as a speech writer. He is a widower with a small child and a growing business when he learns he was left the Maple Valley News in the owner's will.

Logan goes back home with his child, planning to sell the newspaper as soon as possible, but when he meets Amelia things change. Both have wounds from the past they need to face before either can move on with their lives. Logan's faith has become tenuous after the death of his wife and, although Amelia goes to church, she's not sure about her faith either. This is a Christian romance story that is easy to read.—*Phyllis Wendorf*



Honor Redeemed (Keys of Promise, Book 2)

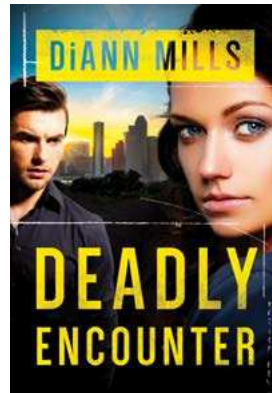
Christine Johnson. Revell, 2016. 344p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780800723514. www.revellbooks.com FIC Key West (Fla.) – History – 19th century – Fiction. Florida – History – 1821-1865 – Fiction. Christian fiction. Romance fiction.

It is the spring of 1852 and Prosperity Jones has been faithful to David, the man she intends to marry, who has been

serving as an army officer for two years in faraway Key West. But life in Nantucket has not been easy for her in spite of her social status. Even though she has always lived a comfortable life, when both of her parents die she impulsively travels to be with her future husband against the wishes of her relatives. Unfortunately, she discovers David is married to someone else, and she finds herself alone and penniless. Prosperity has always been of strong character, but will living on her own in this new climate break her resolve? It will take the wisdom and faith her mother instilled in her to find a place to stay, a job, and friends who will help her reunite with her true love.

Christine Johnson masterfully whisks the reader back to the 1800s as she tackles many issues: the role

of women in society, the topic of slavery, the issues of health care and epidemics and both honor and corruption in the army. Recommended for Christian historical romance fans.—*Mary Lou Henneman*



Deadly Encounter (FBI Task Force, Book 1)

DiAnn Mills. Tyndale House, 2016. 376p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9781496410979. www.tyndale.com FIC Women veterinarians – Fiction. United States. Federal Bureau of Investigation – Fiction. Murder investigation – Texas – Houston – Fiction. Romantic suspense fiction.

Veterinarian Stacy Broussard is a volunteer ranger whose duty is to patrol the area around the Houston airport on horseback.

But her life changes dramatically when she discovers a dead body, a motorcycle, an injured dog and a military drone powerful enough to attack a large aircraft. FBI Special Agent Alex LeBlanc and his partner Ric Price treat the situation as an act of terrorism and suspect everyone. The sparks begin to fly as Alex initially suspects Stacy, but realizes she might be in danger after seemingly unrelated incidents occur. The trio join forces to find the connection between more mysterious deaths in the town, a possible water pollution scare

this issue's reviews

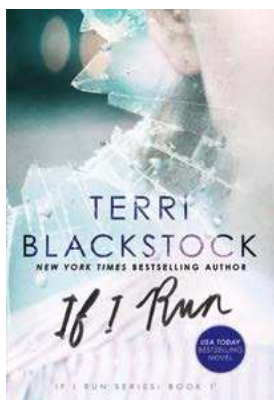
ABC Passover Hunt.....	25	Flash Point (Fault Lines, Book 2).....	12	Missing	
The Alliance.....	12	The Four Keys to Everlasting Love:		(The Nikki Boyd Files, Book 2).....	14
All that Remains (DVD).....	15	How your Catholic Marriage		One Ordinary Sunday: a Meditation	
Almighty Matters: God's Hidden		can Bring You Joy for a Lifetime.....	23	on the Mystery of the Mass.....	22
Politics in the Bible.....	20	The Fragment.....	9	Openings: A Daybook of Saints,	
Bearing the Unbearable: Trauma,		The Friends of Jesus.....	11	Sages, Psalms and Prayer	
Gospel, and Pastoral Care.....	21	God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates		Practices. 2nd ed.....	18
Because Of Bethlehem: Love is		for Finding and Focusing		A Place for Elijah.....	24
Born, Hope is Here.....	24	your Church's Future.....	22	A Primary Decision (The Worthington	
A Blind Hero: The Love		Happiness.....	16	Destiny Series, Book 3).....	11
of Otto Weidt (DVD).....	16	Hildegard of Bingen: Essential		Putting God Second: How	
Breath of God: Living a Life		Writings and Chants of a Christian		to Save Religion from Itself.....	16
Led by the Holy Spirit.....	17	Mystic, Annotated & Explained.....	24	Rebuilding Your Message:	
Bringing Lent Home with Pope Francis:		Honor Redeemed		Practical Tools to Strengthen	
Prayers, Reflections, and Activities		(Keys of Promise, Book 2).....	10	Your Preaching and Teaching.....	21
for Families.....	18	How the Bible Became Holy.....	17	Saffire.....	13
Deadly Encounter		If I Run.....	11	They Say We Are Infidels: On the	
(FBI Task Force, Book 1).....	10	The Inheritance.....	15	Run from ISIS with Persecuted	
Deathbed Wisdom		J.I. Packer: An Evangelical Life.....	23	Christians in the Middle East.....	20
of the Hasidic Masters.....	19	Like Never Before.....	9	This Road We Traveled.....	13
Designed for Joy: How the Gospel		The Memory Weaver.....	14	Verklemt.....	12
Impacts Men and Women,				Without Warning	
Identity and Practice.....	19			(Elite Guardians, Book 2).....	14

and epidemic and one sweet, innocent dog. But Stacy proves her strength as she helps Whitt, a young 12 year-old boy with a brilliant IQ and abusive parents. Author DiAnn Mills skillfully combines suspense and romance through plot twists and turns as her characters face past issues and rely on their courage and faith to unravel the dilemma. Watch for the next book in this exciting series, *Deep Extraction*, scheduled for release in April 2017.—
Mary Lou Henneman

The Friends of Jesus

Karen Kingsbury. Howard Books, 2015. 206p. \$20, hardcover. ISBN: 9781476707396. www.simonandschuster.com FIC Bible – History of biblical events – Fiction.

Serious student of the Bible and popular Christian novelist Karen Kingsbury has branched out in *The Friends of Jesus*. Her novels usually deal with situations facing fictitious contemporary people. In this novel she has fictionalized events in the lives of real, historical individuals. She has selected six of the many persons who knew Jesus, six who became his friends. She wants her readers to know why they were attracted to him and how their lives changed because of their friendship. She states in her brief introduction that she believes her readers catch glimpses of themselves in these individuals' characteristics. Those struggling with pride and judgmentalism can relate to Simon, the Pharisee who contracted leprosy, and Jarius, leader of the Temple Pharisees. The latter's traits also included hypocrisy. Arrogance was characteristic of John as a young man. Peter, Martha, and Mary Magdalene are the other three friends of Jesus portrayed by Kingsbury. Her talent has brought these people to life.—*Beverly Bixler*



If I Run

Terri Blackstock. Zondervan, 2016. 320p. \$16, paperback. ISBN: 9780310332435. www.zondervan.com FIC Murder – Investigation – Fiction. Missing person – Fiction.

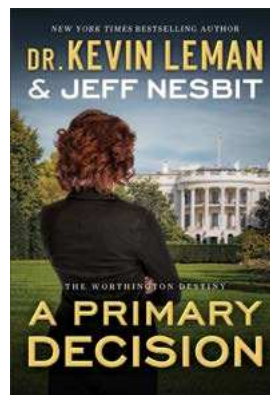
When Casey Cox finds her best friend Brent Pace murdered she knows the police will never believe she did not kill him. Why should they? They did not believe her before when she told them her father did not commit suicide, but was murdered. So she knows she must run

until she can prove who did murder her friend.

Dylan Roberts was best friends with Brent while growing up. He was just discharged from the army, where he was a criminal investigator, due to PTSD. Brent's parents ask him to find Casey and bring her back. The further Dylan digs into the case the more the facts just do not add up.

Casey makes friends with Miss Lucy, an elderly lady she meets on a bus, and decides to start over where Miss Lucy lives. She finds out Miss Lucy's granddaughter, Laura, has been missing for 2 years. When Casey accidentally comes across information that may lead to where Laura is being held she has to decide what to do, save Laura or save herself.

This is the first of a trilogy and the ending will leave the reader wanting more. The book concludes with discussion questions appropriate for a book club.—
Phyllis Wendorf



A Primary Decision (The Worthington Destiny Series, Book 3)

Kevin Leman & Jeff Nesbit. Revell, 2016. 368p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780800723309. <http://bakerpublishinggroup.com/revell> FIC United States – Politics and government – Fiction. Suspense fiction. Christian fiction.

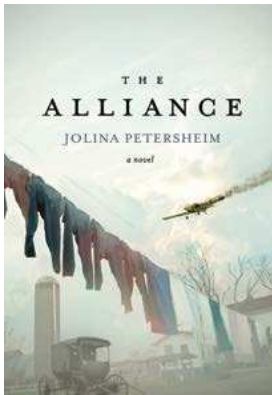
Sarah, the youngest of the three Worthington siblings, finds herself being vetted before the Senate Judiciary Committee as a candidate for the position of Attorney General. Will her strong work ethic and deep faith overcome the rumors involving her brother Sean's supposed connection with a terrorist group, or why Will suddenly dropped out of a bid for State Senator? What is the secret her family is keeping from her and how will it affect her decisions on both a personal and professional level? This final book of the Worthington Destiny series is filled with suspense as the various subplots come to a dynamic conclusion. The background of each character comes together as different puzzle pieces of the total picture are revealed. Readers of suspense/politics/thriller fiction with a strong faith base and family connections will find the series powerful.—*Mary Lou Henneman*

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CSLA GUIDE



The Alliance

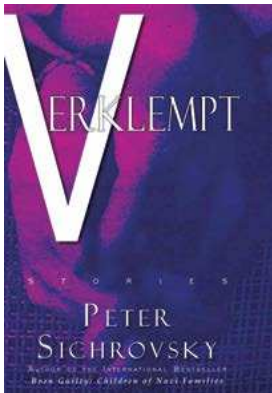
Jolina Petersheim. Tyndale House, 2016. 384p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9781496402219. www.tyndale.com FIC Technology – Social aspects – Fiction. Mennonites – Montana – Fiction. Christian fiction.

What would happen if all electronics, such as cars, phones and refrigerators, stopped working? How would civilization, as we know it, be affected. How would such a situation test your

faith in God and others? This is the premise of *The Alliance*.

When Moses Hughes' plane crashes in a Mennonite field in Montana he is saved by the people there. When he regains consciousness, he discovers that all electronic items stopped working. He believes an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) is the cause. In a community meeting, after some discussion, the Mennonites decide that the stranded "Englishers" will protect the Mennonite community against looters in exchange for food and shelter, but the Mennonites will also give water, soup and medical care to any refugees who pass by and ask for help. Also, the "Englishers" must attend church services on Sundays and may not fire their guns unless they are fired on first. As things get worse and gangs are roaming the area, the community must decide what to do.

This is the first book in the series. The next book, *The Divide*, will appear next year. Book clubs may utilize the discussion questions at the end of the book.—Phyllis Wendorf



Verklemt.

Peter Sichrovsky. Translated by John Howard. DoppelHouse Press, 2016. 177p. \$19.95, hardcover. ISBN: 9780983254034. Available as an e-book. www.doppelhouse.com FIC Short stories, German-Translations into English. Jews-Austria-Fiction. Jews-Germany-Fiction. Children of Holocaust survivors-Germany-Fiction. Children of Holocaust survivors-Austria-Fiction. Short stories, Jewish.

Popularized in *Saturday Night Live* skits, the term "verklemt"

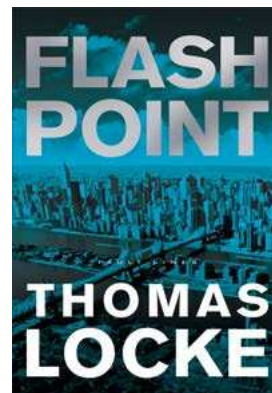
(alternate spelling; "farklemt") often describes how people feel when they are "choked up." In Peter Sichrovsky's eleven short stories he portrays situations in which the characters are choked up due to emotional stress. Some emotions are war-related; others may be personal, but all, Schrovsky indicates, have a factual basis.

The stories are of mixed quality, perhaps due in part to the translation or editing. Two stood out for this reviewer.

The Sirens takes place during Saddam Hussein's era when Iraqi Scud missiles were being fired into Israel. The reader can feel the anxiety and sense of being choked up by the frightening explosions as Jacob, Hazel and their children attempt to maintain composure while receiving frantic telephone calls from Jacob's mother in the United States and Hazel's mother in Haifa. The family faces desperate and difficult decisions.

Onju tells of a feisty Viennese grandmother whose chance encounter with Harry after services at a synagogue brings back hurtful Holocaust memories. Onju, the grandmother, recognizes Harry as the prison inmate who selected her husband for death in a concentration camp. Onju's granddaughter writes a letter to Harry's grandson explaining why she no longer can see him, and Harry tearfully reads the letter to a rabbi who is otherwise preoccupied. Despair and rejection permeate this tale.

Sichrovsky has led a fascinating life as a journalist. He was a chronicler of children of Holocaust survivors and children of Nazis. He has been a controversial politician in his native Austria. An informative foreword by Ari Roth helps the reader put the stories in perspective.—Evelyn Pockrass

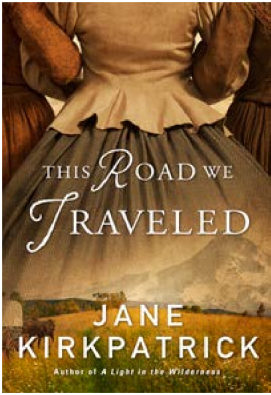


Flash Point (Fault Lines, Book 2)

Thomas Locke. Revell, 2016. 359p. \$15 paperback. ISBN: 9780800724351 <http://bakerpublishinggroup.com/revell> FIC Astral projection -- Fiction. Science fiction. Psychological fiction.

The excitement continues in this sci-fi psychological techno-thriller sequel to *Trial Run* by Thomas Locke (a.k.a. Davis Bunn). Reese Clawson

is offered release from prison with the condition that she must follow specific directions or die. Lena Fennan must also choose whether to remain in her unfulfilling job as a financial analyst or venture into an unknown world of risky financial intrigue. How does this fit in with the research of neuroscientist Dr. Brett Riffkind and Dr. Gabriella Speciale? The experiments working with out-of-body travel by the voyagers continues as new layers emerging through each ascent bring new information and terror—both real and imagined—back to the present day. The personal relationships among the main characters become more developed as the action builds to the final page. The technical background for the story is explained just enough to keep the plot moving at a rapid pace. The series is perfect for discussions on how technology and beliefs affect our lives and the possible decisions that impact others and ourselves.—Mary Lou Henneman



This Road We Traveled

Jane Kirkpatrick. Revell, 2016. 322p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780800722333.

<http://bakerpublishinggroup.com/revell> FIC Overland journeys to the Pacific – Fiction. Brown, Tabitha (Moffat), 1780- -- Fiction. Oregon – History – 19th century – Fiction.

In *This Road We Traveled*, Jane Kirkpatrick has added another fascinating story of

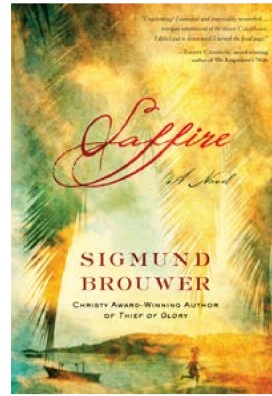
settling the Northwest. For many, the name Tabitha Moffat Brown is not familiar, but in a commentary at the end of her novel Kirkpatrick reveals that in 1987 Brown was officially named “The Mother of Oregon.” She also enumerates the many sources and the information which provides the framework for her novel.

If any person could be called indestructible, it would be Tabitha Brown. The action begins in 1845 when Tabby, as she is called, is 65. Actually, at first the action is mental and emotional. Orus, Tabby’s eldest son, returns from two years of exploring the Oregon Territory. He urges all of his family, with the exception of his mother, to move there. Because of her age and lameness, it was assumed that she would not survive the journey. When her late husband’s brother arrives on the scene, Tabby decides to furnish her own wagon and the two of them join the family train. Subsequent chapters describe what an ordeal the journey is with loss of animals, accidents, illnesses and deaths. Those who arrive at the destination are starving.

They face more hardships when they reach Oregon, but Tabby is very strong, as is her faith. Tabitha Moffat Brown did not quit when she reached the Oregon Territory. Service to others was the most important aspect

of her life and, as a result, she opens a home and school for orphans which eventually becomes Pacific University. She continued serving others until her death.

This novelization based on a true event is well researched and written.—*Beverly Bixler*



Saffire

Sigmund Brouwer. Waterbrook, 2016. 336p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780307446510. www.waterbrookmultnomah.com FIC Panama Canal (Panama) – History – Fiction. Detective and mystery stories.

Saffire is set in 1909 Panama City during the building of the Panama Canal. Many of the characters are real people who were involved in the canal project.

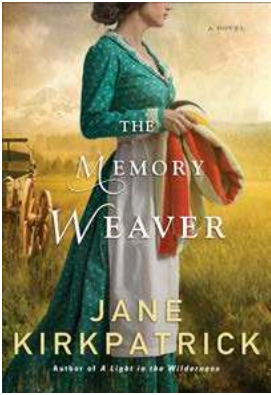
James Holt is sent by President Theodore Roosevelt to the Panama Canal, but is not told why he is being sent there. He plans to stay only a day and then go back home to North Dakota and his young daughter. While waiting to see Colonel Goethals, the man in charge of the project, he meets Saffire, a young girl who is about the same age as his own daughter. Saffire wants to see Colonel Goethals to try and get someone to look for her missing mother. Her mother works for Ezequiel Sandoval, a very wealthy and influential man, who Saffire calls “my Tito.” Goethals sends Holt to look into it and he is pulled into a web of intrigue and danger. Part historical novel and part mystery, the author does a good job of making the setting and characters come alive. Although Brouwer has a reputation in the Christian publishing world and this is published by a Christian press, there is no religious content to set it apart.— *Phyllis Wendorf*

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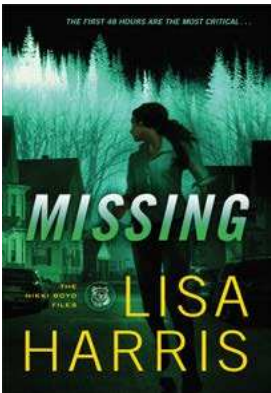
The Memory Weaver

Jane Kirkpatrick. Revell, 2015. 348p. \$15, paperback. ISBN:9780800722326. bakerpublishinggroup.com/revel FIC Warren, Eliza Spalding – Fiction. Memory – Fiction. Oregon – History – 19th century – Fiction. Christian fiction.

Jane Kirkpatrick has done considerable research to provide historical veracity to her novel based on the lives of real people. Eliza Spalding Warren was the

daughter and oldest child of Eliza and Henry Spalding, missionaries to the Indians in the Oregon Territory in the mid-1800s. At age 10, Eliza was taken hostage by the Cayuse Indians during a massacre. She was later rescued, but the memories of her experience troubled her for years. After Eliza's mother dies, her father's behavior changes, creating difficult situations for Eliza and her younger siblings.

Kirkpatrick tells the story in the first person with Eliza as the narrator, comparing her memories with what her mother wrote in her diary. Later, married and a mother, Eliza's faith in God, her love for her children, and the memory of her mother keep Eliza going. She realizes that one's memories may differ from actual facts. They are only part of the story. She finally comes to grips with her past and achieves long-sought peace. There is much mention of faith in the story; indeed it is necessary to the story.—*Beverly Bixler*



Missing (The Nikki Boyd Files, Book 2)

Lisa Harris. Revell, 2016. 305p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780800724191. bakerpublishinggroup.com/revel FIC Missing persons – Fiction. Murder – Investigation – Fiction. Christian fiction. Suspense fiction.

Nikki Boyd is an officer in the missing persons department. When there are two murders at the Hudson home, and both Mac

and Lucy Hudson are missing, Nikki is called in.

While investigating the missing couple, Nikki is lead to the boat of her friend, Tyler. On the boat they find the body of Mac Hudson, but Tyler swears he does not know the man or why he would be on his boat.

Nikki finds out that Mac Hudson worked for a pharmaceutical company and had uncovered something big about artificial drugs which was worth killing for to keep it secret. Nikki needs to find Lucy Hudson fast before the killers find her and kill her too.

The Christian message is clear. Nikki desires a deepening trust in God and calls upon the Lord throughout her daily activities and when she is in danger. Readers who have not read volume one in the Nikki Boyd Files will have no difficulty jumping into this suspenseful story.—*Phyllis Wendorf*



Without Warning (Elite Guardians, Book 2)

Lynette Eason. Revell, 2016. 329p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780800723255. bakerpublishinggroup.com/revel FIC Murder – Investigation – Fiction. Arson – Fiction. Christian fiction.

Katie Singleton is a partner with Elite Guardians Protection Agency. When she sees police lights at the restaurant owned by the uncle of a student in her

self-defense class, she stops to see what is going on. The owner, Daniel Matthews, found a body hanging in his restaurant basement. Then one of his other restaurants is burned down. Someone is determined to put him out of business and his niece hires Katie to watch out for her uncle, but he does not think he needs the protection until his niece is put in danger too.

Katie and Daniel both have difficulties with their faith. Daniel is mad at God because of the death of his family members. Katie has family problems. Together they learn that God is still there for them even if they are not in communion with him.

The hero and heroine need to find out who is behind the murder and arson before he or she strikes again in this fast paced novel.—*Phyllis Wendorf*

A Basic Media List for Church Libraries:

An Annotated Bibliography

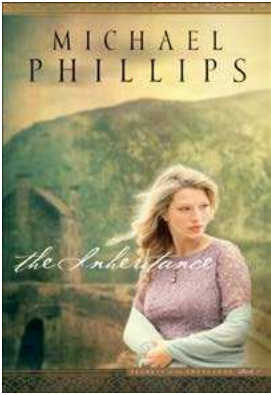
by **Ellen Bosman.**

(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.

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The Inheritance

Michael Phillips. Bethany House, 2016. 428p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9780764217487. bakerpublishinggroup.com/bethanyhouse FIC Inheritance and succession – Scotland – Shetland – Fiction. Shetland (Scotland) – Fiction. Christian fiction.

The Inheritance is the first volume in a new series, *Secrets of the Shetlands*. Only a master storyteller like Phillips could conceive and successfully

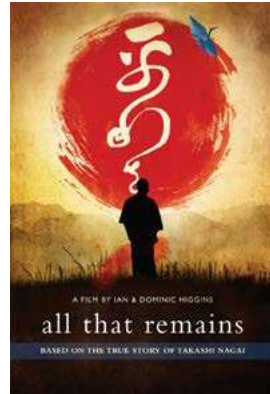
develop a cast of strong characters spanning generations and tightly unite past and present in a complicated plot.

Although “inheritance” in the title refers to money and property, it also refers to family heritage. Traditions in the Shetland Islands, in Whales Reef in this case, run deep and change is not easily accepted.

When McGregor Tulloch, landlord of Whales Reef, dies without leaving a will, troubles begin. It is assumed that his favorite grand-nephew, David, who holds the title of chief, will be the heir. However, another grand-nephew, not as well liked by the community, submits his claim.

While the court is investigating in order to settle the estate, another potential heir is discovered in America, a young, lapsed Quaker woman, Loni Ford. When Loni travels to Whales Reef, she has drifted from God, but is slowly brought back to him. Throughout the story, God’s hand is an underlying theme. —*Beverly Bixler*

MEDIA



All that Remains (DVD)

Ignatius Press, 2016. 120mins. \$20. DVD. ISBN: 9781621641407. www.ignatius.com 940.54252 Nagai, Takashi, 1908-1951. Nagasaki-shi (Japan) – History – Bombardment, 1945.

Takashi Nagai is a sickly, motherless young man who, in the 1930s, travels to Nagasaki to study radiology. There, he boards with a Catholic family, eventually converting to

Christianity. Over the years, he serves as a medic during the Japanese war against China, marries, and begins a

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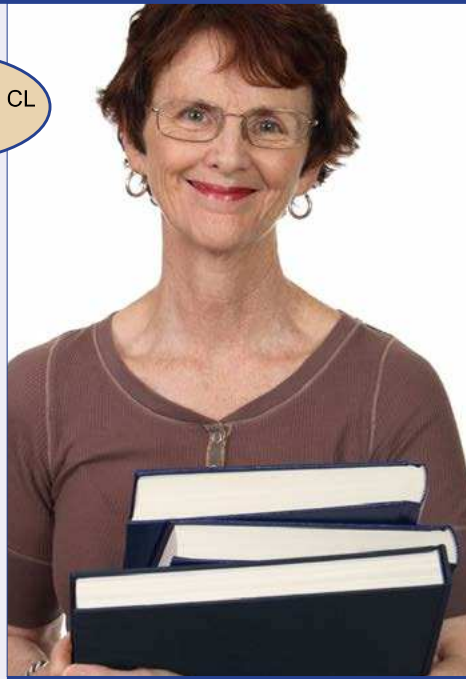


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family. As World War II rages, he works tirelessly and to the detriment of his health to treat patients. Faced with the horror of the atomic bomb and related personal loss, Dr. Nagai must choose between hatred and faith. His choice to preach forgiveness leads to a book which, in turn, leads to his world-wide recognition as a faith leader.

The film utilizes a variety of cinematic techniques, including documentary footage, still photographs, CGI and FX shots. The effects and story elicit a variety of emotional responses, but the horrors of the atomic bomb nearly obscure the story's faith elements. Special features include a documentary film about Nagai, an animated short titled *The 26 Martyrs of Nagasaki* and a brochure containing an interview with the filmmakers. Viewers with a strong interest in World War II and appreciation of the cinema will find this film appealing, as well as those who prefer a subtle message of faith in the face of hardship.—*Ellen Bosman*



A Blind Hero: The Love of Otto Weidt (DVD)

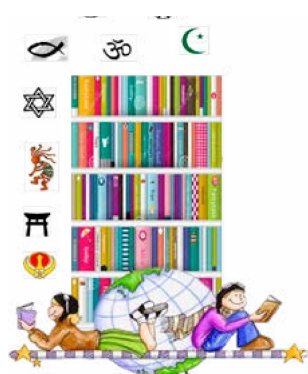
Seventh Art Releasing, (n.d.) 90mins. \$89, DVD. www.7thart.com/films BIO Weidt, Otto. World War, 1939-1945. Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945).

Germany circa 1943 is the setting for this German-language film captioned in English. This docudrama features archival footage and an interview with a Holocaust survivor to tell the

true story of Otto Weidt, a sight-impaired businessman who employs blind Jewish workers to make brushes and brooms.

Hounded by the Gestapo, Weidt resorts to bribery to prevent his workers from deportation, ultimately creating hiding places in his workshop and other locations. He never gives up and goes to great lengths to rescue one young lady. His efforts have mixed results,

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

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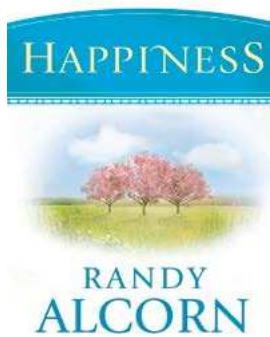
but he is remembered today as one of The Righteous among the Nations.

While the film lacks an overt religious tone, Weidt embodied the principle of loving one's neighbors and being one's brother's keeper. Purchase where there is demand for true stories of World War II and the Holocaust. Also available for audience screenings.—*Ellen Bosman*

FAITH AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Happiness

Randy Alcorn. Tyndale, 2015. 563p. \$25, paperback. ISBN: 9781414389349. www.tyndale.com 248.4. Happiness – Religious aspects – Christianity.

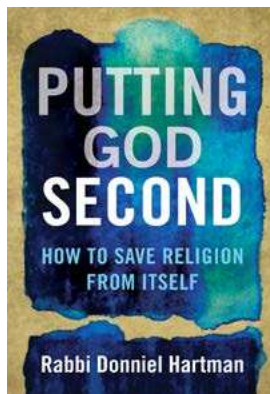


Christian readers looking for a definition of happiness and wanting to delve into its true meaning in relation to their spiritual lives may find that Randy Alcorn has accomplished this task. The book consists of

four major units: the meaning of happiness, happiness and God, the words for happiness found in the Bible, and how we can understand and experience happiness in God. Christian students of biblical theology will appreciate the painstaking documentation and multiple examples throughout the text, especially the detailed look at the use of semantics in the use of words such as happy, blessed, joy, etc., in different translations. Each of the 45 chapters contains subheadings set in bold to identify main points. Also interwoven in the book are Alcorn's personal stories and many current examples to which readers can relate. The two appendices consist of additional happiness words from both the Old and New Testament as seen in various biblical translations, and endnotes will allow for deeper study beyond the over 500 pages of this book. This book is recommended for Christians who wish to explore a deeper relationship with Christ on their faith journey. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

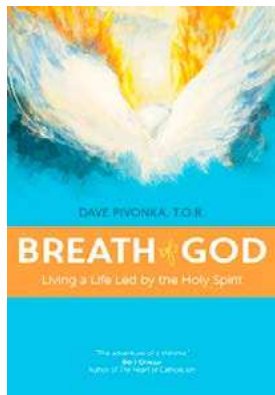
Putting God Second: How to Save Religion from Itself

Donniel Hartman. Beacon Press, 2016. 200p. \$25, hardcover. ISBN: 9780807053928. <http://www.beacon.org> 200.19 Psychology, Religious. Abrahamic religions. Apologetics. Judaism – Apologetic works. Islam – Apologetic works.



Hartman takes on a mammoth task: Why have the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam)

generated so many people spouting immoral ideas and fomenting violence, when the religions themselves profess to promulgate lofty ideals and value peace? Hartman identifies religion's "autoimmune disease" whereby faith traditions and their adherents undermine morality and their own values in two ways: "God intoxication" is the pious humility that renders people morally blind. "God-manipulation," the sense of having been chosen by God, fuels arrogant self-empowerment, leading people to see God as promoting only their agenda. The first is God-induced indifference to morality; the latter is pious indifference to morality. "The moral blindness induced by religious solipsism is the antithesis of a life of faith. A religious person may yearn to be chosen, but a humble spirit recognizes that chosenness means accepting a rigorous set of responsibilities, not receiving a surplus of entitlements." (p.169-170) Hartman argues for the primacy and autonomy of morality above all claims to revelation and interpretation of scripture, which he acknowledges to be the imperfect creation of human beings. The only true way to put God first, he argues, is by putting the welfare and needs of other people first because this is God's priority. This book is for everyone, religiously committed or not, regardless of faith tradition—it should be required reading.—Amy Scheinerman



Breath of God: Living a Life Led by the Holy Spirit

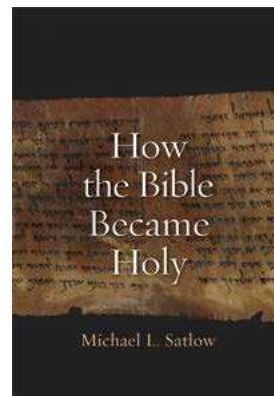
Dave Pivonka. Ave Maria, 2015. 145p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9781594715808. www.avemariapress.com 231'.3. Holy Spirit. Christian life—Catholic authors.

In *Breath of God*, Pivonka details the works of the Holy Spirit in scripture, in Christian history, and in theological texts. Pivonka draws attention to John 20:22. Unlike Acts 2 where the

Holy Spirit descended as roaring wind and tongues of

fire upon an amazed crowd gathered for Pentecost, John 20 describes a quiet event. Before Jesus departs from his apostles who have hidden themselves behind locked doors, he bestows the Spirit by simply breathing on them. The Holy Spirit can descend upon us as a simple breath. This is significant because it will make readers stop and realize that the Holy Spirit is always with them, speaking to them in the words spoken by people in our lives, in sermons, in books and in the silence of prayers. Even though the author wrote this book with a Roman Catholic audience in mind, it is approachable for any Trinitarian Christian and can be used by individual readers and small groups. Dave Pivonka's *Breath of God: Living a Life Led by the Holy Spirit* is a gift from God and may well prove significant in a reader's faith journey.—Carlos R. Fernandez

SACRED TEXTS



How the Bible Became Holy

Michael Satlow. Yale University Press, 2015. 368p. \$25, paperback. ISBN: 9780300171921. <http://yalebooks.com/220.1> Bible.

Satlow's long, flowing and academically dense narrative history of the Jewish and Christian Bibles, from the tenth century B.C.E. until the third century C.E., is punctuated with copious footnotes and capped with a 20-page bibliography of

the scholarship upon which he draws. His innovative and provocative thesis is that biblical texts came to have limited authority only in the third century C.E. Biblical texts began as literary projects of elite and secluded scribes and were acknowledged as having oracular and prophetic quality, but did not have normative value (he does not define normative) until later thanks to the influence of the Septuagint in the Hellenistic milieu of

THIS ISSUE'S REVIEWERS

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Zionsville Fellowship
Indianapolis Indiana

BEVERLY M. BIXLER

First Presbyterian Church
Ashland, Ohio

ELLEN BOSMAN

Mesilla Park Community Church
Las Cruces, New Mexico

LARRY CREIDER

St. Albert the Great Newman Center
Las Cruces, New Mexico

CAROLYN EGOLF

Lincolnshire Church of the Brethren
Fort Wayne, Indiana

CARLOS R. FERNÁNDEZ

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Trietsch Memorial UMC
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AMY SCHEINERMAN

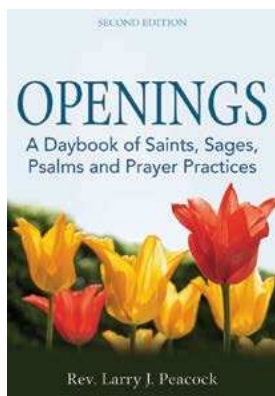
Jewish Hospice of Howard County,
Maryland
Columbia, Maryland

PHYLLIS WENDORF

Mentor United Methodist Church
Mentor, Ohio

revering national texts, and the Sadducees who granted authority to text over tradition in their conflicts with the Pharisees. Here, Satlow presents a novel explanation of the origins and nature of the Pharisees and Sadducees and their role in the development of biblical texts, identifies the Qumran sect as Sadducees, and views virtually all of the Bible as filled with “fantasy” passages that were never normative legal texts for the community until the Rabbis promoted them by “revaluing nearly every element.” Satlow’s book is fascinating but not entirely convincing.—*Amy Scheinerman*

PRAYER AND DEVOTIONS



Openings: A Daybook of Saints, Sages, Psalms and Prayer Practices. 2nd ed.

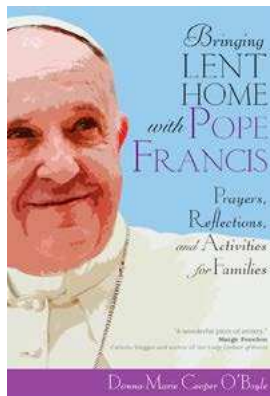
Larry J. Peacock. Skylight Paths, 2014. 419p. \$19, paperback. ISBN: 9781594735455. skylightpaths.com 242.2 Bible – Psalms. Christian saints. Devotional calendars.

Reverend Larry J. Peacock has compiled more than a simple book of devotions for the calendar year. He has also endeavored to compile, in his own words, “a personal companion for spiritual growth,” as well as “a resource for leading retreats, teaching prayer practices, opening meetings and crafting prayers.” The second edition also has added information about modern and ancient sages from inside and outside the Christian tradition. This user friendly volume is organized by the months of year, with each day carefully structured to include:

- A specific person or event to remember
 - A scripture passage to read
 - An insight to ponder
 - A prayer/practice to actively pursue
- Also included is a section at the end of the book with

information on how to use *Openings* for holidays and festivals, a list of suggested resources and sourcebooks on saints, sages, Psalms and prayer practices. Readers will also appreciate two indexes for efficient searching of specific topics.

Whether a reader seeks to establish a rule of life, wishes to deepen their spiritual walk or wants to move closer to God by reading his word and practicing prayer in new ways, Reverend Peacock provides a wealth of information, insight and inspiration. Recommended for pastors, lay leaders, Sunday school teachers and counselors.—*Roberta Ash*



Bringing Lent Home with Pope Francis: Prayers, Reflections, and Activities for Families

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle. Ave Maria Press, 2015. 1 v. (unpaged). \$3.50, paperback. ISBN: 9781594716171. www.ave mariapress.com. 242.34 Lent – Meditations. Francis, Pope, 1936-.

Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle has written a set of daily Lenten devotions for families based on the themes of the season as seen through the eyes of Pope Francis. Each day's devotion begins with a quotation from Pope Francis and is followed by sections titled Parent Reflection, Family Prayer, Story from Pope Francis's Life, Fasting, Almsgiving, and All through the Day. Traditional Lenten practices include prayer, fasting and almsgiving. These are interpreted in light of the Pope's teachings. The sections on fasting refer not only to fasting from food, but from bad habits or even from enjoyable activities such as technology. Suggestions for almsgiving are by no means limited to money. This is a very useful set of devotions that, with some adjustment, could also be used by groups or even individuals.—*Larry Creider*

Helping Those Who Hurt.

S. Meghan Harper. An annotated bibliography of print, non-print, and online resources divided into elementary and teen age groups. Designed for those working with children in congregational and pastoral care settings. Carefully selected for the potential of facilitating discussion between and among children and adults. \$12/\$14 + S&H.



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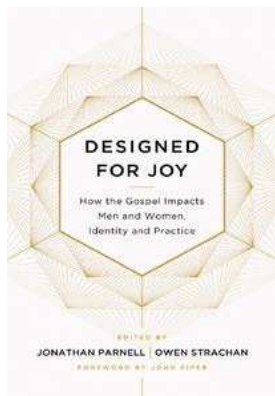
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GENDER IDENTITY



Designed for Joy: How the Gospel Impacts Men and Women, Identity and Practice

Jonathan Parnell and Owen Strachan, eds. Crossway, 2015. 144p. \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9781433549250 www.crossway.org 233.5 Sex role -- Biblical teaching. Sex role -- Religious aspects -- Christianity.

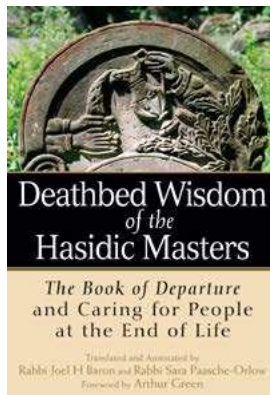
Designed for Joy is a beautiful title that attempts to affirm the truth that God knew what he was

doing when he created humanity. However, the subtitle, *How the Gospel Impacts Men and Women, Identity and Practice*, will clarify what is actually the intention of the fourteen men and women who contributed to this compilation. The forward by John Piper, Calvinist preacher and author, will immediately attract those who adhere to complementarianism. "Male and female he created them"(Genesis 1:27) is the scripture lynchpin the editors use to declare the biblical truth that we are made in the image of God, as well as address a topic that is polarizing our country. A second objective of this book is to help readers avoid gender stereotypes by rooting their identity in Jesus Christ. Thirteen chapters explore a variety of issues that all focus on the need we all have to know: what is our purpose, why do I have this body and what does it mean to be a man or a woman. Short biographies of the chapters' authors and a general index at the end of the book are helpful additions.

Readers must be cautioned that the chapters may be considered heavily focused on the role of men as husbands and fathers with a token offering to the role of women as wives and mothers. While the editors proclaim the gospel is bad news for gender stereotypes, there is scant biblical reference offered to support this simplistic supposition. Plus there is little material provided for the single or not-yet-married persons. Given that, this

book is perhaps best viewed as a beginning point for the individual who is seeking to know more about a biblical perspective of gender roles in today's culture or counterculture.—*Roberta Ash*

DEATH & DYING



Deathbed Wisdom of the Hasidic Masters

Joel H. Baron and Sara Paasche-Orlow. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2016. 240p. \$20, paperback. ISBN: 9781580238502. jewishlights.com 296.8/3320922 Rabbis. Hasidim. Rabbis – Death. Death – Religious aspects – Judaism.

Sefer ha-Histalkut, *The Book of Departure*, was written by Benjamin Mintz and first published in 1930. It

is a collection of stories concerning the final days and deaths of 42 Hasidic masters, from the Besh"t in the 18th century through the late 19th century. For Hasidim, death was a joyous event precipitating the ultimate union with God. Baron and Paasche-Orlow go far beyond translating Mintz's small tract. They annotate each entry with explanations of scriptural references, ritual explanations and interpretations of the emotional and religious resonances of the story. In addition, they provide an abundance of short essays on a wide variety of topics related to death and dying, from coping with dementia and depression, to meditation, liminality and unification. The book is filled with sensitivity and compassion, affording the reader comfort and guidance in considering what the end may be like either for a loved one or for oneself.—*Amy Scheinerman*

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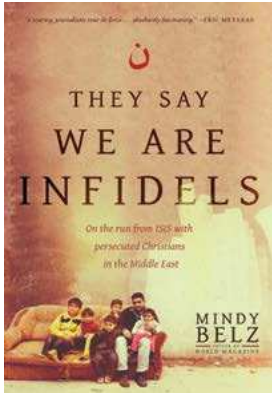


Organizing a Library or Resource Center: Creating a Policy and Procedure Manual.

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+ postage.

CSLA GUIDE

CURRENT EVENTS



They Say We Are Infidels: On the Run from ISIS with Persecuted Christians in the Middle East

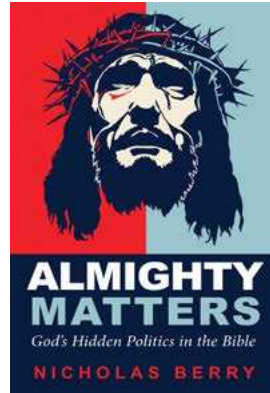
Mindy Belz. Tyndale, 2016. \$16, paperback. ISBN: 9781496411488 www.tyndale.com 956.91042 Persecution -- Iraq. Persecution -- Syria. Middle East -- History -- 21st century. IS (Organization). Christians -- Iraq. Christians -- Syria. Islamic fundamentalism.

In our country we take for granted our right to believe and worship in whatever way we choose. This is not the case in many places throughout the world. One such place is Iraq.

The author traveled to Iraq and Syria many times between 2003 and 2014. She saw how, in the beginning, there was hope and how Christians and Muslims lived together in peace. As the different radical groups took over, Iraqi Christians were targeted. They were told to either become Muslim, pay a high fee or leave. Soon Christians were being killed and women raped. Now ISIS continues killing Christians.

This book reveals what is really is going on, not just what we see on the news, how Christians are trying to help those in Iraq and Syria and how the people living there are coping. It also talks about the United States' part, or lack thereof, in what is going on in the Middle East.—*Phyllis Wendorf*

POLITICS



Almighty Matters: God's Hidden Politics in the Bible

Nicholas Berry. Resource Publications, 2015. 135p. paperback, \$21. ISBN: 9781498234214. wipfandstock.com 261.7 Politics in the Bible.

A professor of political science, Nicholas Berry, explores the Bible at the juncture of religion and politics. The author argues the Bible is a template for politics, therefore the Hebrew and Christian Bibles are

politically connected. Berry describes a hidden political progression between the Hebrew Bible and Christianity. He views conquests by Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans unconnected to sin, as Jews were defeated due to their incompetent diplomacy and reliance on the military and other social factors. Berry views Christianity as a political-religious movement, his theory based on the premise that the Apocalypse has not happened.

Berry presents theories such as 1) God erred in choosing the Jews, and 2) Jesus rejected Judaism. In the Hebrew Bible, humans create a political state, assigned by God, where there is no separation of religion (church) and government (state). Berry reviews the creation of free will, noting that if God did everything by himself, it would diminish his power.

Written from a political perspective, most of Berry's commentary is based upon an earlier English version (RSV) of the Bible and not the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek texts. While it would have improved the text if Berry had collaborated with a theologian or linguist, he presents thought-provoking essays on the intersection of politics and religion.—*Ralph Hartsock*



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MINISTRY



Rebuilding Your Message: Practical Tools to Strengthen Your Preaching and Teaching

Michael White and Tom Corcoran. Ave Maria, 2015. 214p. \$16, paperback. ISBN: 9781594715792. www.avemariapress.com
251 Communication – Religious aspects – Christianity. Communication – Religious aspects – Catholic Church. Preaching.

If the message is being rebuilt, what is the message? “God is the message” and preachers and teachers should “never get over the privilege” of presenting it. Having written *Rebuilt* and *Tools for Rebuilding*, White and Corcoran continue the theme, focusing on communication, with the introduction emphasizing the power of words and impact of communication.

Though written from a Catholic perspective with preachers and teachers as the primary audience, the 89 axioms or “tools” for preparing and presenting material could be applied in multiple faith settings.

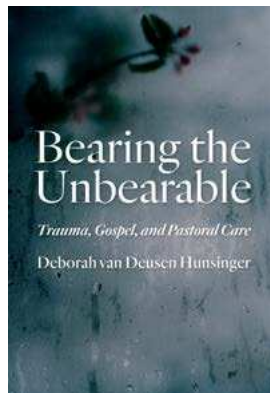
Divided into four parts, material focuses on role, context, delivery and outcomes. Each unit opens with a scripture verse, develops the axiom and includes specific “tools” for application. Each concludes with a summary paragraph of a biblical example or motivational thought.

The honesty and humor with which examples of personal and parish life are shared keeps one reading and gives a realistic and light-hearted feel to serious

matters. Biblical examples are linked to today’s issues, such as technology, cultural changes and congregational expectations.

Highly recommended for church libraries, particularly in Catholic parishes and schools, as well as persons who preach, teach or present materials in religious settings.

—Carolyn Egolf



Bearing the Unbearable: Trauma, Gospel, and Pastoral Care

Deborah van Deusen Hunsinger. Eerdmans, 2015. 176p. \$20, paperback. ISBN: 9780802871039 www.eerdmans.com
253.5`2 Pastoral psychology. Psychology, religious. Pastoral theology.

“How long, O Lord, how long?” cry those bearing the unbearable, and Hunsinger’s text

offers much for the journey.

The seven chapters focus on love, forgiveness, an open heart, prayers of lament, koinonia (life together) and the restorative church. Material is centered in Christ, and significant quotes, as well as references to Scripture, are frequent.

Compassion fatigue is addressed, as are non-violent communication and restorative practices, the latter an emerging method for dealing with conflict, particularly church-wide trauma. “Prayers of Lament” deserves attention as it references lament psalms and Job’s experiences, where transition from anguish to acceptance happens.

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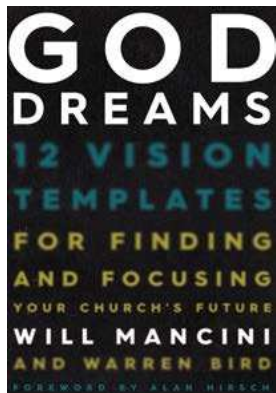
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Ample footnotes, appendices and detailed index enhance the text, which is scholarly, yet personal. Reading level requires concentration and time. If, as Nicholas Wolterstorff suggests, “The valley of suffering is the vale of soul-making,” this text is recommended for pastors, chaplains and others who support, encourage and guide those in that valley.—*Carolyn Eglolf*



God Dreams: 12 Vision Templates for Finding and Focusing your Church's Future

Will Mancini and Warren Bird. B & H Publishing Group, 2016. 262p. \$20, hardcover. ISBN: 9781433688454. www.bhpublishinggroup.com 253 Christian leadership. Goal (Psychology) – Religious aspects – Christianity.

“Where there is no vision the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18.) Vision is the theme, and authors suggest that without it congregations flounder and “. . . leadership doesn’t matter.” Vision is linked to “vision planning” and because God dreams, as the title suggests, so should we.

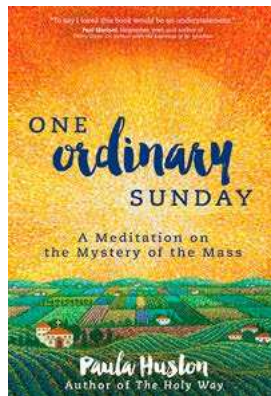
Eighteen chapters are divided into six parts, with part III providing 12 vision templates centered on the themes “Advance,” “Rescue,” “Become” and “Overflow.” Vision gets real as each unit includes definitions, personal reflections, biblical references, and historical and contemporary examples. Exercises focused on a specific vision can be evaluated for potential use in a congregation.

Scripture, quotes, diagrams, personal experiences and sidebars, plus three appendices make this a

content-rich, yet practical text, though for some it may seem too much. While some ideas could apply in the business world as well as the church, benefits would be greatest in mid-to-large size congregations with more than one pastor, a team willing to study the text, and a congregation ready to think, risk, and move intentionally into the future.

Recommended for pastors, church leaders and college and seminary libraries.—*Carolyn Eglolf*

WORSHIP SERVICES



One Ordinary Sunday: a Meditation on the Mystery of the Mass

Paula Huston. Ave Maria Press, 2016. 232p, \$15, paperback. ISBN: 9781594715952. www.avemariapress.com. 264.02036 Mass – Celebration.

This book about “a real mass on a real Sunday in a real parish” written by a laywoman is a gem. Following the order of the mass,

the author describes each major part in turn with its history and importance, weaving these in with stories of her local parishioners and her own life of faith. She speaks of her personal reflections on the mass as it progresses and writes about her own struggles as well as her deep faith in the Eucharist. The result is a very real book that shows how the universal Church is expressed in a very specific body of believers in a very specific time and place. Recommended for both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.—*Larry Creider*



Cataloging and Classification for the 21st Century

Scott M. Dutkiewicz and Susan E. Snyder (2016). All the steps from physical processing to encouraging catalog use to creating bibliographic records and determining classification. \$12/\$14 + S&H.

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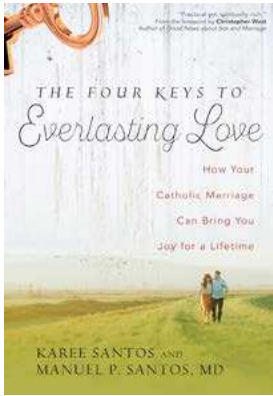


Disaster Management Planning for Small Libraries

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

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MARRIAGE

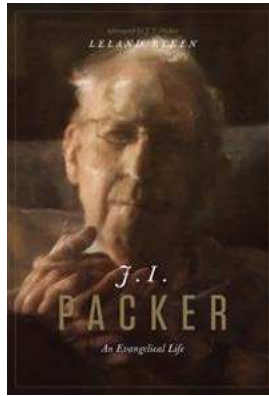


The Four Keys to Everlasting Love: How your Catholic Marriage can Bring You Joy for a Lifetime

Karee Santos and Manuel P. Santos. Ave Maria Press, 2016. 234p, \$16, paperback. ISBN: 9781594716034. www.avemariapress.com. 248.8/44088282 Marriage – Religious aspects – Catholic Church. Catholic Church – Doctrines.

Based on the theology of marriage of St. John Paul II, the authors describe how to develop a marriage that is called to be faithful and forgiving, to be free, to be fruitful and called to love totally and forever. The book covers the author’s experiences with subjects such as in-law relationships, time, raising children, natural family planning, stewardship and the role of work and wealth, blending cultures in a marriage, etc. In each chapter, one or more stories from the authors’ experience with Pre-Cana (marriage preparation) classes are discussed along with the psychiatrist husband’s diagnosis, reflection questions and relevant Scripture. The book is designed to be used with a group, as is evidenced by the “Conversation Starters” and “Action Plan” at the end of each chapter. The suggestions and explanations are gently but firmly in accord with official Catholic teaching so the book is probably best for conservative Catholics. —Larry Creider

BIOGRAPHY



J.I. Packer: An Evangelical Life

Leland Ryken; afterword by J.I. Packer. Crossway, 2015. 431p. \$30, hardcover. ISBN: 9781433542534. www.crossway.org 283.092 (or BIO) Packer, J. I. (James Innell) Church of England -- Biography. Evangelicalism – Church of England – Biography.

J.I. Packer has been one of the most prominent Anglican evangelicals since the 1960’s. This is the second biography

in two decades. The first, by Alister McGrath, was published in 1997. The item under review is by an emeritus professor of English at Wheaton College. The emphasis in this biography is on “Packer the man,” but that inevitably includes his publications and controversies. Part One, The Life, is a section on his early life, his education for ministry, his professional life in England (1955-1979) and his professional life in North America. This is followed by a relatively brief Part Two, The Man, and bookended by a section as long as the first, titled Lifelong Themes. The book is completed by “Sources” and an index. Because a great deal of Packer’s career involved public stances and controversies, the reader will be helped by some advanced knowledge of the history of British and American evangelicalism. To his credit, the author does a very clear job of explaining topics such as the Keswick movement and tensions between ecumenical and fundamentalist trends. Judging from the notes, more detail on these issues is probably available in McGrath’s biography. What comes through most strongly in Ryken’s book are Packer’s commitment to the inclusive side of evangelicalism, rather than its emphasis on purity, his love of the Puritans and his commitment to the pastoral uses of the past.—Larry Creider



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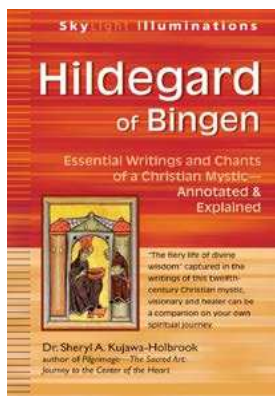
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CSLA Promotional Kit [for public libraries]. The kit, delivered in a pamphlet shelf file box, may either be displayed as a set or shelved as individual items. The kit contains six CSLA guides: Cataloging and Classification, Developing An Effective 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

SAINTS



Hildegard of Bingen: Essential Writings and Chants of a Christian Mystic, Annotated & Explained

Hildegard of Bingen; Translation & annotation by Sheryl A. Kujawa-Holbrook. Skylight Paths, 2016. 186p. \$17, paperback. ISBN: 9781594735141. <http://www.skylightpaths.com> 248.2/2 Mysticism – Catholic Church – Early works to 1800. Spiritual life – Catholic Church – Early Works to 1800.

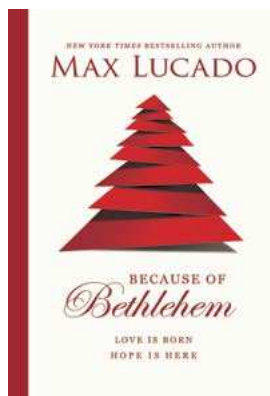
The title says it all, or almost all. After a lengthy and balanced introduction to Hildegard and what might be called the modern appropriation of Hildegard, the translator has compiled sets of excerpts ranging from half a page to four pages on major themes and metaphors in Hildegard's works. Sometimes the excerpt records a vision and sometimes it is in another genre, such as a letter or play. There are sections on her prophetic calling, divine love, her community, "noble greenness" (viriditas), God's creation, celestial harmony, healing and women's health and a section of correspondence to important people in the secular world, such as Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. The author does not shy away from dealing with controversial topics, such as Hildegard's clear class prejudices, traditional views on the role of married women, her complete doctrinal orthodoxy, and a very close relationship with one of her monks, not to mention Hildegard's amazing self-confidence as a prophet. Each selection is faced with annotations and explanations setting the reading in context. This is not a devotional book, nor a detailed account of Hildegard's mysticism, but it is a thoughtful and rather balanced introduction to one of the most compelling figures of the medieval times. Two criticisms: the excerpts are too short, and the discussion of her music includes texts and comments but no actual music. One can find lists of recordings in the discography and in the list of Internet resources.—*Larry Creider*

Resources Manual for Congregational Libraries

Annotated bibliography by Ellen Bosman. A new approach to resources for congregational libraries. Divided into two major sections: "Tools for librarians" and "Enrichment resources for library patrons." 50 pages \$14/\$16 + S&H

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CHRISTMAS

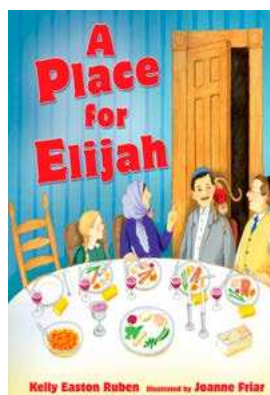


Because Of Bethlehem: Love is Born, Hope is Here

Max Lucado. Thomas Nelson, 2016. 208p. \$20, hardcover. ISBN: 9780849947599. www.thomasnelson.com 232.92 Christmas – Prayers and devotions. Advent – Prayers and devotions. Jesus Christ – Nativity.

Sometimes the seasons of Advent and Christmas become overwhelming with the many preparations—decorating homes, buying gifts, attending parties and much more. Instead of focusing on the secular trappings of the season, Max Lucado offers the perfect guide to help Christians focus on the true meaning of this important time of the year as they concentrate on their relationship with Christ and how to put their faith into practice. With reverence and humor, he uses his own personal experiences to bring readers a fresh perspective in the twelve chapters. The Advent devotional guide for four weeks is perfect for groups or individual study. This is truly a powerful book that lives up to its subtitle of "love is born, hope is here" as Christians prepare their hearts and minds to be true followers of Christ in word and action.—*Mary Lou Henneman*

CHILDREN

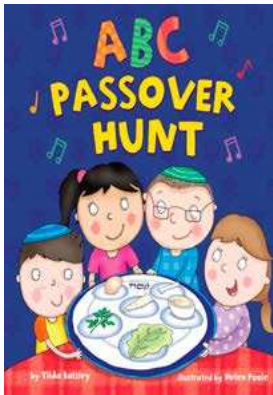


A Place for Elijah

Kelly Easton Ruben. Illustrated by Joanne Friar. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2016. 32p. \$18, hardcover. ISBN: 9781467778411. Available as an e-book. www.karben.com E Passover – Juvenile fiction. Elijah (Biblical prophet) – Juvenile fiction.

It is the first night of Passover and, as is traditional, Sarah's family prepares an extra place setting and wine cup for Elijah the prophet. The door is left open so Elijah can come in, but it is a cold spring evening and the weather seems threatening. A short time later, the lights across the street go out affecting the stores and apartments in the area. Mrs. Faaiz, the florist, knocks on the door because she has lost power in her store. Room is made for her at the table and accommodations are made for other neighbors and storeowners who come due to the power outage. Sarah worries that there won't be room at the table for Elijah but an unexpected Elijah enters at the end.

The parts of the Seder ritual and meal are described in this family-friendly story. The illustrations are colorful, clean and carefully drawn. An author's endnote explains opening the door for Elijah, a popular holiday custom. Ruben's tale also emphasizes diversity as well as welcoming the stranger. Recommended.—*Evelyn Pockrass*



ABC Passover Hunt

Tilda Balsley. Illustrated by Helen Poole. Kar-Ben Publishing, 2016. 32p. \$18, hardcover. ISBN: 9781467778435. Available as an e-book. www.karben.com 296.437 Passover – Juvenile literature. English language – Alphabet – Juvenile literature. Alphabet books. Picture books.

Similar to the format they used for *ABC Hanukkah Hunt*, Tilda Balsley and Helen Poole have teamed again to create an interactive holiday experience

for children ages 3-8 years.

Emphasizing a word for each letter of the English alphabet, two line rhymes pose a question or challenge with an answer or solution to be found in the full page illustration. Younger children will need help with appropriate responses, but this is an enjoyable way to learn. An example can be found in a paraphrase of a question about Moses: “Baby Moses safe afloat, on the Nile what was his boat?” Illustrations for this inquiry include a rubber ducky, a tube, a leaf, a carton, a boat and a basket. On the “E” page, the geography of the Mideast is displayed in a rhyme about Egypt where you have to identify the country on a colorful map.

An illustrated answer key is provided on the last page along with brief information about Passover. Recommended for children as an introduction to the historical and ritual aspects of the holiday.—*Evelyn Pockrass*



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CSLA GUIDE



BY RALPH HARTSOCK
Second Vice President,
Membership
Ralph.Hartsock@unt.edu

Here's how you can keep in touch with CSLA— and learn more about how we can help you

Welcome to CSLA. This marks the 50th year of the organization. The CSLA Board, which can always use more help, is planning a celebration conference. That conference will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in beautiful Rochester, New York, July 16-18, 2017.

Your membership ensures that you can receive the quarterly journal *Congregational Libraries Today*. It is filled with articles related to issues facing church and synagogue libraries, reviews of books and media, and a current selection of resources produced by CSLA to help congregational librarians.

We also encourage members to keep up to date with the CSLA website cslainfo.org.



Our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/cslainfo/>) allows anyone to know of future conference events, books and other material of interest, and association activities. We encourage all

to join the Facebook page and to comment on various posts.

Twitter is available on the website, or at <https://twitter.com/CSLANotes>.



Scroll to the icons at the bottom of the CSLA homepage to find the Twitter and Facebook links, or click the icons here.

Perhaps you have encountered situations that may be helpful to other congregational librarians. If any of you have a story of your library to tell, please forward it, with photographs, to Ralph.Hartsock@unt.edu. We would love to post these stories on Facebook.

We look forward to your continued membership in CSLA. Our goal at the Board is to increase membership this year by five percent.

Renewal is available online or by traditional postal letter with check. A form is on the next page.

CSLA Membership Renewal

Membership Renewal Form for January 1, 2017—December 31, 2017

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.

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Membership, anniversary, and photos



I wish each one of you a wonderful and blessed holiday season.

Have you renewed your membership for 2017? We look forward to getting your renewal and hope that you will help us celebrate our 50 years serving librarians of all faiths.

A fantastic 50th anniversary conference is in the works. We hope to have a huge group to celebrate with and to help us plan for the next 50 years of service to librarians around the world.

If you have photos of past conferences, we would love to have a copy of them for the 50 years of service booklet that is in the works. Be sure to identify everyone in the photos that you send us.

Have you ever considered being a part of the CSLA Board? We need lots of volunteers to fill board jobs, and the more that volunteer the easier each position becomes. Getting “on board” now gives you the opportunity to be a part of planning the next 50 years of our organization.

Stay warm and we will see you next year as CSLA celebrates its golden anniversary.—Judy

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Become a CLT reviewer



Every quarter, *Congregational Libraries Today*, the journal of the Church and Synagogue Library Association, provides readers with 30-40 book and media reviews. We rely on a small, dedicated cadre of reviewers to contribute to this endeavor. We are looking to expand our roster of reviewers.

The process is easy. Lists of available titles are sent to reviewers who choose which titles they would like to receive. Readers may also receive books automatically based on their subject interest. Readers prepare reviews averaging 100-250 words and send the reviews to the editor via email or the post.

On average there are 30 items awaiting review so there is plenty of opportunity.

There is great satisfaction in helping others discover valuable new items for their collections. An additional bonus is that the reviewer gets to keep the book or DVD that has been reviewed.

If you are interested in contributing to the CLT, please contact Ellen Bosman at ebosman@nmsu.edu, or via mail to:

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