



United
Women
in Faith

2023

Reading Program

Programa De Lectura

독서 프로그램



Dear Readers,

When I was a little girl, permission to walk somewhere by myself marked a huge, longed-for milestone. It meant independence. It meant the chance to explore the world. The first place I was allowed to visit alone? The local public library.

A grey stone building at the corner of a sleepy intersection, the library proved itself to be a magical place: safe enough for a young girl on her own, yet containing the promise of almost-infinite possibility. The towering fiction shelves held the weight of an endless parade of complex and vivid characters inside thrilling stories. The rows upon rows of nonfiction were best navigated through a mystifying set of tiny paper cards in long wooden boxes. Carefully penciled call numbers led me to books that helped answer my many newly emerging questions about the world and myself. Meanwhile, a randomly pulled hardcover from here and there invited me beyond the bounds of the questions I'd thought to ask, introducing me to new information and ideas that showed me how wide and wonderful the world really was. Inside the library doors, my then-shy childhood self found a vast world to wander safely at her leisure.

Thirty years later, I have added other means of exploration to my repertoire, and now I take my own toddler to the public library whenever I can, because the world of books wows me still. I have known the wonderful sensation of a writer articulating something I've always felt somewhere in my spirit, but had never been able to name before seeing it on the page. I have found, too, an invitation into deep engagement with perspectives and experiences far different from my own, challenging my assumptions about other people, and giving me not just new information but new insight. Both of these reading experiences can be a great gift, vitally needed in times such as these. This is the power of the Reading Program.

As you engage with this year's reading list, I invite you to open your mind and your heart to experiences of both profound resonance and deep difference. Learn from our authors. Stop and wonder, lingering with perspectives and experiences outside your usual go-to list. Pause and journal on what moves your soul. Read the books that seem right up your alley – and perhaps one or two that are beyond your comfort zone. Are you a regular reader of adult nonfiction? Add a YA novel to your list and see what you make of it. Are you all-in for social action? Try a bit of spiritual growth, as well. If you want to go deeper, read together, sharing this book list with a family member, friend, or colleague. You may create a formal book group or it may be something more casual – whatever works for you. Consider intergenerational options. Children and youth love the wonder of reading, and the Reading Program is proud to feature a selection of books curated for all ages. Please consider sharing some of the enclosed book selections with children and youth in your life and then talk together about what you read. Adults, youth, and children can all benefit from the experience.

Finally, as you join the Reading Program journey this year, know that we are praying for you along the way. May this Reading Program nourish your soul, strengthen your understanding, and equip each of you for the work the Spirit has placed in your heart.

Peace and blessings,

Emily A. Jones

Emily Jones
Executive for Racial Justice



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OVERVIEW

The Reading Program is a cherished United Women in Faith tradition that brings together members in mission as they explore, share, and discuss the written word.

To participate, select one of the four plans on page 4—and start reading! From captivating mysteries and heartfelt biographies to urgent messages about issues like immigration, racism, and mental healthcare, there's something for everyone.

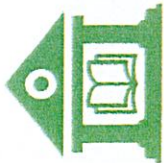
Reading Program books are divided into five categories: **Education for Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, Social Action, and Spiritual Growth.** Books are available for people of all ages and reading levels. Books that are suitable for children or youth will be listed among the five categories; look for “Suitable for children” or “Suitable for youth” following book descriptions. As you read, track your progress using the reporting form on page 26. When you complete a plan, you will be acknowledged with a Certificate of Recognition, available on page 28.

Earning your Certificate of Recognition is just one way to show what you've gained from the Reading Program. The Reading Program is not meant to be completed alone, even when social distancing. As you read, consider taking one or more of the following actions:

Take Action

- **Promote the Reading Program.** Share the program with United Women in Faith members and members of the community on LISTSERVs, online message boards, or on social media. Help people obtain books and distribute this guide.
- **Connect with local and district groups.** Start a virtual book club over Zoom, Google Hangouts, or another videoconferencing platform. Download books and present book reviews at virtual meetings, share a spreadsheet tracking progress (through Google Docs, for example), and post information in online groups.
- **Pray.** Books often raise concerns about people, countries, and issues. Bring these concerns to God during your prayer time.
- **Advocate for tangible change.** Many Reading Program books address important social issues. And many address racism.
- If you're not able to engage in demonstrations or other in-person activities, organize a remote task force to discuss ways to impact your community virtually.

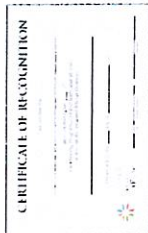
FOR YOUR INFORMATION



Where to get books: We encourage you to get books at your public library, from your favorite local bookstore or through an online retailer. United Women in Faith does not stock nor sell most of the books directly.



Audio access: You are always welcome to use audiobooks, if that's an easier way for you to access the material.



Reporting and recognition: Recognition of Reading Program participation is handled at the district and/or conference level of United Women in Faith. Please reach out to your district/conference leadership team for the relevant details about where and when to submit your reporting form in order to receive recognition for completing one of the reading plans.



Eligible years: For 2023, books from the 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021-2022, and 2023 Reading Program lists are all eligible for Reading Program reporting credit, if you have not previously read them.



Bonus Books: Bonus Books are credited towards the reading plan as the equivalent of two books.

See Bonus Book section starting on page 22.

Note: For the Spiritual Growth Bonus Books, you must participate in or lead one of the studies in order to receive Reading Program credit. You may attend or lead the 8-part Mission u study either in a conference/district Mission u context or in your own local context (church, unit, otherwise) to receive Bonus Book credit. If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only one credit.



Faith Talks: You can also receive Reading Program credit for listening to the *Faith Talks* podcast. Listening to at least two episodes of *Faith Talks* counts as the equivalent of one book in the spiritual growth category.



Movies: Several movies are also available for Reading Program credit, including:

Hidden Figures *Pushout* *The Hate U Give*

In determining the category for credit, identify the category of the original book and apply credit for the film to the same category.



Book recommendations: If you would like to suggest a book for consideration for a future Reading Program catalog, you can do so using the Reading Program page of uwfaith.org



Reading Enthusiasts group: We invite you to join us for a virtual chat group about books we love on the Mighty Networks platform.

For people who are new to Mighty Networks:
<https://bit.ly/reading-enthusiasts>

For people who are already on Mighty Networks:
<https://bit.ly/reading-enthusiasts-MIN>

READING PROGRAM PLANS



Eligible years: For 2023, books from the 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021-2022 and 2023 Reading Program lists are all eligible for Reading Program reporting credit, if you have not previously read them.

PLAN I

- 5 books each year.
- 1 book from each category.
- Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports.
- Regular reading of **response** magazine.

PLAN II

- 10 books each year.
- 2 books from each category.
- Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports.
- Regular reading of **response** magazine.

PLAN III

- 15 books each year.
- 2 books from each category.
- PLUS 5 additional books from any category.
- Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports.
- Regular reading of **response** magazine.

PLAN IV

- 20 books each year.
- 2 books from each category.
- PLUS 10 additional books from any category.
- Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports.
- Regular reading of **response** magazine.

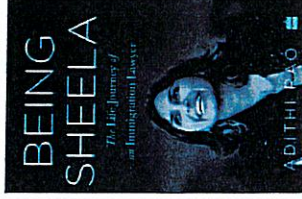
Books can be purchased directly from the retailer of your choice or borrowed from your local public library.

For books on previous reading lists, go to:

uwfaith.org/resources/2022-reading-program/



EDUCATION FOR MISSION



**BEING SHEELA:
THE LIFE JOURNEY OF AN IMMIGRATION LAWYER**
ADITHI RAO
HARPERCOLLINS INDIA (2020)

A young mother separated from her children for eight long years; a man facing deportation after being mistaken for a terrorist; a woman forced to endure domestic violence so she can retain her right to remain in her adopted country—these are just a few of the thousands immigration lawyer Sheela Murthy has helped in her long career as a philanthropist. From her birth in India through law school at Harvard and starting one of the world's most successful immigration law firms, Adithi Rao explores the journey of a woman driven to help others overcome injustice, dispossession, and legal tangles so they may live a life of dignity in an increasingly challenging world.



THE BOOK WOMAN OF TROUBLESOME CREEK
- NOVEL
KIM MICHELE RICHARDSON
SOURCEBOOKS LANDMARK (2019)
Inspired by the true blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s, this bestselling historical novel follows packhorse librarian Cussy Mary Carter and her quest to bring books to Troublesome Creek. The last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else, Cussy has to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachias and suspicion as deep as the hollow to bring the joy of books to the hill folks. *The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek* is a story of raw courage, fierce strength, and one woman's belief that books can carry us anywhere—even back home.



HOW FAR DO YOU LOVE ME?
LULU DELACRE
LEE & LOW BOOKS (2021)

This unique bedtime book by award-winning author-illustrator Lulu Delacre features a game that highlights the universal love between caregivers and children while taking readers on a journey across the seven continents of earth. Based on a bedtime game Delacre played with her young daughters, is an I love you book with a twist. With every expression of love, readers visit a different location around the world, each a beautifully illustrated scene of caregivers and children in a place of natural beauty.

Suitable for children.

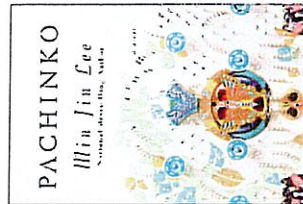


EDUCATION FOR MISSION



"I AM A MAN"
CHIEF STANDING BEAR'S JOURNEY FOR JUSTICE
JOE STARITA
ST. MARTIN'S GRIFFIN (2010)

In 1877, Chief Standing Bear's Ponca Indian tribe was forcibly removed from their Nebraska homeland and marched to Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), in what became the tribe's own Trail of Tears. *"I Am a Man"* chronicles what happened when Standing Bear set off on a 600-mile walk to return the body of his only son to their traditional burial ground. Along the way, it examines the complex relationship between the United States government and the small, peaceful tribe and the legal consequences of land swaps and broken treaties, while never losing sight of the heartbreaking journey the Ponca endured. It also explores fundamental issues of citizenship, constitutional protection, cultural identity, and democracy—issues that continue to resonate loudly today.



PACHINKO – NOVEL
MIN JIN LEE
GRAND CENTRAL PUBLISHING (2017)

Among *New York Times* Top Ten Books of the Year and National Book Award finalist, this novel details the four generations of an immigrant family as they fight to control their destiny in 20th-century Japan. When teenage Sunja discovers she is pregnant—and her lover is married—she accepts an offer of marriage from a gentle, sickly minister passing through Korea on his way to Japan. But her decision sets off a dramatic saga that echoes through the generations. From bustling street markets to the halls of Japan's finest universities to the pachinko parlors of the criminal underworld, Lee's complex and passionate characters survive and thrive against the indifferent arc of history.



PHOEBE: A STORY – NOVEL
PAULA GOODER
INTERVARSITY PRESS (2018)

When the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome around 56 AD, he entrusted his letter to Phoebe, the deacon of the church at Cenchreae. But who was this remarkable woman? In her debut novel, biblical scholar Paula Gooder tells Phoebe's story—who she was, the life she lived, and her first-century faith—and in doing so opens up Paul's theology, giving a sense of the cultural and historical pressures that shaped Paul's thinking, and the faith of the early church.

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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



EDUCATION FOR MISSION



STAMPED (FOR KIDS): RACISM, ANTIRACISM, AND YOU
JASON REYNOLDS AND IBRAM X. KENDI
LITTLE, BROWN BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS (2021)

Adapted from the award-winning, bestselling *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You*, this book takes young readers on a journey from present to past and back again. Kids will discover where racist ideas came from, identify how they impact America today, and meet those who have fought racism with antiracism. Along the way, they'll learn how to identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their own lives—and learn that talking about race is one of the most important things to learn how to do. Ibram X. Kendi's research, Jason Reynolds' and Sonja Cherry-Paul's writing, and Rachelle Baker's art come together in this vital read.

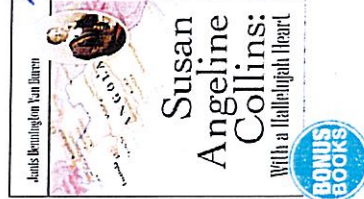
Suitable for youth.



SUPER CILANTRO GIRL / LA SUPERPIÑA DEL CILANTRO
JUAN FELIPE HERRERA AND ILLUSTRATED BY HONORIO ROBLEDOTAPIA
LEE & LOW BOOKS (2022)

Authored by former U.S. poet laureate Juan Felipe Herrera, this empowering story centers on a young girl who uses her superpowers to rescue her mamá from the United States-Mexico border. Young Esmeralda Sinfronteras eagerly waits for her mamá to come home from Mexico so the two of them can be together again. But when Esmeralda learns that her mother is being kept at the United States-Mexico border, she decides to use her newfound powers to save Mamá herself. In a daring rescue, Esmeralda—now known as Super Cilantro Girl—finds her mother, evades the border patrol, and successfully reunites her family.

Suitable for children.



SUSAN ANGELINE COLLINS: WITH A HALLELUJAH HEART
JANIS BENNINGTON VAN BUREN
WESTBOW PRESS (2021)

Years before Mary Jane McLeod Bethune started her school for girls in Florida, one Midwestern woman was steadily doing her part for girls in the northern Angolan high plateau. For more than three decades, African American missionary Susan Angelina Collins made a tremendous difference in the lives of countless African women and children, some orphaned and homeless and others escaping early marriage and subservience. Authored by retired professor Janis Bennington Van Buren, this book explores the remarkable service-oriented life of Collins from her 1851 birth in Illinois until her 1940 death in Iowa. Collins overcame economic, education, gender, race, religious, and other obstacles surrounding Africa's colonization to serve as a stalwart missionary, leader, teacher, nurse, construction manager, and surrogate mother to "her girls."

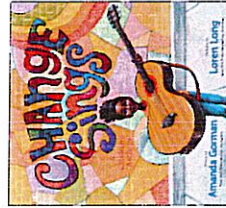
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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



ALL WE CAN SAVE: TRUTH, COURAGE, AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS
AYANA ELIZABETH JOHNSON AND KATHERINE K. WILKINSON
ONE WORLD (2022)

Named one of the best books of the year by *Smithsonian* magazine, *All We Can Save* illuminates the expertise and insights of dozens of diverse women leading on climate in the United States—scientists, journalists, farmers, lawyers, teachers, activists, innovators, wonks, and designers, across generations, geographies, and race—and aims to advance a more representative, nuanced, and solution-oriented public conversation on the climate crisis. These women offer a spectrum of ideas and insights for how we can rapidly, radically reshape society. Intermixing essays with poetry and art, this book is both a balm and a guide for knowing and holding what has been done to the world, while bolstering our resolve never to give up on one another or our collective future.



CHANGE SINGS: A CHILDREN'S ANTHEM
AMANDA GORMAN AND ILLUSTRATED BY LOREN LONG
VIKING BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS (2021)

In this stirring, much-anticipated picture book by presidential inaugural poet and activist Amanda Gorman, anything is possible when our voices join together. As a young girl leads a cast of characters on a musical journey, they learn that they have the power to make changes—big or small—in the world, in their communities, and, most importantly, in themselves. *Change Sings* is a triumphant call to action for everyone to use their abilities to make a difference.

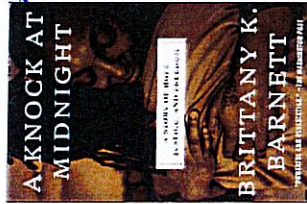
Suitable for children; will be released in Spanish in Fall 2022.



IDA B. THE QUEEN: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE AND LEGACY OF IDA B. WELLS
MICHELLE DUSTER
ATRIAWONE SIGNAL PUBLISHERS (2021)

Journalist, suffragist, antilynching crusader. In 1862, Ida B. Wells was born enslaved in Holly Springs, Mississippi. In 2020, she awarded a Pulitzer Prize. *Ida B. the Queen* tells the awe-inspiring story of a pioneering woman who was often overlooked and underestimated—a woman who refused to exit a train car meant for white passengers; a woman who brought to light the horrors of lynching in America; and a woman who cofounded the NAACP. Written by Wells' great-granddaughter Michelle Duster, it is a unique visual celebration of Wells' life, and of the Black experience.

2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



A KNOCK AT MIDNIGHT: A STORY OF HOPE, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM
BRITTANY K. BARNETT
CROWN (2021)

Brittany K. Barnett was a law student when she came across the case that would change her life forever—that of Sharanda Jones, single mother, businessowner, and, like her, Black daughter of the rural South. A victim of America's war on drugs, Sharanda had been separated from her young daughter and was serving a life sentence without parole for a first-time drug offense. As Barnett studied this case, a system came into focus with widespread racial injustice at the core of America's addiction to incarceration. Moved, Barnett set to work to gain Sharanda's freedom. The memoir is at once Barnett's coming-of-age story and a powerful evocation of what it takes to bring hope and justice to a system built to resist them.



MIOSOTIS FLORES NEVER FORGETS – NOVEL
HILDA EUNICE BURGOS
TU BOOKS (2021)

Miosotis Flores is excited about three things: fostering rescue dogs, goofy horror movies, and her sister Amarilis' upcoming wedding. But her papi wants her to care about school most, so they strike a deal—if Miosotis improves her grades in two classes, she can adopt a dog this summer. But when she notices her sister behaving strangely and discovers her secret, she faces some difficult choices. What do you do if someone is in danger, but doesn't want your help? What ultimately matters most—what Miosotis wants, or what's right for the ones she loves?

Suitable for children.



ON THE COME UP – NOVEL
ANGIE THOMAS
BALZER + BRAY (2019)

In this followup to *The Hate U Give*, Angie Thomas dives into the story of 16-year-old Bri, who wants to be one of the greatest rappers of all time—or at least win her first battle. As the daughter of an underground hip-hop legend who died right before he hit big, Bri's got massive shoes to fill. But it's hard to get your come up when you're labeled a hoodlum and your fridge is empty after your mom loses her job. Bri pours her anger and frustration into her first song, which goes viral for all the wrong reasons, and soon finds herself at the center of a controversy. But with an eviction notice looming, Bri doesn't just want to make it—she has to.

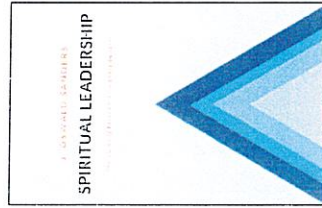
Suitable for youth.

2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



PIONEER BLACK CLERGYWOMEN: STORIES OF BLACK CLERGYWOMEN OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 1974-2016
REV. DR. JOSEPHINE WHITELY-FIELDS
WESTBOW PRESS (2021)

Authored by Dr. Josephine Whitely-Fields, who retired after 40 years of ministry and nonprofit leadership, this book features stories about Black clergywomen as pioneers of The United Methodist Church who overcame challenges and injustices in a predominantly White male vocation to fulfill God's work in the world today. The book delves into the individual, institutional, and systemic acts of racism, sexism, and ageism they have endured while being subjected to economic discrimination. Among the many featured Black clergywomen are bishops Linda Lee, Tracy Malone, Sharma Lewis, and Cynthia Moore-Kolkoi.



SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP
J. OSWALD SANDERS
MOODY PUBLISHERS (REISSUE 2017)

In this long-standing faith-based classic, J. Oswald Sanders, a Christian leader for nearly 70 years and author of more than 40 books, presents the key principles of leadership in both the temporal and spiritual realms. He illustrates his points with examples from Scripture and biographies of eminent men of God, such as Moses, Nehemiah, the apostle Paul, David Livingstone, Charles Spurgeon, and others. Featured topics include the costs, responsibility, tests, qualities, and requirements of leadership, as well as the art of developing effective leaders today. Sanders holds that even natural leadership qualities are God-given, and their true effectiveness can only be reached when they are employed in the glory of God.

It cannot be that the people should grow in grace unless they give themselves to reading. A reading people will be a knowing people."

John Wesley



THE BARBER'S CUTTING EDGE
GWENDOLYN BATTLE-LAVERT AND ILLUSTRATED BY RAYMOND HOLBERT
CHILDREN'S BOOK PRESS (2004)

The Barber's Cutting Edge is a touching celebration of the close relationship between a young African American boy and his community mentor. Jam-packed with little boys, big boys, dads, and neighbors, Mr. Bigalow's barbershop is a familiar place to talk, play dominoes, read, and in Rasheed's case, get a little extra help with his schoolwork. For not only does Mr. Bigalow know all the latest styles, but he also knows all the words on Rasheed's vocabulary list. The text drawings capture the lively atmosphere and warm spirit of the barbershop.

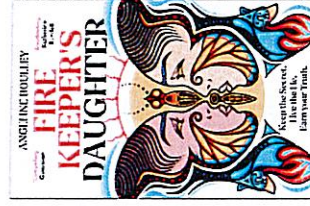
Suitable for children.



EYES THAT KISS IN THE CORNERS
JOANNA HO AND ILLUSTRATED BY DUNG HO
HARPERCOLLINS (2021)

A celebration of diversity, this lyrical, stunning picture book tells a story about learning to love and celebrate your Asian-shaped eyes. A young Asian girl notices her eyes look different from those of her peers and realizes her eyes are like her mother's, her grandmother's, and her little sister's eyes. They have eyes that kiss in the corners and glow like warm tea, crinkle into crescent moons, and are filled with stories of the past and hope for the future. Drawing from the strength of these powerful women in her life, she recognizes her own beauty and discovers a path to self-love and empowerment. This powerful, poetic picture book will resonate with readers of all ages.

Suitable for children.



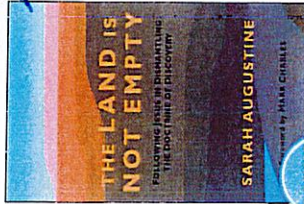
FIREKEEPER'S DAUGHTER – NOVEL
ANGELINE BOULLEY
HENRY HOLT AND CO. (2021)

Angeline Boulley's debut novel is a groundbreaking YA thriller about a Native teen who must root out the corruption in her community. When family tragedy strikes, 18-year-old Daunis Fontaine puts her future on hold to look after her mother. The only bright spot is meeting Jamie, the charming new recruit on her brother's hockey team. Yet even as Daunis falls for Jamie, she senses the dashing hockey star is hiding something. Everything comes to light when Daunis witnesses a shocking murder, thrusting her into an FBI investigation of a lethal new drug. Daunis agrees to go undercover, drawing on her knowledge of chemistry and Ojibwe traditional medicine to track down the source. But the search for truth is more complicated than Daunis imagined, exposing secrets and old scars.

Suitable for youth.



NURTURING FOR COMMUNITY



BONUS BOOKS

THE LAND IS NOT EMPTY: FOLLOWING JESUS IN DISMANTLING THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY
SARAH AUGUSTINE
HERALD PRESS (2021)

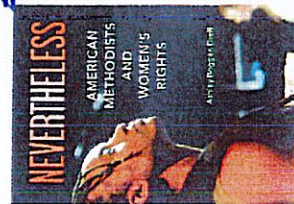
In this prophetic book, author Sarah Augustine, a Pueblo woman, reframes the colonization of North America as she investigates ways that the Doctrine of Discovery continues to devastate Indigenous cultures, and even the planet itself, as it justifies exploitation of both natural resources and people. This is a powerful call to reckon with the root causes of a legacy that continues to have devastating effects on Indigenous Peoples around the globe and a call to recognize how all of our lives and our choices are interwoven.



MAGIC LIKE THAT
SAMARA COLE DOYON AND ILLUSTRATED BY GENEVA BOWERS
LEE & LOW BOOKS (2022)

In this celebratory book, a young Black girl finds confidence and excitement in the versatility of her natural hair and the way her different hairstyles reflect the natural world. Natural hair is magical, but magic isn't easy. As the girl patiently waits for her mother to finish her newest hairstyle, she wonders what stunning, majestic, awe-inspiring form her hair will take next. With radiant illustrations by Geneva Bowers and beautiful, poetic text by Samara Cole Doyon, *Magic Like That* will inspire young readers of all textures to believe in the beauty of their natural selves.

Suitable for children.



**NEVERTHELESS:
AMERICAN METHODISTS AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS**
ASHLEY BOGGAN DREFF
WESLEY'S FOUNDERY BOOKS (2020)

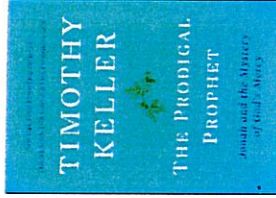
This book tells the story of American Methodist women's efforts to fight for women's rights, beginning with the Women's Christian Temperance Union and ending with the #MeToo movement. Each chapter documents particular Methodist women and provides the reader with a basic historic context of the time or situation as it shows how Methodist women engaged and fought for women's equality and women's rights in American society and American Methodism. These Methodist women addressed the causes of oppression, and by stepping out of "their place," they made a place for others.

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NURTURING FOR COMMUNITY



THE PRODIGAL PROPHET: JONAH AND THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S MERCY
TIMOTHY KELLER
VIKING (2018)

The story of Jonah is one of the most well-known but most misunderstood parables in the Bible.

In *The Prodigal Prophet*, pastor and *New York Times* bestselling author Timothy Keller reveals the hidden depths within the book of Jonah. Keller makes the case that Jonah was one of the worst prophets in the entire Bible. And yet there are unmistakably clear connections between Jonah, the prodigal son, and Jesus. Keller provides an answer to the extraordinary conclusion of this biblical parable—and shares the powerful Christian message at the heart of Jonah's story.



STAY THIS WAY FOREVER
LINSEY DAVIS AND ILLUSTRATED BY LUCY FLEMING
ZONDERKIDZ (2021)

Celebrate the joy, wonder, and innocence of being a child with this love letter to the loved ones in your life, encouraging and affirming their own special qualities now and always. It is the third picture book authored by Emmy Award-winning ABC News correspondent and bestselling author Linsey Davis, beautifully and authentically celebrating diversity in its characters with whimsical, joy-filled illustrations from bestselling artist Lucy Fleming.

Suitable for children.

TOGETHER: THE HEALING POWER OF HUMAN CONNECTION IN A SOMETIMES LONELY WORLD

VIVEK H. MURTHY
HARPER WAVE (2020)

In this groundbreaking book, the 19th surgeon general of the United States Dr. Vivek Murthy makes a case for loneliness as a public health concern: a root cause and contributor to many of the epidemics sweeping the world today—from alcohol and drug addiction to violence to depression and anxiety. Loneliness, he argues, is affecting not only our health, but also how our children experience school, how we perform in the workplace, and the sense of division and polarization in our society. His message underscores the importance of human connection, the hidden impact of loneliness on our health, and the social power of community.

Also available in Spanish.

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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM

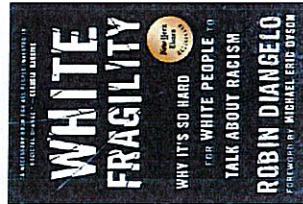


VAIL'S TALES

VAIL JOHNSON AND ED PAYNE AND ILLUSTRATED BY BRITT SEKULIC
PROVERBIAL GIRL PUBLISHING (2019)

Vail Johnson, a 9-year-old writer, died suddenly in her sleep before she could turn 10, but she left pages of profound insight for someone so young. These four stories by Vail, teamed with storytelling skills of veteran journalist and children's author Ed Payne, are memorable tales that will leave her imprint on your heart.

Suitable for children.



WHITE FRAGILITY: WHY IT'S SO HARD FOR WHITE PEOPLE TO TALK ABOUT RACISM

ROBIN DIANGELO
BEACON PRESS (2018)

This *New York Times* bestselling book by antiracist educator Robin DiAngelo explores the counterproductive reactions White people have when their assumptions about race are challenged, and how these reactions maintain racial inequality. Referring to the defensive moves White people make when challenged racially, White fragility is characterized by emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and by behaviors including argumentativeness and silence. DiAngelo examines how White fragility develops, how it protects racial inequality, and what we can do to engage more constructively.

Also available in Spanish.



WORLD OF WONDERS: IN PRAISE OF FIREFLIES, WHALE SHARKS, AND OTHER ASTONISHMENTS

AIMEE NEZHUKUMATATHIL
MILKWEED EDITIONS (2020)

From award-winning poet Aimee Nezhukumatathil comes a debut work of nonfiction—a collection of essays about the natural world and the way its inhabitants can teach, support, and inspire us. As a child, Nezhukumatathil called many places home. But no matter where she was transplanted—no matter how awkward the fit or forbidding the landscape—she was able to turn to our world's fierce and funny creatures for guidance. The axolotl teaches us to smile, even in the face of unkindness; the touch-me-not plant shows us how to shake off unwanted advances; the narwhal demonstrates how to survive in hostile environments. Even in the strange and the unlively, Nezhukumatathil finds beauty and kinship.

Suitable for children.

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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



BLACK WAS THE INK – NOVEL

MICHELLE COLES WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUSTIN JOHNSON
TU BOOKS (2021)

After escalating violence in his D.C. neighborhood, 16-year-old Malcolm is shipped off by his mother to his father's family farm in Mississippi. Malcolm is anything but pleased. Then he encounters the ghost of his ancestor, Cedric Johnson, and journeys to 1866. As Cedric, Malcolm meets the real-life Black statesmen who fought for change during the Reconstruction era and made American history. But even after witnessing their bravery, Malcolm's faith in his own future remains shaky, particularly since he knows the gains these statesmen made were almost immediately stripped away. Malcolm must decide which path to take. Can Cedric's experiences help him construct a better future? Or will Malcolm resign himself to resentments and defeat?

Suitable for youth.



BRIGHT STAR(LUCERO)

YUYI MORALES (SPANISH AND ENGLISH)
NEAL PORTER BOOKS (2021)

With a combination of powerful, spare language and sumptuous, complex imagery, *New York Times* bestselling author Yuyi Morales weaves the tale of a fawn making her way through the Sonoran Desert, a landscape that is dangerous, beautiful—and full of potential. A gentle voice urges her onward, to face her fears and challenge the obstacles that seek to hold her back. With a voice full of calm, contemplative wisdom, readers are invited to listen and observe, to accept themselves, and to dare to shout.

Suitable for children.



CASTE: THE ORIGINS OF OUR DISCONTENTS

ISABEL WILKERSON (ALSO AVAILABLE IN SPANISH)
RANDOM HOUSE (2020)

In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King Jr.—she shows the ways the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day, ultimately pointing to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions toward hope.

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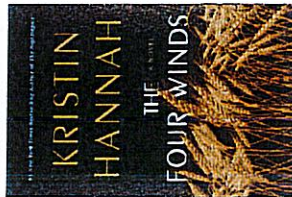
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COUSINS: CONNECTED THROUGH SLAVERY, A BLACK WOMAN AND A WHITE WOMAN DISCOVER THEIR PAST – AND EACH OTHER

BETTY KILBY BALDWIN AND PHOEBE KILBY
WALNUT STREET BOOKS (2021)

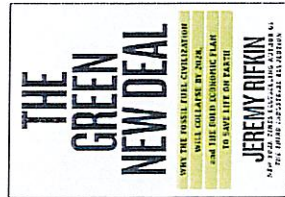
What happens when a White woman, Phoebe, contacts a Black woman, Betty, saying she suspects they are connected through slavery? Revealed to be cousins, they commit to a path of reconciliation. In alternating chapters, each tells her dramatic story, from Betty's experience as one of the first Black children to attend her desegregated school to Phoebe's eventual question to Betty: "How do I begin to repair the harms?" Piercingly honest, the book includes a working reparations project that the women conceived together.



THE FOUR WINDS – NOVEL

KRISTIN HANNAH
ST. MARTIN'S PRESS (2021)

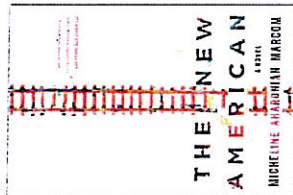
Bestselling author Kristin Hannah delivers a powerful epic about love, heroism and hope during the Great Depression, when millions were out of work and even the land seemed to have turned against them. Centered on Elsa Wolcott, married to a Great Plains farmer whose land is ravaged by dust storms and drought, each day has become a desperate battle against nature and a fight to keep her children alive. Elsa must make an agonizing choice: fight for the land she loves or leave it behind and go west in search of a better life for her family. *The Four Winds* is a rich, sweeping novel that stunningly brings to life the Great Depression and the people who lived through it—the harsh realities that divided us as a nation and the enduring battle between the haves and have-nots.



THE GREEN NEW DEAL

JEREMY RIFKIN
ST. MARTIN'S PRESS (2019)

With 25 years of experience at the forefront of enacting green transitions for both the European Union and the People's Republic of China, *New York Times* bestselling author and renowned economic and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin offers his indispensable wisdom in a blueprint for how to transform the global economy and save life on earth. This book offers an urgent, workable plan to confront climate change and transform America's economy for a post-fossil fuel world.



THE NEW AMERICAN: A NOVEL
MICHELINE AHARONIAN MARCOM
SIMON & SCHUSTER (2020)

Inspired in part by interviews with Central American refugees, and told in lyrical prose, Micheline Aharonian Marcom weaves a heart-pounding and heartbreaking tale of one young man who risks so much to go home. One day, Emilio learns a shocking secret: he is undocumented. His parents, who emigrated from Guatemala to California, had never told him. When the young Guatemalan American college student gets into a car accident he is soon deported to Guatemala. Determined to get back to California, the only home he has ever known, Emilio makes an epic journey across thousands of miles and eventually the Sonoran Desert and the U.S.-Mexico border, meeting thieves and corrupt law enforcement but also kind strangers and new friends.



NIBI'S WATER SONG
SUNSHINETENASCO AND ILLUSTRATED BY CHIEF LADY BIRD
LEE & LOW BOOKS (2021)

This bright and vivacious book from two Indigenous creators celebrates the energy, moxie, and determination of water activists of all ages. When Nibi, an Indigenous girl, turns the tap in her house, only mucky brown water comes out. That starts her on a search for clean water to drink. Though she must face polluted rivers, unfriendly neighbors, and discouragement, Nibi's joyful energy becomes a catalyst for change and action as her community rallies around her to make clean drinking water available for all.

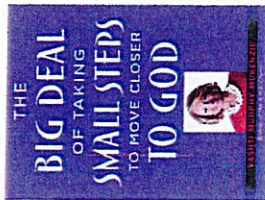
Suitable for children.



**WHAT CAN I DO?:
MY PATH FROM CLIMATE DESPAIR TO ACTION**

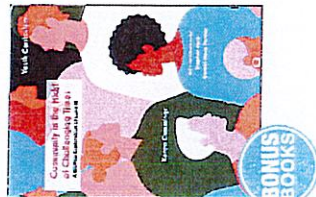
JANE FONDA
PENGUIN BOOKS (2021)

In 2019, daunted by the looming disaster of climate change and inspired by Greta Thunberg, Naomi Klein, and student climate strikers, activist Jane Fonda asked herself one question: What can I do? She moved to Washington, D.C., and teamed up with Greenpeace, leading climate scientists, and community organizers not only to understand what's at stake, but to equip all of us with the education and tools we need to join her in protest. *What Can I Do?* isn't a wish list but a to-do list, urging us to wake up and take action.



THE BIG DEAL OF TAKING SMALL STEPS TO MOVE CLOSER TO GOD
 BISHOP VASHTI MURPHY MCKENZIE
 FAITHWORDS (2017)

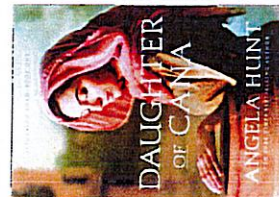
This book by Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, uncovers how to develop a stronger relationship with God and more effective spiritual lifestyle by taking small steps that lead to big changes. McKenzie prescribes small changes that lead to radical closeness to God, and the "big deal" result is a greater ability to biblically address life challenges.



**COMMUNITY IN THE MIDST OF CHALLENGING TIMES:
 A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13**
 KENYA CUMMINGS
 (MISSION u YOUTH STUDY)
 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (2022)

In this Mission u Youth Study, organizer and minister Kenya Cummings brings participants on a journey through stories that have anchored Christian communities for millennia, through times of stability and times of turmoil and tragedy. Using study, prayer, reflection, and sharing, participants examine the meanings of the kingdom of God, also exploring the dynamics of power and empire in light of the gospel.

Suitable for youth.



DAUGHTER OF CANA (JERUSALEM ROAD, BOOK 1)
 ANGELA HUNT
 BETHANY HOUSE PUBLISHERS (2020)

Thomas and Tasmin, twin siblings hired to oversee a wedding feast in Cana, worry when the host runs out of wine—until a guest tells Tasmin to have the servants fill the pitchers by the gate with water from the cistern. Reluctantly, she obeys and is amazed when rainwater turns into the finest wine ever tasted in Cana. When Thomas impulsively decides to follow the teacher from Nazareth, he and Tasmin argue. Tasmin can't accept losing her brother to some magician-prophet. She decides to follow the Nazarene's group, do whatever she must to mend the fractured relationship with her brother, and bring him home.



FREEDOM, WE SING
 AMYRA LEÓN AND ILLUSTRATED BY MOLLY MENDOZA
 FLYING EYE BOOKS (2020)

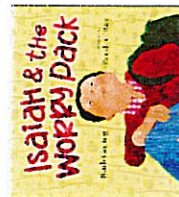
As powerful as it is beautiful, *Freedom, We Sing* is a lyrical picture book designed to inspire and give hope to readers around the world. Molly Mendoza's immersive, lush illustrations invite kids to ponder singer-songwriter Amyra León's poem about what it means to be free.

Suitable for children.



I'M STILL HERE: BLACK DIGNITY IN A WORLD MADE FOR WHITENESS
 AUSTIN CHANNING BROWN
 CONVERGENT BOOKS (2018)

Austin Channing Brown's first encounter with a racialized America came at age seven, when she discovered her parents named her Austin to deceive future employers into thinking she was a White man. Growing up in majority-White schools and churches, Austin writes, "I had to learn what it means to love blackness," a journey that led to a lifetime spent navigating America's racial divide as a writer, speaker, and expert helping organizations practice genuine inclusion. She writes in incisive detail about her journey to self-worth and the pitfalls that kill our attempts at racial justice. Her stories bear witness to the complexity of America's social fabric—from Black neighborhoods to private schools in the middle-class suburbs, from prison walls to boardrooms at majority-White organizations.



ISAIAH & THE WORRY PACK: LEARNING TO TRUST GOD WITH ALL OUR FEARS
 RUTH GORING AND ILLUSTRATED BY PAMELA C. RICE
 IVP KIDS (2021)

It's bedtime again, but Isaiah can't sleep. It seems he's got too many things on his mind—things he's worried about. So Mom helps Isaiah imagine what it would be like if each of his worries were a block that he could stash in his backpack. As Isaiah imagines hiking through the woods carrying his worry pack, he discovers the joy and relief of trusting Jesus with everything, especially those worries. This tender story written by poet, visual artist, and children's author Ruth Goring is paired with Pamela C. Rice's warm illustrations.

Suitable for children.



OUR GROWING TREE—FROM SELF-LOVE TO THE BELOVED COMMUNITY AND ALL OF GOD'S CREATION: A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13

ILKA VEGA
(MISSION u CHILDREN'S STUDY)
UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (2022)

In this Mission u Children's Study by social justice advocate and educator Ilka Vega, participants take a journey of spiritual growth and community building that helps children recognize the diversity of their capacities, spiritual gifts, and talents as well as their responsibilities to care for one another and for all of God's creation. Through Bible study and reflection, transformative activities, and spiritual practices, participants focus on growing their spiritual gifts and talents and find support in their journeys of self-love, community building, and stewardship of God's creation.

Suitable for children.



UNTIL UNITY
REV. FRANCIS CHAN
DAVID C COOK (2021)

If unity is so important to the heart of God, why is the church one of the most divided groups on earth? *New York Times* bestselling author Francis Chan calls for believers and churches everywhere to align hearts with God and start taking seriously God's numerous commands to unify. While many believe doctrine is at the root of the problem, Chan argues that the real problem is the shallowness or non-existence of our love for each other—rooted in a shallowness in our understanding of the gospel. This is what desperately needs to change.



WHAT IS GOD LIKE?
RACHEL HELD EVANS AND MATTHEW PAUL TURNER, ILLUSTRATED BY YING HUI TAN
CONVERGENT BOOKS (2021)

This picture book by the late Rachel Held Evans and her friend, Matthew Paul Turner, answers what is for many children their first question about God: What is God like? Through pictures from the Bible, children see God is like a shepherd, like a star, like a gardener, like the wind, and more. God is a comforter and support. And whenever a child is unsure, *What Is God Like?* encourages young hearts to "think about what makes you feel safe, what makes you feel loved, and what makes you feel brave. That's what God is like."

Suitable for children.

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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM



WHO CAN WE BE TOGETHER? A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13

CANDACE SIMPSON
(MISSION u ADULT STUDY)
UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (2022)

In this Mission u Adult Study, Candace Simpson brings participants deeper into Jesus' teachings in Luke 13 to explore what it means to be in community. As Simpson notes, "For followers of Christ 2,000 years later, it's important for us to sit with the range of emotions we have in response to these words. It's not easy to build and sustain communities, especially when there are forces that drain us, exhaust us, and even push us to act uncharacteristically. And yet, we are called to act on the most ethical principles of our faith so we can witness the kingdom of God on earth."



I've really enjoyed the books in the Reading Program and have learned a lot, which is the point! Our Reading Program involvement has about doubled this past year with the start of our book group. It also has helped to have all the usable Reading Program books on one list and marked with which ones are in our own library and what is available in our public library. Thanks for all the work you put in to making it all available to us."

Carol, Reading Program member

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2023 UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM

BONUS BOOKS



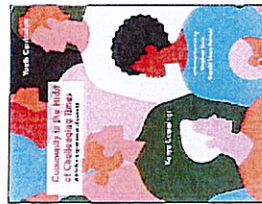
Note: For the Spiritual Growth Bonus Books, you must participate in or lead one of the studies in order to receive Reading Program credit. You may attend or lead the 8-part Mission u study either in a conference/district Mission u context or in your own local context (church, unit, otherwise) to receive Bonus Book credit. If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only one credit.



WHO CAN WE BETOGETHER? A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13

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COMMUNITY IN THE MIDST OF CHALLENGING TIMES: A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13

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Suitable for youth.



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

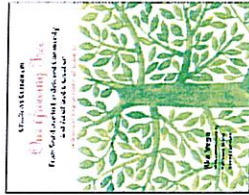


OUR GROWING TREE—FROM SELF-LOVE TO THE BELOVED COMMUNITY AND ALL OF GOD'S CREATION: A BIBLICAL EXPLORATION OF LUKE 13

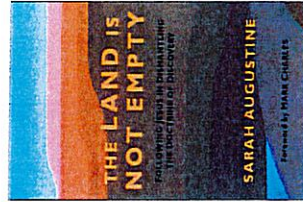
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Suitable for children.



NURTURING FOR COMMUNITY



THE LAND IS NOT EMPTY: FOLLOWING JESUS IN DISMANTLING THE DOCTRINE OF DISCOVERY

SARAH AUGUSTINE
HERALD PRESS (2021)

In this prophetic book, author Sarah Augustine, a Pueblo woman, reframes the colonization of North America as she investigates ways that the Doctrine of Discovery continues to devastate Indigenous cultures, and even the planet itself, as it justifies exploitation of both natural resources and people. This is a powerful call to reckon with the root causes of a legacy that continues to have devastating effects on Indigenous Peoples around the globe and a call to recognize how all of our lives and our choices are interwoven.

EDUCATION FOR MISSION



SUSAN ANGELINE COLLINS: WITH A HALLELUJAH HEART
JANIS BENNINGTON VAN BUREN
WESTBOW PRESS (2021)

Years before Mary Jane McLeod Bethune started her school for girls in Florida, one Midwestern woman was steadily doing her part for girls in the northern Angolan high plateau. For more than three decades, African American missionary Susan Angeline Collins made a tremendous difference in the lives of countless African women and children, some orphaned and homeless and others escaping early marriage and subservience. Authored by retired professor Janis Bennington Van Buren, this book explores the remarkable service-oriented life of Collins from her 1851 birth in Illinois until her 1940 death in Iowa. Collins overcame economic, education, gender, race, religious, and other obstacles surrounding Africa's colonization to serve as a stalwart missionary, leader, teacher, nurse, construction manager, and surrogate mother to "her girls."

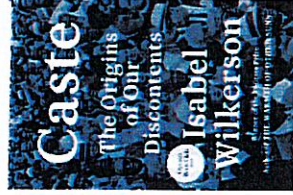
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



ALL WE CAN SAVE: TRUTH, COURAGE,
AND SOLUTIONS FOR THE CLIMATE CRISIS
AYANA ELIZABETH JOHNSON AND KATHERINE K. WILKINSON
ONE WORLD (2022)

Named one of the best books of the year by *Smithsonian* magazine, *All We Can Save* illuminates the expertise and insights of dozens of diverse women leading on climate in the United States—scientists, journalists, farmers, lawyers, teachers, activists, innovators, wonks, and designers, across generations, geographies, and race—and aims to advance a more representative, nuanced, and solution-oriented public conversation on the climate crisis. These women offer a spectrum of ideas and insights for how we can rapidly, radically reshape society. Intermixing essays with poetry and art, this book is both a balm and a guide for knowing and holding what has been done to the world, while bolstering our resolve never to give up on one another or our collective future.

SOCIAL ACTION



CASTE: THE ORIGINS OF OUR DISCONTENTS
ISABEL WILKERSON (ALSO AVAILABLE IN SPANISH)
RANDOM HOUSE (2020)

In this brilliant book, Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King Jr.—she shows the ways the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day, ultimately pointing to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions toward hope.

... for wisdom is better than jewels, and all that you may desire cannot compare with her."

Proverbs 8:1-21

"The Gifts of Wisdom"

Scriptural basis for the Reading Program