

2027

Reading Program
Programa De Lectura
독서 프로그램



United
Women
in Faith



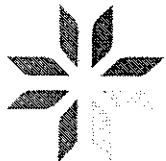


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Dear Reader,

"Reading makes me feel alive," Khaled Allostath writes in *We Are Not Numbers: The Voices of Gaza's Youth* (2027 Bonus Book). To which I say: Me, too! If you are a regular of the United Women in Faith Reading Program, you likely feel the same. We know, of course, that reading has its limits. If bombs are falling on your city, those bombs are real, no matter what you read—see the latter section of Allostath's piece. Nonetheless, for the active reader, there is something truly extraordinary in the written word. Books allow us a small glimpse—however partial and shadowy—into another person's world. Through reading, we are invited into a kind of intimacy, a nearness to other people whose lives may be different than our own, to grieve their heart-breaks, to warm in the sunshine of their celebrations. Reading invites us to cultivate empathy, to embrace concerns and joys outside ourselves, and to truly find each other across a whole slew of borders and barriers—a much-needed antidote to the diet of dehumanization that seems to be the bread-and-butter of our contemporary world.

The 2027 Reading Program is wrestling with many of the big questions of our day—those that dominate our news feeds, dinner tables, pulpits, and pews. Like our foremothers, we are asking the question, "How do these big questions impact the real, daily lives of women, children, and youth?" and seeking out the real answers. We do not need to speculate or imagine the answers to this question. People are telling us what is happening to them, if only we would listen. The Reading Program is, largely, about learning to ask hard questions and listen to an array of voices, paying attention to small details that re-humanize the big questions: What is the legacy of Indian Boarding Schools—and what does it mean for you to be your mother's daughter? How can we imagine healing—and why are you sewing this jingle dress? (See 2027 Bonus Book, *Medicine River*.) To say: Tell me about the sea and the stars in Gaza, about your high school exams, and your best friends. To wonder: Do you like cinnamon rolls, too? And to cry out: What is the name of this woman who has miscarried beneath the rubble? (See 2027 Bonus Book, *We Are Not Numbers*.)

Each of our 2027 Reading Program selections invites us to step into the author's world—not just to learn new information but so that what we learn might transform us, broaden our horizons, grow our minds, and, ultimately, expand our hearts. This doesn't mean that we agree with—or even like—everything we read. It does mean that when we make space to listen—and listen and listen and listen some more—we are allowing God to help us be changed for the better. Because we have listened well, we will show up in spaces differently, think differently, do differently, and be differently.

We are living in the same world, and we are experiencing it differently. As women of faith, we are not afraid of exploring those differences. As Chimaanda Ngozi Adichie reminds us, there is deep danger in accepting the lie that there is just one single story. This is one reason why even the shortest reading plan (Plan I) requires reading at least five different books. We know that any book—even the true and extraordinary gems—tells only a part of the story. That is true not only for books, but also for this sacred sisterhood. To be in a community, a church, a local circle, a unit, or a conference is to recognize that we each carry a part of the story; we are all a piece of a broader whole. I hope that you will engage with a variety of books from the 2027 Reading Program and, if you are able, that you will discuss them with a variety of readers, learning and growing from each other's differing perspectives. Reading is a sacred gift, and reading together is a double blessing.

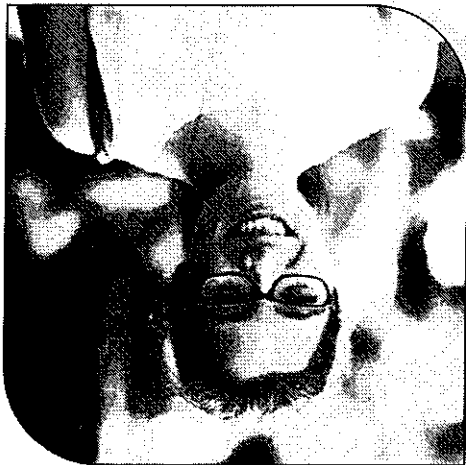
For Christian readers—even the most avid of booklovers—there will always be *The Book that tops all other books: the Bible*. This year, in the spiritual growth category, you will see a selection of three children's books based on Scripture: *Whistlestop Tales: Around the Bible with 10 Extraordinary Children*; *The Book of Belonging: Bible Stories for Kind & Contemplative Kids*; and *The Just Love Story Bible*. Perhaps you are thinking, "Wow, that's a lot of children's Bibles for one Reading Program!" You're not wrong—and we've done it on purpose. Each of these three books offers a creative retelling of familiar biblical stories, each providing a distinct perspective on the same content. We hope that this set of books taken together might encourage you and the young children in your life to do two important things: First, we want to get in the habit of reading Scripture—let our babies learn their Bibles! Second, we want to nurture, from the very youngest age, the idea that there is more than one way to tell the same story. We want to build a generation of young people who are empowered to read the Bible and encounter there not just words on the page but the life-giving, living Word of God, to believe deeply that we *all* held in God's Big Story and each experiencing God's world uniquely, to embrace universality and difference.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks. Thank you to the 175+ volunteer evaluators who made this 2027 Reading Program a reality. Thank you to the Program Advisory Group Reading Program Committee, who guided this process with such faithful care—and so much fun along the way—and especially the Reading Program Committee Chair, Kelly G. Loeb. Most importantly, thank you, I send my love to each one of you.

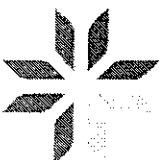
Peace,

Emily A. Jones

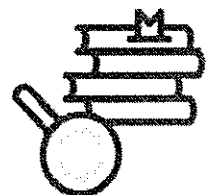
Emily Jones
Executive for Racial Justice
United Women in Faith



GENERAL FAQs

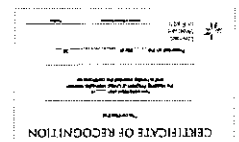


• Where can I find the books?



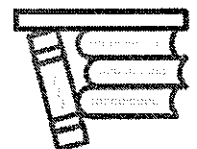
You can access books at your public library, from your local bookstore, or through an online retailer. You can also purchase most of the current Reading Program books at bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith. United Women in Faith receives 10% back on all purchases from our virtual shelves.

• How can I receive recognition for participating in the Reading Program as an individual?

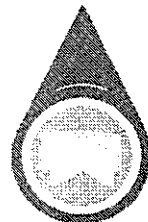


Complete Reading Program Plans I, II, III, or IV. Fill out the reporting form available in the resources section at the end of this catalog. Submit the reporting form to the District or Conference Program Resources Coordinator or designee. Reach out to your district/conference leadership team for the relevant details, including the due date. All members and friends of United Women in Faith who complete a Plan and submit the form in a timely manner are eligible to receive the annual Certificate of Recognition.

• How can I use the Reading Program resources in a group setting?



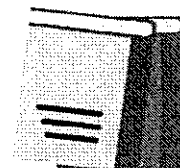
The Reading Program provides excellent content for both regular unit meetings and new All-Access member gatherings. Whether your group is meeting in person or virtually, reading a book together can provide powerful common ground. The books in the Reading Program are specially selected to help women grow spiritually, strengthen their leadership skills, and equip themselves for more effective social action, community-building, and public service. Reading and discussing a shared book can also make for an easier start to meaningful conversation among women who do not yet know each other well. It can also be a way to connect with new women and invite them into our sisterhood. Consider opening your Reading Program book discussions to women who are not yet members of United Women in Faith. Explore hosting groups in non-traditional locations such as public libraries, coffee shops, or parks. Try meeting at times accessible to women in a variety of life situations, including women who are working full-time during the day or shouldering heavy care responsibilities. You can develop your own discussion questions for any book in the Reading Program or begin with the sample discussion questions for this year's Bonus Books, available in the resources section at the end of this document.



• How are books selected?

To create the 2027 Reading Program, a team of 175+ volunteers read and evaluated potential book selections. Each book on the 2027 Reading Program was independently evaluated by at least four people. The Reading Program Advisory Group Reading Program Committee and staff used these evaluations to compile the 2027 Reading Program, considering both the merit of individual books and the overall balance of the offerings. The Reading Program Committee recommendation was then reviewed and approved by both the Program Advisory Group Governance Committee and the Board of Directors.

- Movies and television programs based on current Reading Program books are also eligible for credit. In determining the category for credit, identify the category of the original book and apply credit for the film to the same category.
 - 1 credit in Spiritual Growth for reading a Mission u study on your own
 - 2 credits in Spiritual Growth for joining a Mission u study together with others, as a leader or participant
 - Being part of a Mission u:
 - one year (6 issues)
 - Reading **response** magazine: 1 credit in Nurturing for Community for reading for 2+ episodes
 - Listening to the *Voices From the Field* podcast: 1 credit in Education for Mission for 2+ episodes
 - Listening to the *Faith Talks* podcast: 1 credit in Spiritual Growth for 2+ episodes
- Yes, you can also receive Reading Program reporting credit for:



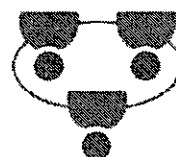
• Are there other ways to receive Reading Program reporting credit?

For 2027, books from the 2021-2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027 Reading Program lists are all eligible for Reading Program reporting credit. You can find a combined Excel list of all these books at bit.ly/RPBookList. The annual Reading Programs are also available in a PDF format for each credit-eligible year at uwfaith.org/read.

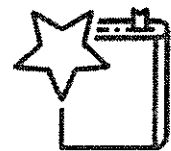


• Which years of the Reading Program are eligible for reporting credit?

Adult, youth, and children's book selections are included in every category. We encourage you to read and reflect together across the generations. Books written for youth and children can be wonderful learning resources for adults, as well.



• What resources support intergenerational learning?



• **How can I recommend a book?**

If you would like to suggest a book for consideration for a future Reading Program Catalog, you can do so by using the "Suggest a book" link available at uwfaith.org/read.



• **Can I use audiobooks?**

You are always welcome to use audiobooks if that's an easier and more accessible way for you to read the material.



• **Is there any troubling content in the Reading Program books?**
How do I know what to expect?

The Reading Program is designed to be uplifting and spiritually nourishing while we have added flags to the book descriptions to indicate any violence (V), sexual content (S), or profane language (L). We hope this helps readers make informed choices. However, each of us brings our unique set of experiences and expectations, and, despite our best efforts, we are not always able to anticipate what may be disturbing to an individual reader. What is barely noteworthy to one person may be profoundly upsetting to another. If you start reading a book and find it too much for you, please practice good self-care and set it aside.

• **How can I learn about upcoming events and keep connected to the community?**



- If you would like to receive invitations to Reading Program-related events, including author talks, book discussions, volunteer opportunities, and more, please join our mailing list by visiting bit.ly/RPMailingList.
- We also invite you to join us in the Reading Enthusiasts discussion group on UWFaith Digital where you can post, learn about upcoming events, and share with others about your favorite books.
- For people who are new to United Women in Faith Digital: bit.ly/reading-enthusiasts-MN.
- For people who are already on United Women in Faith Digital: bit.ly/reading-enthusiasts.

READING PROGRAM PLANS



Eligible years: For 2027, books from the 2021-2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, and 2027 Reading Program lists are eligible for Reading Program reporting credit, if you have not already 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.

PLAN II

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

PLAN III

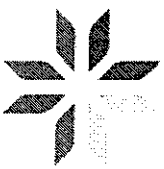
- 15 books each year.
- 2 books from each category.
- PLUS 5 additional books from any category.
- Selections from the current reading lists if not included in previous reports.

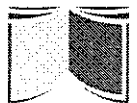
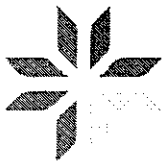
PLAN IV

- 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.

Books can be purchased directly from the retailer of your choice, from bookshop.org/shop/uwfaith, or borrowed from your local public library.

For books on previous reading lists go to: uwfaith.org/read.





LAST TO EAT, LAST TO LEARN: MY LIFE

IN AFGHANISTAN FIGHTING TO EDUCATE WOMEN

PASHTANA DURRANI & TAMARA BRALO

CITADEL (2024)

From young Afghan activist and Amnesty International Global Youth Ambassador Pashtana Durrani comes this stirring memoir about the power of learning and the value of educators. Durrani recognized her calling early: to educate Afghanistan's girls and young women in a society where learning is forbidden, and girls are often married off before reaching their teenage years and prohibited from leaving their homes. She founded the nonprofit LEARN and developed a program for getting educational materials directly into the hands of girls in remote areas of Afghanistan, training teachers in digital literacy. It's a story of how just one person can transform many. (V)

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF ABED SALAMA: ANATOMY OF A JERUSALEM TRAGEDY

NATHAN THRALL

METROPOLITAN BOOKS (2023)

In this Pulitzer Prize-winning account, a Palestinian father named Abed embarks on a desperate search for his son after a devastating accident. Five-year-old Milad and his classmates were on a school trip to a theme park on the outskirts of Jerusalem when their bus collided with a semitrailer. The author traces Abed's search for his son after victims were taken to different hospitals in the region, a search rife with physical, emotional, and bureaucratic obstacles because he is Palestinian. The book is hailed as a human portrait of the struggle over Israel/Palestine. (V)

Book available in English & Spanish.

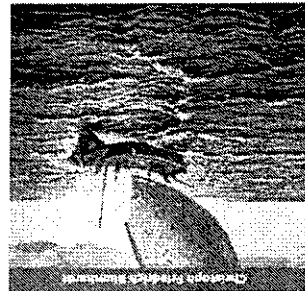
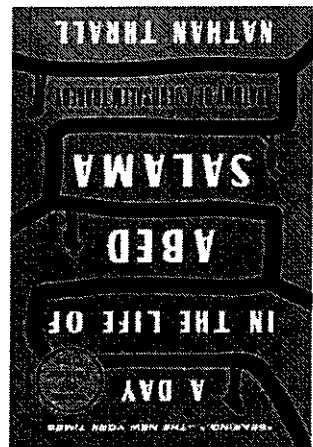
ACTION IN WAITING

CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH BLUMHARDT

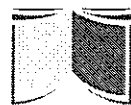
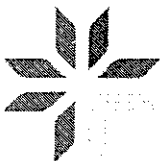
PLOUGH PUBLISHING HOUSE (2014)

This collection of writings from the late German pastor and theologian calls for a fresh look at the spiritual life as "active expectation" of God's kingdom breaking into this world. It's a kingdom no longer relegated to some distant afterlife, but one that takes effect today through a faith strong enough to transform us and our world. In the essays, Blumhardt argues that genuine Christian life isn't about personal salvation or waiting around for heaven but about throwing yourself into service to God and others now. He advocates stripping away the comfortable layers that accumulate around organized religion and getting back to faith that's raw and urgent.

Book available in English & Korean.



Action in Waiting



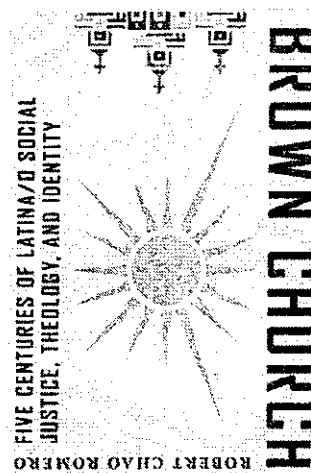
BROWN CHURCH: FIVE CENTURIES OF LATINA/O SOCIAL JUSTICE, THEOLOGY, AND IDENTITY

ROBERT CHAO ROMERO

IVP ACADEMIC (2020)

Religious scholar Dr. Robert Chao Romero explores the history and theology of what he terms the Brown Church. Weaving stories of Latin American and U.S. Latino/a communities across five centuries, he shares how this movement has responded to injustices throughout its history by appealing to the belief that God's vision for redemption includes not only heavenly promises but also the transformation of every aspect of our lives and the world. Moving from "El Plan Espiritual de Galilee" to the current social justice theologies of U.S. Latinas/os, this book will educate and inspire contemporary readers. A Foreword INDIES Book of the Year Finalist.

Book available in English & Spanish.

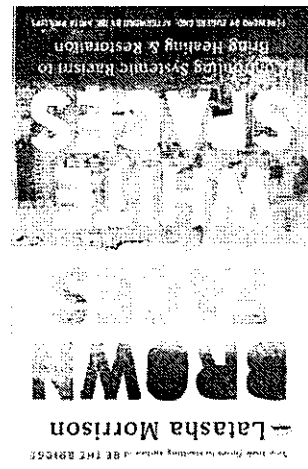


BROWN FACES, WHITE SPACES: CONFRONTING SYSTEMIC RACISM TO BRING HEALING & RESTORATION

LATASHA MORRISON

WATERBROOK (2024)

In this book, Latasha Morrison, an author and nonprofit founder known for her transformative work in racial reconciliation and unity, argues that systemic racism was never truly dismantled in America. Rather, it continues shaping education, healthcare, justice, entertainment, and the church today. Drawing on personal stories, history, and sociological insights, Morrison guides readers through recognizing inequities (preparation), committing to change (dedication), and pursuing true freedom (liberation), showing how Jesus' work on the cross connects to human liberation and offering practical steps to reform historically White spaces so that all people can flourish.



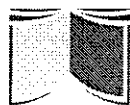
NO MAN'S LAND: THE INTERNATIONAL METHODIST DEACONESS MOVEMENT

PRISCILLA POPE-LEVISON

CASCADE BOOKS (2025)

Award-winning author, historian, pastor, professor, and higher education administrator Priscilla Pope-Levison offers this groundbreaking study of the international characteristics of a remarkable yet largely forgotten women's movement—the Methodist deaconesses. She offers vivid vignettes, striking photos, and intimate personal diaries to provide not just a historical overview, but an encounter with these women dedicated to serving those ground down by suffering, sickness, poverty, and addiction. As she notes, deaconesses carved out a precarious existence in no man's land—neither fully clergy nor fully laity—that nonetheless galvanized an international network of Methodist women.

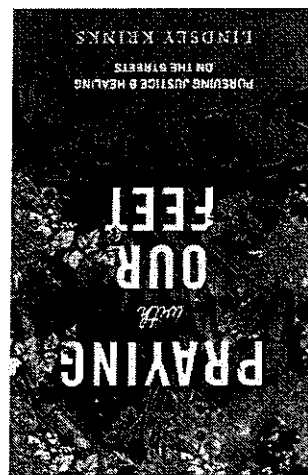




PRAYING WITH OUR FEET: PURSUING JUSTICE AND HEALING ON THE STREETS

LINDSEY KRINKS
BRAZOS PRESS (2021)

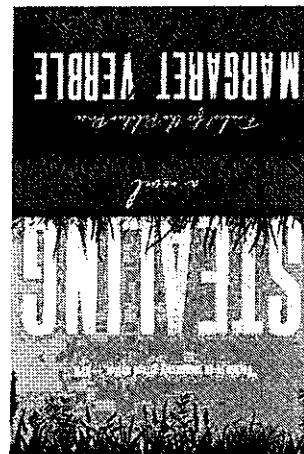
Lindsey Krinks is a street chaplain, activist, and nonprofit leader who has worked for more than a decade on the front lines of social justice movements. In this book, Krinks shares how a devastating injury at age 20 and an unexpected encounter with a homeless organizing group opened her eyes to the immense suffering and injustice around her. Taking readers on an unforgettable spiritual journey to tent cities, alleys, slums, and the front lines of justice movements, where she has found both staggering loss and astounding love.



STEALING: A NOVEL

MARGARET VERBLE
MARINER BOOKS (2023)

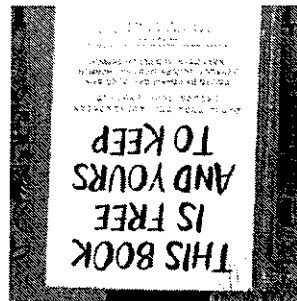
Pulitzer Prize finalist Margaret Verble offers a gripping novel about a Cherokee child removed from her family and sent to a Christian boarding school in the 1950s. Kit Crockett lives on a farm with her widowed father, tending the garden, fishing, and reading mysteries from the library bookmobile. But a malicious neighbor lands Kit at the center of a tragic, fatal crime, and she becomes a ward of the court. Her Cherokee family wants to raise her, but the righteous Christians in town instead send her to a religious boarding school where she's subjected to religious indoctrination and other forms of abuse. (V)(S)

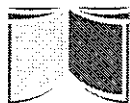


THIS BOOK IS FREE AND YOURS TO KEEP: NOTES FROM THE APPALACHIAN PRISON BOOK PROJECT

EDITED BY CONNIE BANTA, DRISTIN DEVAULT-JUELF, DESTINEE HARPER, KATY RYAN, & ELLEN SKIRVIN
WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY PRESS (2024)

In this collection from the nonprofit Appalachian Prison Book Project, letters and artwork from incarcerated people across six states offer a rare, intimate glimpse into daily prison life and reading practices while sparking vital conversations about race, poverty, and mass incarceration. The collection celebrates the transformative power of books and education, illuminates state violence and systemic neglect within prisons and jails, and honors the broader movement for accountability and prison reform. Ultimately, it offers a hopeful path forward rooted in solidarity, community, and collaboration. A 2024 Weatherford Award Winner, Nonfiction.





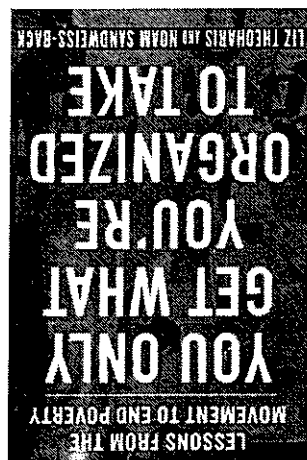
WHITE POVERTY: HOW EXPOSING MYTHS ABOUT RACE AND CLASS CAN RECONSTRUCT AMERICAN DEMOCRACY
 REV. DR. WILLIAM J. BARBER, II
 LIVERIGHT (2024)

One of the most pernicious, persistent myths in the United States is the association of Black skin with poverty. Though there are forty million more poor white people than poor Black people, most Americans continue to think of poverty as solely a Black problem. White poverty, Barber argues, is a hugely neglected subject. Why? What are the historical causes? And what are the political consequences? These are among the questions Barber addresses in this groundbreaking work.



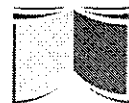
WESLEYAN VILE-TALITY: RECLAIMING THE HEART OF METHODIST IDENTITY
 ASHLEY BOGGAN
 ABINGDON PRESS (2025)

In this book, from the General Secretary of the General Commission on Archives and History, comes a look at what John Wesley meant when he said we should "submit to be more vile"—by spreading the love of God to all people. Boggan argues that Wesleyan "vile-tality" is at the core of Methodist identity. As rule-benders, rabble-rousers, and outcast-embracers, early Methodists stood out and stood up. She traces how that original identity was lost as the predecessor denominations to The United Methodist Church grew and began to embrace respectability over "vile-tality." It's an accessible and engaging account of a fascinating history.



YOU ONLY GET WHAT YOU'RE ORGANIZED TO TAKE: LESSONS FROM THE MOVEMENT TO END POVERTY
 LIZ THEOHARIS & NOAM SANDWEISS-BACH
 BEACON PRESS (2025)

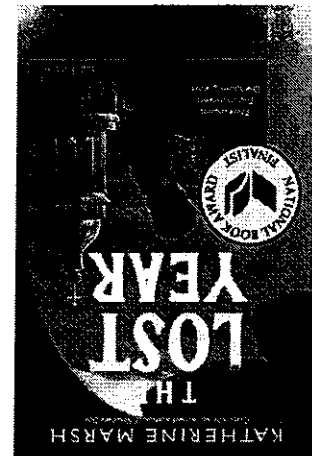
Theoharis and Sandweiss-Bach tell the engrossing and powerful story of poor people's movements in America. Drawing on 30 years of personal experience, history, and political strategy, they introduce readers to the multiracial coalitions of homeless families, welfare mothers, farmworkers, and laborers who have fought collectively for dignity and economic justice. They argue that poverty will not end through charity or the goodwill of the powerful, but through a mass movement led by the poor themselves, who have always been agents of change and must become the architects of a new America and reinvigate the promise of democracy.



THE LOST YEAR: A SURVIVAL STORY OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE

KATHERINE MARSH
SQUARE FISH (2023)

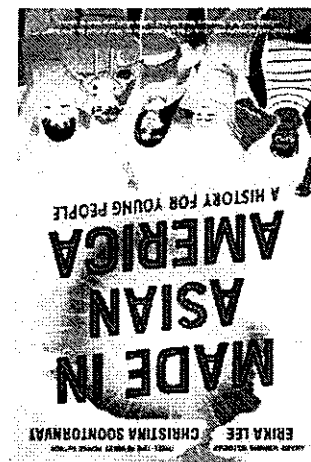
A National Book Award Finalist, *The Lost Year: A Survival Story of the Ukrainian Famine* is a historical-fiction middle-grade survival story that traces a narrow-ing family secret back to the Holodomor. This terrible famine devastated Soviet Ukraine in the 1930s. Thirteen-year-old Matthew is miserable. His journalist dad is stuck overseas indefinitely, and his 100-year-old great-grandmother has moved in with him and his mom. But when Matthew finds a tattered black-and-white photo in his great-grandmother's belongings, he discovers a clue to a hidden chapter of her past, one that leads to a life-shattering family secret. The novel sheds fresh light on the horrific famine that killed millions of Ukrainians, which the Soviet government covered up for decades.



MADE IN ASIAN AMERICA: A HISTORY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

ERICA LEE & CHRISTINA SOONTORNVAT
OULLTREE BOOKS (2024)

This book is a stirring account of the ordinary people and extraordinary acts that made Asian America and the young people who are remaking America today. As the authors reveal, Asian-American history is not a single story but many, beginning centuries before America even existed as a nation. It's a story of migration. Of race and racism. Of being labeled an immigrant invasion, unfit to become citizens, and being banned, deported, and incarcerated. Of being blamed for bringing diseases into the country. But it's also a story of bravery and hope, with heroes who fought for equality in the courts, on the streets, and in the schools.



I credit the Reading Program for opening my eyes to situations, perspectives, and events that I never had been aware of in the past. It has challenged me to read beyond my comfort level, explore my faith, and be aware of the world beyond my personal experience.

—Jana Jones, Reading Program Committee Chair

In the early 1900s, Tulsa, Oklahoma, was home to a thriving African-American community known as the Greenwood District. It had its own school system, libraries, churches, restaurants, post office, and more. But on May 31 and June 1, 1921, a mob of armed White Tulsans attacked Greenwood, looting homes and businesses and burning them to the ground. The police did nothing, and as many as 300 African Americans were killed and 8,000 left homeless. No official investigation occurred for 75 years. This book provides a sensitive and powerful introduction to the Tulsa Race Massacre, helping young readers understand the past so we can move toward a better future. (V)

CAROL BOSTON WEATHERFORD
CAROLRHODA BOOKS (2021)

UNSPEAKABLE: THE TULSA RACE MASSACRE

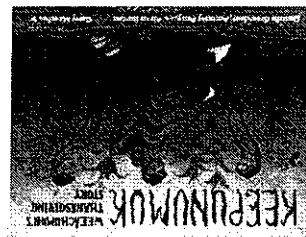


Discover the first Thanksgiving through Wampanoag eyes as the First Peoples teach the newcomers to grow the Three Sisters—corn, beans, and squash—for a successful harvest. Written by Danielle Greendeer (Mashpee Wampanoag), Anthony Perry (Chickasaw), and Alexis Buntin (Unangan/Yupik) and illustrated by Garry Meeches Sr. (Anishinaabe), this important book is crafted for 3- to 7-year-olds. It includes a glossary, a recipe, and back matter with additional resources and information.

CHARLESBRIDGE (2022)

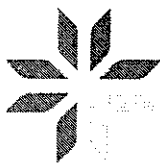
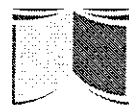
DANIELLE GREENDEER, ANTHONY PERRY, & ALEXIS BUNTIN

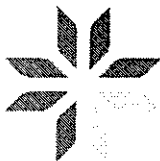
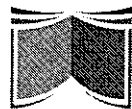
KEEPUNUMUK: WEEACHUMUN'S THANKSGIVING STORY



Children's Books

EDUCATION FOR MISSION





Adult Books

CALLING IN: HOW TO START MAKING CHANGE WITH THOSE YOU'D RATHER CANCEL

LORETTA ROSS

SIMON & SCHUSTER (2025)

Calling In: How to Start Making Change with Those You'd Rather Cancel is a handbook, a manifesto, and a memoir—because the message comes from who Ross is and what she's lived through. She's a Black woman who's deprogrammed White supremacists and a survivor who's taught convicted rapists the principles of feminism. With stories from five decades in activism, she illustrates why calling people in—inviting them into conversation instead of calling them out and focusing on your shared values over a desire for punishment—is the more strategic choice if you want to make real change. And she shows you how to do so, whether in the workplace, at college, or at home.

THE FIRST LADIES: A NOVEL

MARIE BENEDICT & VICTORIA C. MURRAY

BERKLEY (2023)

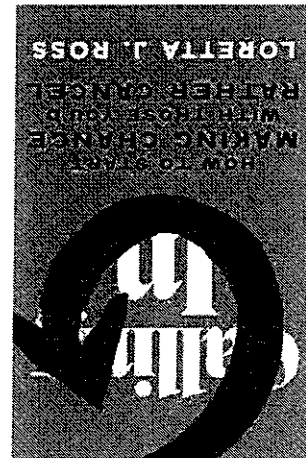
This novel explores the extraordinary friendship between First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt and civil rights activist Mary McLeod Bethune that changed the world. The daughter of formerly enslaved parents, Bethune refuses to back down to White supremacists, marching on as an activist and an educator. Awestruck, Roosevelt is eager to make her acquaintance. They become fast friends, confiding their secrets, hopes, and dreams and holding each other's hands through tragedy and triumph. This is the story of two different, yet equally formidable, passionate, and committed women, and the way in which their singular friendship helped form the foundation for the modern civil rights movement. (V)

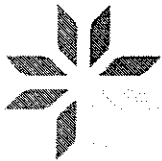
THE GIRLS WHO STEPPED OUT OF LINE: UNTOLD STORIES OF THE WOMEN WHO CHANGED THE COURSE OF WORLD WAR II

MAJOR GENERAL MARI K. EDER

SOURCEBOOKS (2021)

Mari K. Eder unearths the remarkable true stories of 15 unsung heroines whose courage, brilliance, and defiance altered the course of World War II. These women didn't serve for recognition but because it was right. This powerful work of narrative nonfiction transports you into the lives of resistance fighters, medics, spies, scientists, and ordinary women who accomplished the extraordinary. With meticulous research and vivid storytelling, Eder restores these women to their rightful place in history making the invisible unforgettable. These stories are a legacy of resistance, courage, and the unbreakable spirit of women who refused to be written out of history.





HAVE YOU GOT GOOD RELIGION? BLACK WOMEN'S FAITH, COURAGE, AND MORAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

ANNEMARIE MINGO

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS (2024)

This book reveals how Black churchwomen's faith, courage, and moral imagination transformed a nation. Mingo explores how these women's deep faith and moral imagination compelled them to risk their lives challenging systemic injustice—not for personal gain, but out of conviction that something larger was at stake. Drawing on their personal accounts, Mingo examines the liberation theology they created and the ethical framework that sustained them through threats, violence, and imprisonment. Their stories offer powerful insights for contemporary activists, providing a model of faith-driven courage in the ongoing pursuit of justice and moral transformation.

HOW WE LEARN TO BE BRAVE: DECISIVE MOMENTS

IN LIFE AND FAITH

MARIANN EDGAR BUDDÉ, EPISCOPAL BISHOP OF WASHINGTON

AVERY (2023)

In this book, Buddé offers an inspirational guide to the key junctures in life that, if navigated with faith and discernment, help us become our most courageous selves. Here, Buddé explores the full range of decisive moments, from the most visible and dramatic to the internal and personal. She weaves together personal experiences with stories from Scripture, history, and pop culture to underscore the universality of these moments and the particular call each one of us must heed when they arrive.

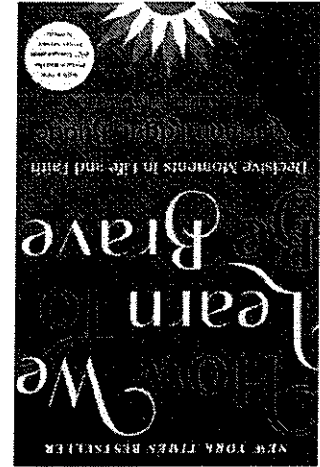
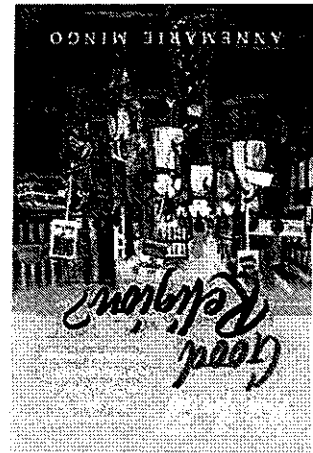
Book available in English & Spanish.

LOVELY ONE

KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

RANDOM HOUSE (2024)

In this unflinching account, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson invites readers in, tracing her family's ascent from segregation to her confirmation on America's highest court within the span of one generation. Jackson learned from her educator parents to take pride in her heritage. She describes her resolve as a young girl to honor this legacy and realize her dreams. Pulling back the curtain, she marries the public record of her life with what is less known. She reveals what it takes to advance in the legal profession when most people in power don't look like you, and to reconcile a demanding career with the joys and sacrifices of marriage and motherhood.





NECESSARY TROUBLE: GROWING UP AT MIDCENTURY

DREW GILPIN FAUST
PICADOR (2023)

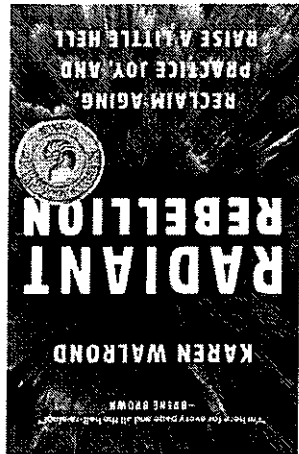
This memoir of coming of age in a conservative Southern family in postwar America captures a time of rapid change and fierce reaction in one young woman's life, tracing the transformations and aftershocks that many continue to grapple with today. A privileged White girl, the author was expected to adopt a willful blindness to the inequities of race and the constraints of gender. This proved intolerable and galvanizing. Through her love of learning and her active engagement in the civil rights, student, and antiwar movements, she forged a path that would lead her to become a historian of the very conflicts that shaped the world she grew up in.



RADIANT REBELLION: RECLAIM AGING, PRACTICE JOY, AND RAISE A LITTLE HELL

KAREN WALROND
BROADLEAF BOOKS (2023)

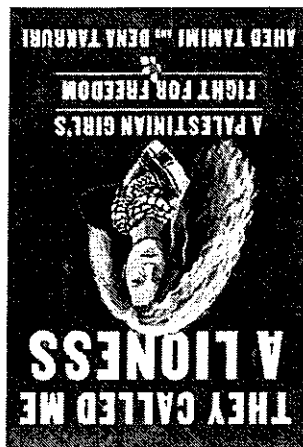
What if aging is something to aspire to, not dread? What if together we could forge a radiant rebellion against the idea of aging as a season of decline? Walrond does a deep dive into dimensions of getting older, including health, beauty, spirituality, connection, adventure, meaning, and purpose. Through conversations with social workers, neurologists, activists, and clergy, Walrond delves into why the dominant culture treats aging as a time of dwindling capacity. She also embarks on experiments that help her rebel against convention. A resources section offers journal prompts and strategies for creating a handbook for your own radiant rebellion.

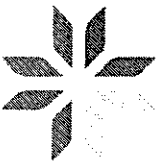


THEY CALLED ME A LIONESS: A PALESTINIAN GIRL'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

AHED TAMIMI & DENA TAKRURI
ONE WORLD (2022)

A Palestinian activist jailed at 16 after a confrontation with Israeli soldiers illuminates the daily struggles of life under occupation in this moving, deeply personal memoir. Ahed Tamimi is a world-renowned Palestinian activist who was raised in a West Bank village that became a center of the resistance to Israeli occupation. She came of age participating in nonviolent demonstrations against the occupation. She shares the human-scale story of an occupation that has riveted the world and shaped global politics. (V)





WHEN WOMEN LEAD: WHAT THEY ACHIEVE, WHY THEY SUCCEED, HOW WE CAN LEARN FROM THEM

JULIA BOORSTIN

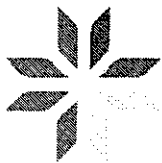
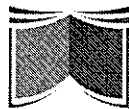
AVID READER PRESS (2022)

This groundbreaking, deeply reported work from CNBC's Julia Boorstin reveals the key characteristics that help top female leaders thrive as they innovate, grow businesses, and navigate crises. Throughout two decades as a TV reporter and creator of CNBC's Disruptor 50 franchise—interviewing and studying thousands of executives—she realized women who thrived shared key commonalities that made them uniquely equipped to lead, grow businesses, and navigate crises. By utilizing those strengths, they invented new business models, disrupted industries, and made massive profits along the way. Here, she brings together the stories of more than 60 female CEOs and leaders to illuminate how it's done.



I've always been an avid reader but what a joy it is to share my passion with hundreds of other reading enthusiasts, changing the world one page at a time!

—Mikela Haskins-Delmore, Northeastern Jurisdiction President



Youth Books

BLACK GIRL YOU ARE ATLAS

RENÉE WATSON

KOKILA (2024)

This semi-autobiographical collection of poems by award-winning author and poet Renée Watson presents readers with a thoughtful celebration of Black girlhood. Watson writes about her experience growing up as a young Black girl and the intersections of race, class, and gender. Using a variety of poetic forms, she shares recollections of her childhood in Portland, tender odes to the Black women in her life, and urgent calls for Black girls to step into their power. *Black Girl You Are Atlas* encourages young readers to embrace their future with a strong sense of sisterhood and celebration.

**DOROTHY HEIGHT (SHE PERSISTED)**

KELLY STARLING LYONS

PHILOMEL BOOKS (2023)

This book shares the story of Dorothy Height. Growing up as a Black girl in the 1920s and 1930s, Height was denied access to a local swimming pool as well as admission to Barnard College because of her race. But she persisted in pushing for change and became a seminal figure in both the civil rights and women's rights movements. She went on to be awarded the prestigious Presidential Medal of Freedom. In this biography, readers learn about the amazing life of Dorothy Height—and how she persisted.

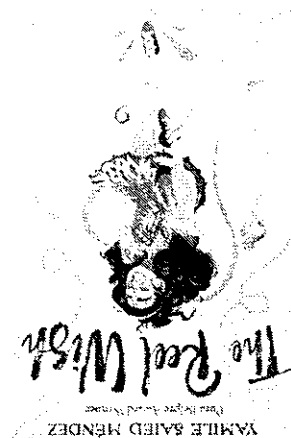
**THE REEL WISH**

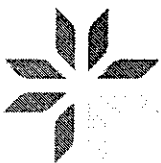
YAMILE SAIED MÉNDEZ

LEE & LOW BOOKS (2022)

Ballet is Florencia's entire world. After years of hard work, she was chosen as Clara in *The Nutcracker*. But she suffers a panic attack on opening night, and her best friend steps in to replace her. Florencia's whole world falls apart—the ballet studio expels her, and her best friend turns on her, tormenting her online and in real life. Therapy and family support help Florencia open up to new experiences. She even stumbles upon an Irish dance school and decides to give it a try. Can a new passion for Irish dance help Florencia find the joy of performing once more?

Book available in English & Spanish.





FIGHTING FOR YES! THE STORY OF DISABILITY RIGHTS ACTIVIST JUDITH HEUMANN

MARYANN COCCA-LEFFLER
ABRAMS BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS (2022)

This picture book biography celebrates the life and work of disability rights activist and icon Judith Heumann, highlighting one of her landmark achievements: leading the historic 504 Sit-in in 1977. From a very young age, Judy Heumann heard "no"—when she wanted to attend public school, and later, when she wanted her teaching license. In the 1970s, an important disability rights law, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, was waiting to be signed. She and other disability rights activists fought for a "yes." They held a sit-in until Section 504 was signed into law, making an extraordinary contribution to the disability rights movement.

I AM RUBY BRIDGES

RUBY BRIDGES
ORCHARD BOOKS (2022)

When Ruby Bridges was six years old, she became the first Black child to integrate the all-white William Frantz Elementary in Louisiana. Based on the pivotal events of 1960, Ruby Bridges reflects on her experience and how it changed the course of history and the trajectory of the civil rights movement. A personal and intimate look through a child's lens at a landmark moment, *I Am Ruby Bridges* offers hope and confidence to all children who aspire to be bridge-builders and change-makers.

SHE SANG FOR INDIA: HOW M.S. SUBBULAKSHMI USED HER VOICE FOR CHANGE

SUMA SUBRAMANIAM
FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX (BYR) (2022)

A 2023 New York Public Library Vibrant Voices Book, this picture-book biography introduces young readers to M.S. Subbulakshmi, a powerful Indian singer who advocated for justice and peace through song. Before Subbulakshmi was a famous Carnatic singer and the first Indian woman to perform at the United Nations, she was a young girl with a prodigious voice. But in the early 1900s, in India, girls were not allowed to perform for the public. She broke barriers by singing at small festivals. Eventually, she broke tradition to record her first album. At Gandhi's request, Subbulakshmi sang for India's freedom—and changed the world.





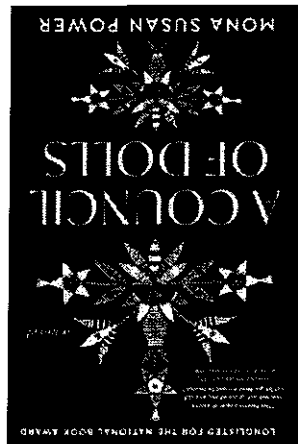
Adult Books

A COUNCIL OF DOLLS: A NOVEL

MONA SUSAN POWER

MARINER BOOKS (2023)

From Native American author Mona Susan Power comes this novel spanning three generations of Yanktonai Dakota women from the 19th century to the present day. *A Council of Dolls* is the story of three women—Sissy, born 1961; Lillian, born 1925; and Cora, born 1888—told in part through the stories of the dolls they carried. Praised as “quietly devastating and ultimately hopeful,” the novel shines a light on the echoing damage wrought by Indian boarding schools and the historical massacres of Indigenous people, with love and healing that comes alive on the page. (V)(S)

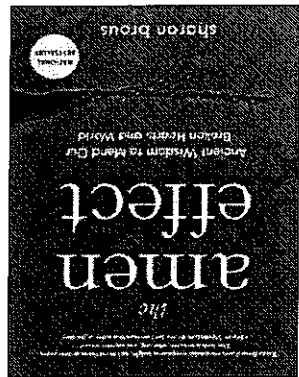


THE AMEN EFFECT: ANCIENT WISDOM TO MEND OUR BROKEN HEARTS AND WORLD

SHARON BROUS

AVERY (2024)

In a time of loneliness and isolation, social rupture, and alienation, what will it take to mend our broken hearts and rebuild our society? Leading American Rabbi Sharon Brous contends that it is through honoring our most basic human instinct—the yearning for real connection—that we reawaken our shared humanity and begin to heal. This sacred presence is captured by the word “amen,” a powerful ancient idea that we affirm the fullness of one another’s experience by demonstrating, in body and word: “I see you. You are not alone.” *The Amen Effect* offers a blueprint for a more meaningful life and a more connected and caring world.

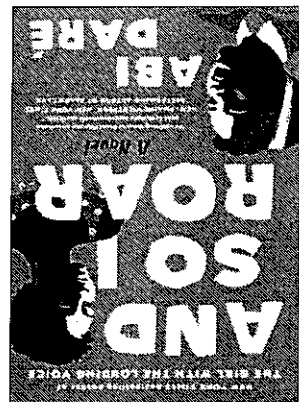


AND SO I ROAR: A NOVEL

ABI DARE

DUTTON (2024)

When Tia accidentally overhears a whispered conversation between her dying mother and her aunt, the repercussions send her on a desperate quest to uncover a secret her mother has been hiding for nearly two decades. Into this comes Adunni, a 14-year-old runaway who has found refuge with Tia. Soon, Tia has to make a terrible choice between protecting Adunni or finally learning the truth behind the secret her mother has hidden from her. And Adunni will learn that her “louding voice,” as she calls it, is more important than ever. Set in Nigeria. (V)(S)





WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

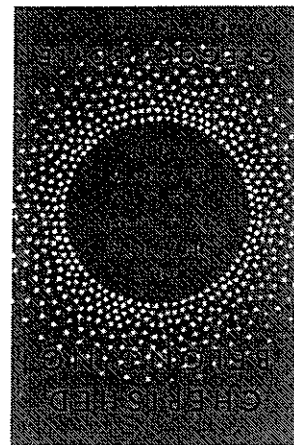


CHERISHED BELONGING: THE HEALING POWER OF LOVE IN DIVIDED TIMES

GREGORY BOYLE

AVID READER PRESS (2024)

Jesuit priest Gregory Boyle has transformed countless lives through his work as the founder of Homeboy Industries, the world's largest gang-intervention program. The program runs on two unwavering principles: 1) We are all inherently good, and 2) We belong to each other. Boyle believes these ideas allow all to cultivate a new way of seeing the world. In *Cherished Belonging*, Boyle recalls Christianity's origins as a spiritual movement of equality, emancipation, and peace. His vision of community is a space for people to join together and heal one another, a world dedicated to kindness as a constant and radical act of defiance. (V)(L)



THE COMFORT OF CROWS: A BACKYARD YEAR

MARGARET RENKL

SPIEGEL & GRAU (2023)

Across 52 chapters, Renkl follows the creatures and plants in her backyard over the course of a year. From a crow spied on New Year's Day to the lingering bluebirds of December, what develops is a portrait of joy and grief: joy in the ongoing pleasures of the natural world, and grief over winters that end too soon and songbirds that grow fewer and fewer. Along the way, we also glimpse the changing rhythms of a human life. This lovely and deeply moving book from a cherished observer of the natural world features 52 original color artworks by the author's brother.



HONOR: A NOVEL

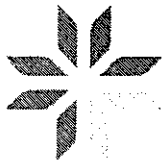
THRITY UMRIGAR

ALGONQUIN BOOKS (2022)

Reluctantly, Indian American journalist Smita has returned to India to cover a story. As she follows the case of Meena—a Hindu woman attacked for marrying a Muslim man—Smita comes face to face with a story that threatens to unearth the painful secrets of Smita's own past. While Meena's fate hangs in the balance, Smita tries in every way she can to right the scales. She also finds herself increasingly drawn to Mohan, an Indian man she meets on assignment. *Honor* shares the fictional story of two couples and the sometimes dangerous and heartbreaking challenges of love across a cultural divide in India. (V)(L)

Book available in English & Spanish.





NOTHING FOR LARA LOVE



JAMES: A NOVEL

PERCIVAL EVERETT

DOUBLEDAY (2024)

This Pulitzer Prize- and National Book Award-winning book is an action-packed, harrowing, heartbreaking, and darkly humorous reimagining of the literary classic, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, told from the enslaved Jim's point of view. When Jim overhears that he is about to be sold to a man in New Orleans, he runs away until he can formulate a plan. Meanwhile, Huck takes his own death to escape his violent father. Thus begins the dangerous and transcendent journey by raft down the Mississippi River toward the elusive and unreliable promise of the Free States and beyond. (V)(S)(L)

Book available in English & Spanish.

THE MANY LIVES OF MAMA LOVE: A MEMOIR OF LYING, STEALING, WRITING, AND HEALING

LARA LOVE HARDIN

SIMON & SCHUSTER (2023)

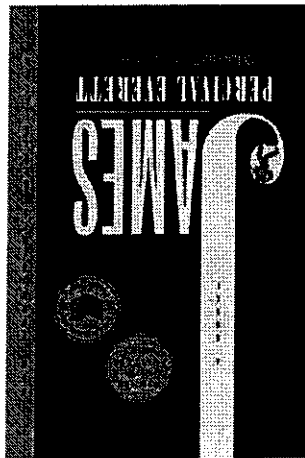
In this harrowing, hilarious memoir, Hardin recounts her slide from soccer mom to opioid addict to jailhouse shot caller. Convicted of 32 felonies, she navigates prison's complex social hierarchy, earning the nickname "Mama Love." Upon release, she reinvents herself as a ghostwriter, meeting Oprah, meditating with the Dalai Lama, and dining with Archbishop Desmond Tutu. But shame, she discovers, is a poison worse than heroin, and impossible to detox from. Hardin explores shame, redemption, self-forgiveness, and rebuilding a life within a system that makes it nearly impossible to move past your worst moments. (L)

REDWOOD COURT

DÉLANA R.A. DAMERON

THE DIAL PRESS (2024)

The baby of the family, Mika Tabor, spends much of her time in the care of loved ones, listening to their stories and witnessing their struggles. On Redwood Court, the cul-de-sac in her Southern all-Black working-class suburb, Mika learns important lessons from the people who raise her: her exhausted parents, her older sister, her retired grandparents, and the many neighbors who hold tight to the community they've built, committed to fostering joy and love in an America so insistent on seeing Black people stumble and fall. It's a celebration of extraordinary, ordinary people striving to achieve their own American dreams. Fiction.



Scriptural basis for the Reading Program

"The Gifts of Wisdom"

Proverbs 8:1-21

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

On January 15, 1959, life for one family changed forever. White supremacists kidnapped and severely beat rural Alabama preacher Israel Page, nearly killing him because he had sued a White sheriff's deputy for injuries suffered in a car crash. After "they got Daddy," his children began leaving the Jim Crow South, the event leaving an indelible mark on the family and its future. Decades later, the events of that day fueled the epic quest of Page's granddaughter, journalist Sharon Tubbs, to learn who had "gotten" her mother's daddy and why. *They Got Daddy* follows Tubbs on her moving journey from Fort Wayne, Indiana, to the back roads of Alabama. (V)

QUARRY BOOKS (2023)

SHARON TUBBS

**THEY GOT DADDY:
ONE FAMILY'S RECKONING WITH RACISM AND FAITH**



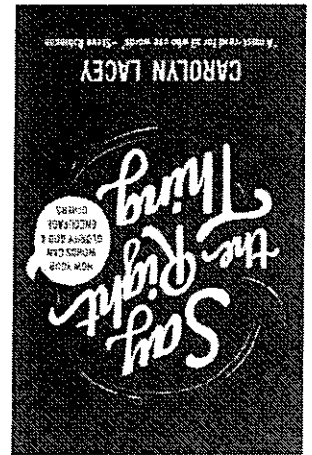
Many of us want to say the right thing, but we don't know how. This positive, constructive book delves into the Bible to show us how to overcome specific temptations, such as gossip or angry words. But it also goes much further. It shows readers how we can use our speech to bring beauty, hope, truth, and comfort into the lives of those around us—and to give glory to God. Full of gracious words and practical help, this book will help readers discover how to let the gospel shape their speech and enjoy the blessings that flow from it.

Book available in English & Korean.

THE GOOD BOOK COMPANY (2023)

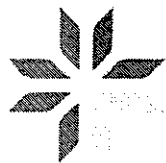
CAROLYN LACEY

**SAY THE RIGHT THING: HOW YOUR WORDS
CAN GLORIFY GOD AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS**



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH READING PROGRAM





BUFFALO DREAMER

VIOLET DUNCAN

NANCY PAULSEN BOOKS (2024)

Summer and her family always spend relaxed summers in Alberta, Canada, on the reservation where her mom's family lives. But this year, Summer has begun to have vivid dreams in which she's running away from one of the many real-life residential schools that tore Native children from their families and tried to erase their Native identities. Then she learns unmarked children's graves have been discovered at the school her grandpa attended as a child. Now more people are speaking up about their harrowing experiences at these places, including her grandfather. When the town holds a rally, she's eager to take part—and uncover the source of her unsettling dreams. Fiction.



IMPOSTER SYNDROME

PATRICIA PARK

CROWN BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS (2023)

Alejandra Kim feels like she doesn't belong anywhere. Not at home, where Ale faces tense silence from Ma since Papá's passing. Not in Jackson Heights, where she isn't considered Latinx enough and is seen as too PC for her own good. Certainly not at her Manhattan prep school, where her predominantly White classmates pride themselves on being "woke." She only has to survive her senior year before she can escape to college. Maybe there, Ale will finally find a place to call her own. But there's a problem—her usual keeping-her-head-down tactic isn't working. Fiction.

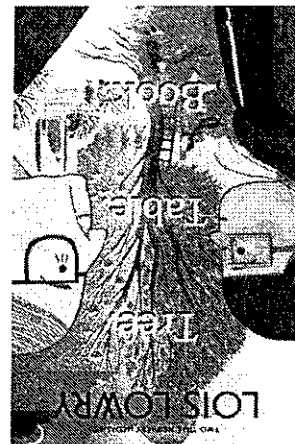


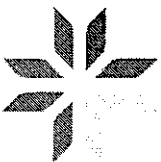
TREE, TABLE, BOOK.

LOIS LOWRY

CLARION BOOKS (2024)

Precocious 11-year-old Sophie sets out to save her elderly neighbor (who is also her best friend) after the elder Sophie begins having memory problems, burning teakettles, and forgetting things. It looks like her son is going to steal her away forever. Young Sophie isn't having that. So she sets out to help elder Sophie's memory, with the aid of her neighborhood friends Ral-phi and Oliver. But when she opens the floodgates of elder Sophie's memories, she winds up listening to stories that will illustrate just how much there is to know about her dear friend—stories of war, hunger, cruelty, and ultimately love. Fiction.





GIRLS ON THE RISE

AMANDA GORMAN

VIKING BOOKS FOR YOUNG READERS (2025)

From presidential inaugural poet Amanda Gorman comes this picture book about girls standing together. As the book shares, girls are strong on their own but even stronger when they work to uplift one another. In this galvanizing original poem, girls and girlhood are celebrated in their many forms, all beautiful, not for how they look but for how they look into the face of fear. With vivid illustrations by LoveIs Wise, Gorman reminds us how girls have shaped our history while marching boldly into the future.

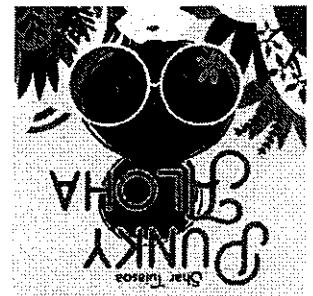


PUNKY ALOHA

SHAR TUIASOA

HARPERCOLLINS (2022)

From Polynesian author-illustrator Shar Tuiasoa comes this story of Punky Aloha, a girl who uses the power of saying "aloha" to experience exciting and unexpected adventures. Punky loves to do a lot of things—except meeting new friends. She doesn't feel brave enough. So when her grandmother asks her to get butter for her famous banana bread, Punky hesitates. But with the help of her grandmother's magical sunglasses and a lot of aloha in her heart, Punky sets off on a big adventure across Oahu for the very first time. Will she be able to get the butter for Grandma?



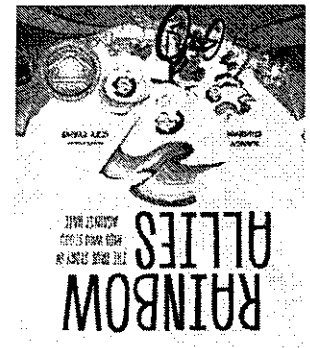
RAINBOW ALLIES:

THE TRUE STORY OF KIDS WHO STOOD AGAINST HATE

NANCY CHURNIN

BEAMING BOOKS (2024)

When a lesbian couple comes home one day to find their Pride flag stolen and their front porch egged, the sense of belonging they had felt is threatened. Are they safe in their house? The support they need comes from an unexpected place—the neighborhood's children. Together, the local kids create a plan to show Cari and Lauri just how valued they are in the community. Based on real-life events, Rainbow Allies tells the story of how a Massachusetts neighborhood rallied together around Cari and Lauri—and their dogs, Tink and Scout—to make them feel welcomed and loved again after an act of hate. This book is an inspiring introduction to allyship for young readers and changemakers.



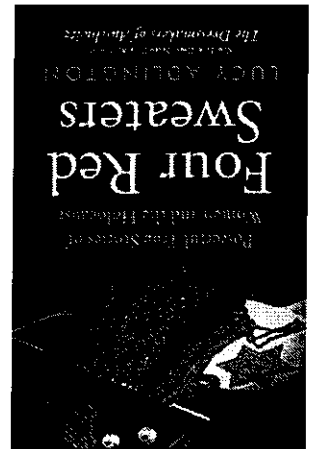


FOUR RED SWEATERS: POWERFUL TRUE STORIES OF WOMEN AND THE HOLOCAUST

LUCY ADLINGTON

HARPER (2025)

Jock Heidenstein, Anita Lasaker, Chana Zumerkorn, and Regina Feldman all faced the Holocaust in different ways. While they did not know each other, each had a red sweater that would play a major part in their lives. In this deeply moving account, award-winning clothes historian Lucy Adlington documents their stories, knitting together the experiences that fragmented their families and their lives. A powerful reminder of the suffering they endured and a celebration of courage, love, and tenacity, this moving piece of narrative nonfiction illuminates moments long lost to history, now pieced back together by a simple garment. (V)



HALFWAY HOME: RACE, PUNISHMENT, AND THE AFTERLIFE OF MASS INCARCERATION

REUBEN JONATHAN MILLER

LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY (2021)

Chaplain and sociologist Reuben Miller spent years alongside prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their friends and families. What his work revealed: Life after incarceration is its own form of prison. The idea that someone can serve a debt and return as a full-fledged member of society is one of America's most persistent myths. Recent releases individuals face legal and social limitations, resulting in off-limits jobs, apartments that cannot be occupied, and votes that cannot be cast. The book is a poignant and eye-opening call to arms that exposes how the policies we've enacted prevent people from rebuilding their lives and how mass incarceration has fundamentally changed our democracy. (V)(L)

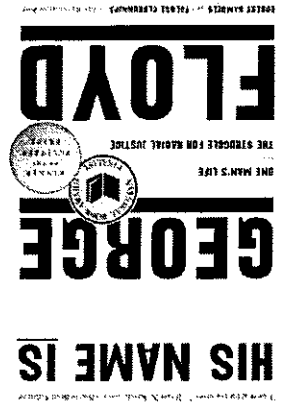


HIS NAME IS GEORGE FLOYD: ONE MAN'S LIFE AND THE STRUGGLE FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

ROBERT SAMUELS & TOLUSE OLORUNNIPAA

VIKING (2022)

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd became the latest Black person to die at the hands of the police, murdered outside of a Minneapolis convenience store by White officer Derek Chauvin. The events of that day are now tragically familiar. The video of his death set off the largest protest movement in the history of the United States, awakening millions to the pervasiveness of racial injustice. But long before his name became synonymous with civil rights, Floyd was a father, partner, athlete, and friend who strived for a better life. This landmark biography reveals how systemic racism shaped Floyd's life and legacy, exploring how one man's tragic experience brought about a global movement for change. (V)





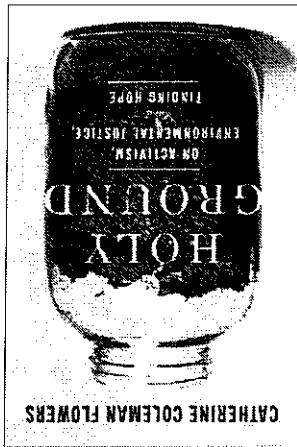
SOCIAL ACTION



HOLY GROUND: ON ACTIVISM, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND FINDING HOPE

CATHERINE COLEMAN FLOWERS
SPIEGEL & GRAU (2025)

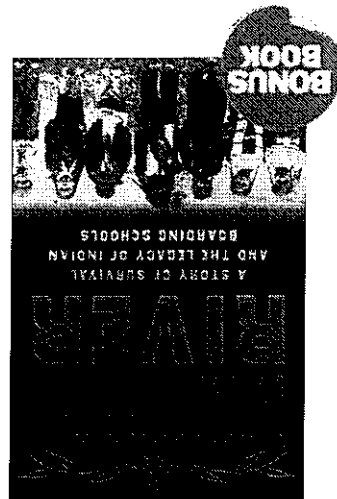
The MacArthur Award-winning Catherine Coleman Flowers has dedicated her life to fighting for the most vulnerable communities—rural, poor, and of color—who have been deprived of the basic civil right to a clean, safe, and sustainable environment. The essays within *Holy Ground* draw on history to illuminate the most pressing issues of this moment: from climate change to human rights, from rural poverty to reproductive justice, from the notorious history of Lowndes County, Alabama, to the broader crisis of racialized disinvestment in the South. Drawn from a lifetime of organizing, activism, and change-making, *Holy Ground* equips with clarity, lights a way forward, and rouses readers to action for our planet.



MEDICINE RIVER: A STORY OF SURVIVAL AND THE LEGACY OF INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOLS

MARY ANNETTE PEMBER
PANTHEON (2025)

From the mid-19th century to the late 1930s, tens of thousands of Native children were pulled from their tribal communities to attend boarding schools. Sponsored by the U.S. government but often run by religious orders with little to no regulation in a calculated attempt to dismantle tribes by pulling apart Native families. Children were beaten for speaking their Native languages; denied food, clothing, and comfort; and forced to work menial jobs in terrible conditions, all while utterly deprived of love and affection. Ojibwe journalist Mary Pembro's mother was sent to a boarding school in northern Wisconsin at age 5. Bringing together her own family's story, investigative reporting, and historical insight, Mary Annette Pember invites readers into a deeper understanding of the profound legacy of Indian Boarding Schools. (V)

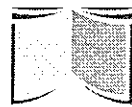


MY SIDE OF THE RIVER: A MEMOIR

ELIZABETH CAMARILLO GUTIERREZ
ST. MARTIN'S PRESS (2024)

Born in Tucson, Arizona, Gutierrez was preparing to enter her first year of high school when her parents' visas expired, and they were forced to return to Mexico. Immediately, she was left responsible for her younger brother and her education. Determined not to let go of the opportunities the United States could provide, she stayed in the United States after her parents left. She became what her school would describe as "an unaccompanied homeless youth," one of thousands of underage victims of family separation because of broken immigration laws. Her memoir explores separation, generational trauma, and the toll of the American dream. (L)





ORIGINAL SINS: THE (MIS)EDUCATION OF BLACK AND NATIVE CHILDREN AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF AMERICAN RACISM

EVE L. EWING
ONE WORLD (2025)

In *Original Sins*, Ewing argues that American schools were never neutral institutions but deliberately designed to reinforce racial hierarchies. Rather than equalizing opportunity, the education system historically prepared Black students for menial labor and sought to "civilize" Native students while promoting White intellectual superiority. These inequities persist today through standardized testing, academic tracking, discipline disparities, and unequal distribution of resources. Ewing contends that these mechanisms operate below public awareness, making them especially durable. Ultimately, she calls for a fundamental rethinking of what schools are truly meant to accomplish and which students they have historically been built to serve.

ROOTED: THE AMERICAN LEGACY OF LAND THEFT AND SHIP

BREA BAKER
ONE WORLD (2024)

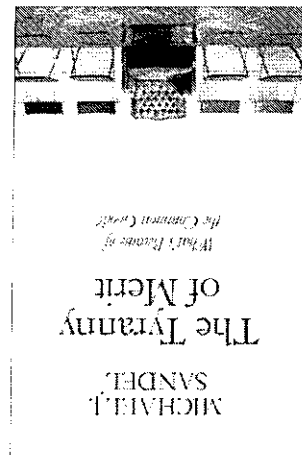
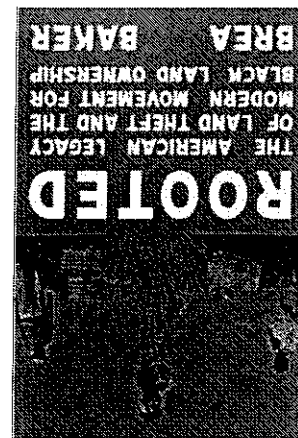
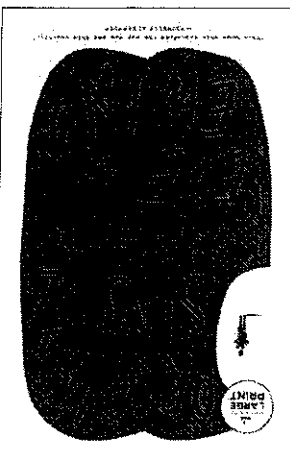
Why do Black people in the United States own less than 1% of rural land? Baker uncovers the devastating history of Black and Indigenous land dispossession in America, arguing that the racial wealth gap cannot be understood without confronting centuries of theft, displacement, and exploitation. Between 1910 and 1997, Black Americans lost roughly 90% of their farmland, a loss that entrenched inequality and severed communities from generational wealth. Weaving in her own family's history, Baker connects this broader story to something intimate and urgent. Ultimately, she makes the case that restoring land equity is not just economic justice—it is the foundation for healing both people and the land itself.

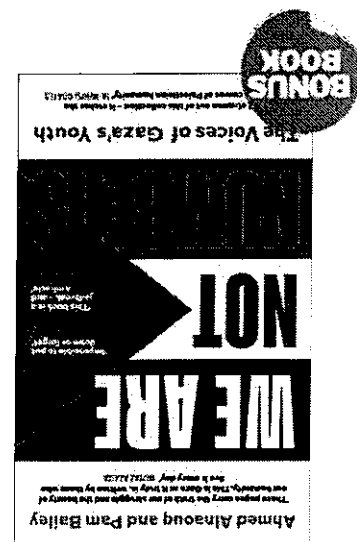
THE TYRANNY OF MERIT: WHAT'S BECOME OF THE COMMON GOOD

MICHAEL J. SANDEL, TRANSLATED BY KUJIN HAM
FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX (2020)

What has become of the common good? That's the question world-renowned philosopher Michael J. Sandel explores. Sandel argues that to overcome the crises depending our world, we must rethink the attitudes toward success and failure that have accompanied globalization and rising inequality. Sandel shows the hubris a meritocracy generates among the "winners" and the harsh judgment it imposes on those left behind, tracing the dire consequences across a wide swath of American life. He offers an alternative way of thinking about success—more attentive to the role of luck in human affairs, more conducive to an ethic of humility and solidarity, and more affirming of the dignity of work.

Book available in English, Korean, & Spanish.





**WE ARE NOT NUMBERS:
THE VOICES OF GAZA'S YOUTH**
EDITED BY AHMED ALNAOUQ & PAM BAILEY
OLIVE BRANCH PRESS (2025)

A teenage girl stares at her roof, hoping it won't collapse over her head. A young student searches the Internet for photos of libraries around the world, hoping he'll be able to visit one day. Another walks the city, taking notes of all the buildings she dreams of repairing. These are the stories of young people from Gaza, born under Israeli occupation and blockade. They are people who have endured unspeakable struggles and losses, who keep fighting to be recognized not as numbers, but as human beings with hopes, dreams, and lives worth living. Essays and poems from 2015-2023. (V)

**WE DO THIS 'TIL WE FREE US:
ABOLITIONIST ORGANIZING AND TRANSFORMING
JUSTICE**

MARIAME KABA
HAYMARKET BOOKS (2021)

What if social transformation and liberation isn't about waiting for someone else to come along and save us? What if ordinary people have the power to free ourselves? In this collection of essays and interviews, Kaba reflects on the deep work of abolition and transformative political struggle. With chapters on seeking justice beyond the punishment system, transforming how we deal with harm and accountability, and finding hope in collective struggle for abolition, Kaba's work is deeply rooted in the relentless belief that we can fundamentally change the world. As she writes, "Nothing that we do that is worthwhile is done alone."

Book available in English & Spanish.





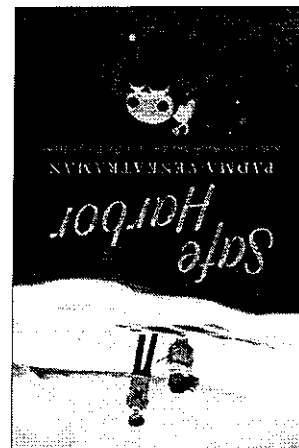
Youth Books

SAFE HARBOR

PADMA VENKATRAMAN

NANCY PAULSEN BOOKS (2025)

When Geetha and her mom move from India after her parents' divorce, they leave everything Geetha loves behind. Geetha is bullied at her new school for her clothes, her food, and her English. She finds some solace in her new friend Miguel, and they help rescue an injured harp seal stranded on the beach. But Geetha can feel her anger building. She sees many of her fears mirrored in the injured seal when she visits it at the Marine Mammal Rehabilitation Center. But when she and Miguel start a beach-clean-up venture, she's surprised to find how many kind kids are out there. Fiction.



WE DESERVE MONUMENTS

JAS HAMMONDS

ROARING BROOK PRESS (2022)

Seventeen-year-old Avery Anderson is convinced her senior year is ruined when she's uprooted from her life in D.C. and forced into the hostile home of her terminally ill grandmother, Mama Letty. The tension between Avery's mom and Mama Letty unearth's past drama they refuse to discuss. While tempers flare in her family, Avery finds friendship in unexpected places: in Simone Cole, her captivating next-door neighbor, and Jade Oliver, daughter of the town's most prominent family—whose mother's murder remains unsolved. As the three girls grow closer—Avery and Simone's friendship blossoms into romance—the sharp-edged opinions of their small town begin to hint at something insidious underneath. Fiction. (V)(L)



The Reading Program was really one of the first things that captured my United Women in Faith imagination because back in the day when I was young my mother was a UMW Secretary of Program Resources and she would request my assistance in preparing for displays. I always loved to scan the books when I was "helping" and it made me think—How can an organization with this kind of reading list be anything but exciting and inviting! —Ellen Lipsey, Reading Program Committee Member and South Central Jurisdiction President

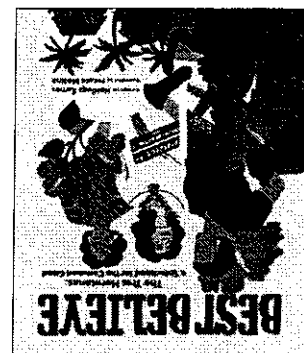


BEST BELIEVE: THE TRES HERMANAS, A SISTERHOOD FOR THE COMMON GOOD

NONIEGA RAMOS

CAROLRHODA BOOKS (2024)

Evelina Antonetty, Lillian López, and Elba Cabrera moved from Puerto Rico to New York City as children and grew up to become leaders in their Bronx community. Evelina, an activist for social causes, founded United Bronx Parents. Lillian became a librarian and administrator who fought for Spanish and bilingual books and Spanish-speaking library staff. Elba worked closely with Evelina and became an ambassador and advocate for the arts. Rhythmic verse by Noniega Ramos and vibrant illustrations by Nicole Medina provide a stirring look at these three dynamic changemakers.

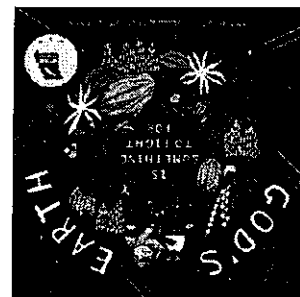


GOD'S EARTH IS SOMETHING TO FIGHT FOR

AMY HOUTS

SUNBEAM (2023)

This Christian picture book shares why human beings are responsible for fighting climate change—and how kids can help. Through Bible verses, author Amy Houts explains to kids that everyone must work together to save the earth by reversing the effects of hundreds of years of human-created environmental damage. From organizing peaceful protests and writing letters to elected officials to recycling and conserving water at home, kids are encouraged to make change and to ask others to do the same. The book also includes suggestions for readers to reduce their carbon footprints.



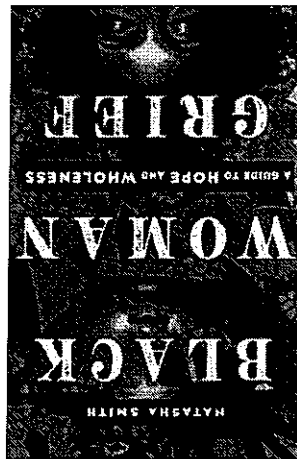
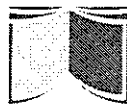
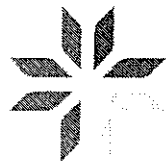
OPAL LEE AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FREE: THE TRUE STORY OF THE GRANDMOTHER OF JUNETEENTH

ALICE FAYE DUNCAN

TOMMY NELSON (2022)

Black activist Opal Lee envisioned Juneteenth as a holiday for everyone. Every year as a kid, Opal looked forward to the Juneteenth picnic—a drumming, dancing, delicious party. She knew from Granddaddy Zak's stories that Juneteenth celebrated the day the freedom news of President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation finally sailed into Texas in 1865—more than two years after the president had declared it! But she soon discovered that many Americans had never heard of the holiday. Join Opal on her historic journey to recognize and celebrate "freedom for all."





**BLACK WOMAN GRIEF:
A GUIDE TO HOPE AND WHOLENESS**
NATASHA SMITH
INTERVARSITY PRESS (2025)

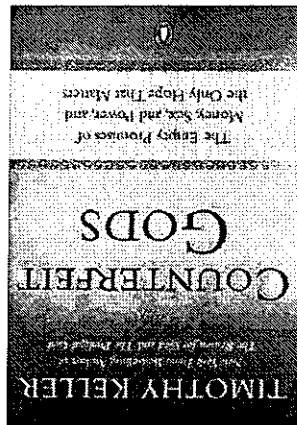
Natasha Smith unearths a painful reality: Trauma, loss, and grief are embedded in the lived experience of the Black woman in the United States. Smith discusses grief that is specifically applicable to Black women, offering them affirmation and a safe place to exhale. Yet amid a broken world and broken systems that have weighed down Black women for generations, there is hope because the kingdom of God is at hand. Smith takes readers through narrative and biblical truths, provides a space made by and for Black women to be seen and understood by God, and encourages Black women to live a God-filled life in a grief-filled world.

**COUNTERFEIT GODS: THE EMPTY PROMISES OF MONEY,
SEX, AND POWER, AND THE ONLY HOPE THAT MATTERS**
TIMOTHY KELLER

VIKING (2009)

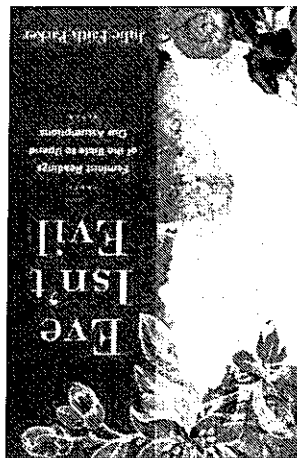
Many of us placed our faith in success, money, or true love, believing they held the key to happiness. But the truth is that we made lesser gods of these good things—gods that can't give us what we really need. There is only one God who can wholly satisfy our cravings. In *Counterfeit Gods*, Keller applies his trademark approach to show us how a proper understanding of the Bible reveals the unfinished truth about societal ideals and our own hearts. This powerful message comes at a crucial time for both the faithful and the skeptical.

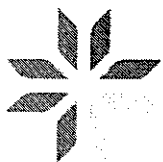
Available in English, Korean, & Spanish.



**EVE ISN'T EVIL: FEMINIST READINGS OF THE BIBLE TO
UPEND OUR ASSUMPTIONS**
JULIE FAITH PARKER
BAKER ACADEMIC (2023)

Intertwining academic knowledge and candid, personal, and sometimes humorous stories, Julie Faith Parker helps readers engage biblical texts with both mind and heart—to learn the Bible's stories, explore theological ideas, question common assumptions, develop interpretive skills, and grow in their faith. In each chapter, Parker reads biblical texts through a feminist lens. Parker's reflections show how vital our readings of the Bible can be as a source of strength, guidance, and joyful defiance. Additional features include conversation or reflection questions and an overview of the entire Bible, summarizing each book in one line.





FIELD NOTES FOR THE WILDERNESS:

PRACTICES FOR AN EVOLVING FAITH

SARAH BESSEY

CONVERGENT BOOKS (2024)

Sarah Bessey is an expert at faithfully stumbling forward. As a New York Times bestselling author and co-founder of Evolving Faith, a vital community for progressive Christians, she has been trusted by thousands of people to pursue a reconstruction of faith centered on compassion, truth, and inclusion. Here, she guides readers through multiple principles to live by for an evolving faith, including practicing wonder and curiosity as spiritual disciplines; mothering ourselves with compassion and empathy; making space for lament and righteous rage; finding good spiritual teachers; and discovering what we are for in this life, and moving in that direction.



GOD DIDN'T MAKE US TO HATE US: 40 DEVOTIONS TO

LIBERATE YOUR FAITH FROM FEAR AND RECONNECT

WITH JOY

REV. LIZZIE MCMANUS-DAIL

TARCHERPERIGEE (2025)

For those feeling disenchanted, disillusioned, and deconstructed, Lizzie McManus-Dail offers a first-of-its-kind devotional to help Christians love and be loved by Jesus without hateful or abusive theology. If you're one of these believers, this feminist, anti-racist, LGBTQ-affirming devotional will take you on a journey of spiritual re-enchantment. Featuring 40 devotions on God's radical and liberating salvation, it's designed to help you heal your church hurt, restore your sense of community, and embrace Jesus' heart-healing forgiveness. Move beyond rigidity and reconnect with the undeniable truth: God made you to love you.



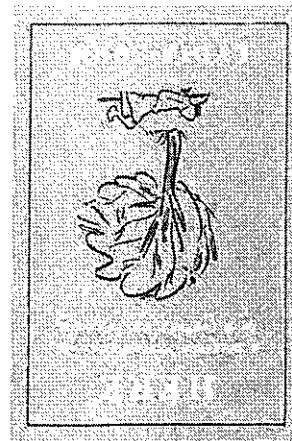
HERE: A SPIRITUALITY OF STAYING

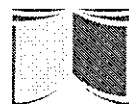
IN A CULTURE OF LEAVING

LYDIA SOHN

CONVERGENT BOOKS (2025)

Lydia Sohn was a serial burn-it-down-and-make-a-fresh-start girl until she encountered the Rule of St. Benedict with its vow of stability, and her world was transformed. Sohn paused to consider what she wanted out of life—identity, purpose, community—and had an epiphany: Everything she needed to live the life she desired was already within her reach. Here pushes back against our age of constant reinvention and the cultural message that we should do whatever it takes to get wherever we want to go. Instead, Sohn's message is the opposite: stay. Stay and cultivate the immense potential and beauty that lies dormant within your circumstances.



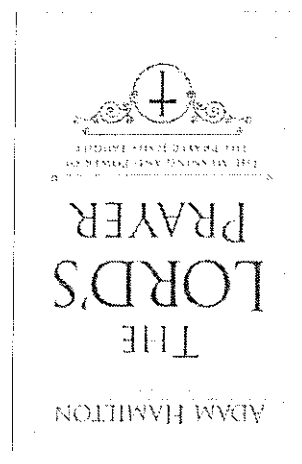


THE LORD'S PRAYER: THE MEANING AND POWER OF THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT

ADAM HAMILTON

ABINGDON PRESS (2021)

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, Jesus gave them the Lord's Prayer. He likely taught it to his followers often, not just once. He never intended the Lord's Prayer to be a museum piece, framed and placed on a mantel. It was Jesus teaching God's people, through his disciples, how to pray. In this book, United Methodist pastor Adam Hamilton guides us to really know and pray the Lord's Prayer. He explores each of its rich lines and their meaning in the Bible, illuminating what we ask of God and what we ask of ourselves through its words. He also teaches us how to use it as a pattern for our own prayer life.

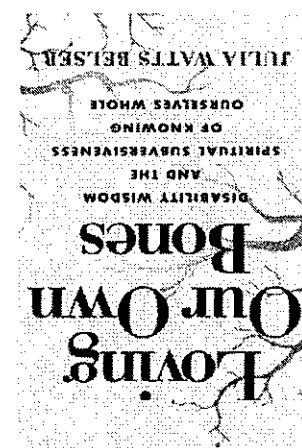


LOVING OUR OWN BONES: DISABILITY WISDOM AND THE SPIRITUAL SUBVERSIVENESS OF KNOWING OURSELVES WHOLE

JULIA WATTS BELSER

BEACON PRESS (2023)

Open the Bible, and disability is everywhere. Moses believes his stutter renders him unable to answer God's call. Jacob's encounter with an angel leaves him changed not just spiritually but physically: he gains a limp. For centuries, these stories have been told and retold in ways that treat disability as a metaphor for spiritual incapacity or as a challenge to be overcome. Through fresh and unexpected readings of the Bible, *Loving Our Own Bones* paints a portrait of what it means to be disabled and one of God's beloved. Belser delves into sacred literature, braiding insights of disabled, feminist, Black, and queer thinkers with her own experiences.



DRAW THE CIRCLE WIDE: AN EXPLORATION OF CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY

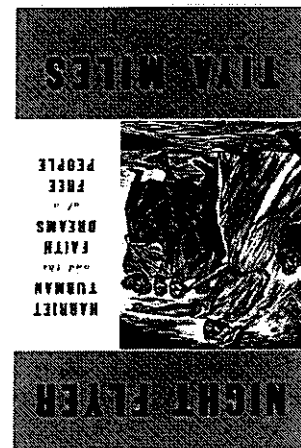
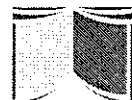
(ADULT CURRICULUM BY KATHY HARVEY NELSON)

CONTRIBUTORS: SHIRLEY DURR, MARYANN VERGHESE, OLIVIA DIAGOSTINO

Journey together to explore the question, "What does kin-dom hospitality look like?" In the adult curriculum, *Draw the Circle Wide: An Exploration of Christian Hospitality*, participants will explore with others what it means to pursue spiritual hospitality as it is presented in Scripture.

Available in English, Korean, & Spanish.





NIGHT FLYER: HARRIET TUBMAN AND THE FAITH DREAMS OF A FREE PEOPLE

TIYA MILES

PENGUIN PRESS (2024)

With her characteristic tenderness and imaginative genius, Tiya Miles retells Harriet Tubman's legendary story, focusing on Tubman's spirituality and ecology. *Night Flyer* considers the ecological realities of Harriet Tubman's surroundings and examines her kinship with other enslaved women who, like her, passed through a spiritual wilderness and recorded those travels in profound and moving memoirs. What emerges is a human being whose mysticism becomes more palpable the more we understand it—a story that offers us powerful inspiration for our time of troubles. *Night Flyer* explores the principles and tactics that guided Harriet Tubman, with a focus on her spirituality and ecology. (V)

SEASON'S GREETINGS: CHRISTMAS LETTERS FROM THOSE WHO WERE THERE

RUTH L. BOLING

UPPER ROOM BOOKS (2024)

Rediscover the beloved Christmas story this year through the words of those who were there. From King Herod to the magi, the innkeeper, the midwife, and even Jesus himself, hear the dramatic stories of the Bible characters forever changed by the miracle in Bethlehem so long ago. As we hear multiple perspectives on what Jesus' birth and life meant to these characters of old, we're invited to ask what it means for us now. Each chapter ends with a prayer, reflection questions, and journaling prompts, making this new resource an enriching Advent companion for individuals, small groups, and church leaders alike.

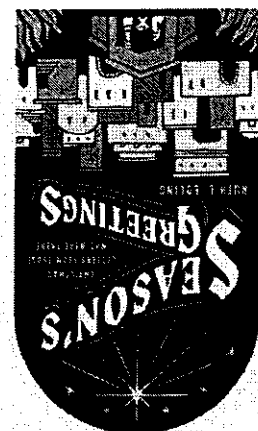
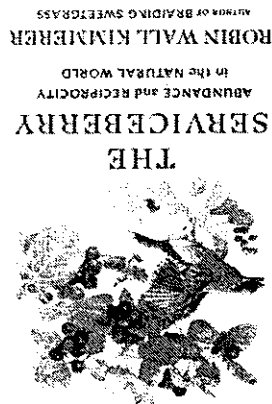
THE SERVICEBERRY: ABUNDANCE AND RECIPROCITY IN THE NATURAL WORLD

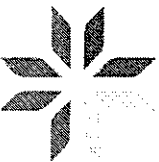
ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

SCRIBNER (2024)

While harvesting serviceberries alongside birds, indigenous scientist, MacArthur Fellow, and *Braiding Sweetgrass* author Robin Wall Kimmerer reflects on reciprocity and the gift economy. Our economy thrives on scarcity, competition, and hoarding—a system that harms what we love. The serviceberry offers a different model: it freely distributes its abundance, strengthening its natural community and ensuring its own survival through interconnectedness. Drawing on indigenous wisdom and the plant world, Kimmerer invites us to reimagine what we value most. *The Serviceberry* is an antidote to our broken relationships and misguided priorities, reminding us that "hoarding won't save us; all flourishing is mutual."

Available in English & Spanish.





WITH GOD IN EVERY BREATH: A GUIDE TO DRAWING CLOSER TO JESUS THROUGH YOUR SENSES

WHITNEY R. SIMPSON

NAVPRESS (2025)

Many of us yearn for a deeper connection with God but struggle to find the time or space to cultivate it amid our busy lives. The daily stress of meeting responsibilities leaves us longing to connect with God and find rest for our souls. We crave intimacy with our Creator and the peace only God's presence can give. This book invites you on a journey toward a more embodied and present spiritual life. Carefully crafted guided prayers and meditations provide an accessible way for us to quiet our hearts and enter God's presence, engaging all our senses.



CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY IS SO WORTH IT . . .

EVEN WHEN

(YOUTH CURRICULUM BY GARLINDA BURTON)

CONTRIBUTORS: KEISHA WILLIAMS, NICHOLAS GRAINGER

Christian Hospitality Is So Worth It . . . even when invites youth to discover a faith that goes beyond kindness and comfort to embrace the radical welcome modeled by Jesus and rooted in Scripture. The eight sessions include biblical stories, interactive activities, thoughtful discussion starters, and opportunities for reflection to help young people explore what it means to love their neighbors, challenge injustice, and build communities where everyone belongs.



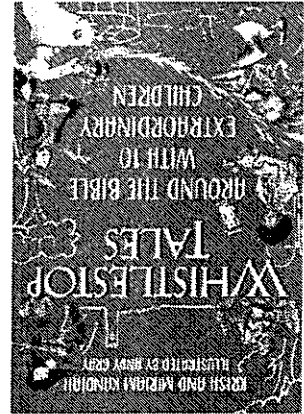
WHISTLESTOP TALES: AROUND THE BIBLE WITH 10 EXTRAORDINARY CHILDREN (VOLUME 2 IN THE WHISTLESTOP TALES SERIES)

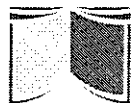
KRISH & MIRIAM KANDIAH

JOHN MURRAY PUBLISHERS LTD (2022)

A prince lost for words. A sister who worried too much. A brother who walked differently through the world. Join Krish and Miriam Kandiah on an adventure through 10 retellings of Bible stories. While many people with disabilities, differences, and disadvantages are often undervalued, underacknowledged, and underrepresented in society, God gives people with disabilities a special mention, special honor, and special jobs. The Kandiahs introduce readers to people in the Bible of all shapes and sizes who go on incredible adventures with God. It's time to remember all the characters in the Bible who do amazing world-changing things—especially those who dare to be different.

Suitable for youth & children.



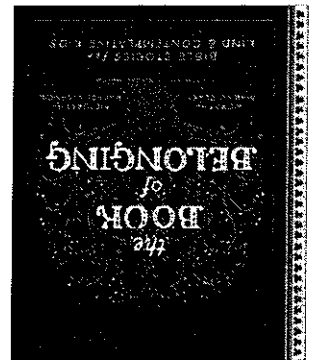


THE BOOK OF BELONGING: BIBLE STORIES FOR KIND AND CONTEMPLATIVE KIDS

MARIKO CLARK

CONVERGENT CHILDREN'S (2024)

The Book of Belonging is designed for families seeking an illustrated Bible storybook with a strong focus on the themes of belonging, love, and delight. Thoughtful text and rich illustrations present some of Scripture's most important and overlooked stories—including many female-centered ones—alongside old favorites. Through narratives, mindful practices, and guided wonder moments, children and grown-ups alike will learn who God is and be reminded over and over that God tells each of us, "You are beloved, you belong, and you are delightful." Because when it comes to the love of God, everyone belongs.



THE JUST LOVE STORY BIBLE

DR. JACQUI LEWIS & REV. DR. SHANNON DALEY-HARRIS

BEAMING BOOKS (2025)

People have long wondered about the great questions: What are the fairest ways to live together? Can we believe in God and still have questions? What does it look like to be a follower of Jesus? For thousands of years, people have told stories, sung songs, asked hard questions, and shared experiences to learn about God and how to live as God's people. The big message of the Bible is that God loves us and created us to love God and each other, to do justice, and to love kindness. *The Just Love Story Bible*, an illustrated story Bible by Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis and Rev. Dr. Shannon Dailey-Harris, isn't a book of answers but an invitation for children to ask the important questions while centering love, justice, and kindness.

See also Whistlestop Tales: Around the Bible with 10 Extraordinary Children described above.

GOD'S BIG TABLE

(CHILDREN'S CURRICULUM BY MARGARET FRAIZER)

CONTRIBUTORS: ALICIA VÉLEZ STEWART, PAULINE NEAL

In the children's curriculum, *God's Big Table*, children experience giving and receiving hospitality over eight sessions as they prepare for a banquet. Author Margaret Fraizer uses the metaphor of a banquet table where people who were once divided sit side by side, welcomed into an abundant feast.

Designed for children and those who guide them, *God's Big Table* brings Scripture to life through imagination, conversation, and shared experience in eight sessions. As participants build their own banquet table—adding symbols of welcome, joy, and provision each week—they discover that hospitality is more than an act; it is a way of being.

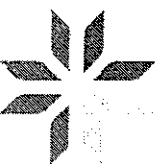


2027 Reading Program Bonus Book Discussion Guides

A note to facilitators:

If you are interested in reading a 2027 Bonus Book and discussing it together, you may find these discussion questions a useful starting point. This is not meant to be a strict lesson plan, but rather a springboard and aid. You are unlikely to have time to cover all the listed questions. You may also want to add your own questions. Please adapt freely based on your group. Please note that both of these books may be challenging to read and/or may bring up painful emotions. As you are planning and facilitating, please remember these twin guidelines:

- **Do not** shy away from the difficulties of the subject or "water it down." Both of these subjects and each of the books writers deserve our full attention. Don't skip the hard parts, or you will miss key learning.
- **Do** take care to support the needs of the group and its members in dealing with the tough feelings that may emerge. These are not easy topics to engage. Make space for the humanity of the reader as well as the writer.



1. Which essay or poem is lingering most strongly in your heart? Take a moment to turn to that piece now. Read a paragraph or stanza and briefly share why it resonated for you.
2. How does our understanding of Gaza change when we put the stories of directly impacted young people at the center of the conversation, rather than focusing on politicians, pundits, and other power players?
3. While many of the authors described experiences that are specific to the social conditions of life in Gaza, there were also many themes that we can recognize as common to the experience of young people around the world: students worried about their exams; romances began and ended; friendships were made and lost; dares were accepted; businesses were started; young people celebrated beach days with their parents; siblings were desired, loved, mourned; dreams were realized—and not realized; etc. What are the commonalities you see between your own life (or the lives of the young people in your family/community) and the lives of these young Gazans? How are they similar? How are they different?
4. We Are Not Numbers worked to develop mentoring relationships between more established writers and emerging young writers, helping young writers to hone their craft, improve their English language skills, get their story out to the world, and cultivate relationships with mentors—advocates to help them advance their careers or educational goals. What do you think of this model? What are its strengths? What are its downsides?
5. How does Khaled Allostath relate to reading in “A Book Lover’s Simple Dream?” (See pages 38–41.) How is that similar to—and different from—the way you are relating to reading this book now?
6. Read “A Palestinian Woman Takes Charge” by Lubna Abuhashem (pages 251–253). Who is Amani Shaat? What is her dream, and how does she achieve it? What challenges does she experience, and how does she overcome them?

Discussion Questions:

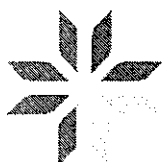
A teenage girl stares at her roof, hoping it won't collapse over her head. A young student searches the Internet for photos of libraries around the world, hoping he'll be able to visit one day. Another walks the city, taking notes of all the buildings she dreams of repairing. These are the stories of young people from Gaza, born under Israeli occupation and blockade. They are people who have endured unspeakable struggles and losses, who keep fighting to be recognized not as numbers, but as human beings with hopes, dreams, and lives worth living. *Essays and poems from 2015–2023. (V)*



WE ARE NOT NUMBERS: THE VOICES OF GAZA'S YOUTH
EDITED BY AHMED ALNAOUC AND PAM BAILEY



7. Considering the various pieces in *We Are Not Numbers*:
- What are the pleasures and special joys of life in Gaza?
 - What are the dreams and hopes expressed by young Gazans?
 - What makes life in Gaza so difficult?
 - How do unemployment and economic pressure impact young Gazans?
 - What health struggles afflict the young people, their families, and their patients? (Hint: Think about both mental health and physical health.)
 - What is the impact of frequent bombing on the lives of these young people?
 - How do travel restrictions impact the lives of youth in Gaza?
 - What are the different coping strategies young Gazans are using to get through hard times?
 - What was the Great Return March, and how was it described? (See, especially, the 2018 section.)
 - How does the sea appear across these stories and poems? The stars? Other features of the natural environment?
- Note: Please point to specific passages or examples in your responses, as the young people whose stories are shared in this volume have varied perspectives on these questions.
8. Anas Juna ends her essay, "I Want the World to Know," with these sentences: "I want the world to know that Palestine has writers, artists, thinkers, and, most importantly, lovers. I want the world to know that we are humans just like you" (page 85). Do you think that your community recognizes the humanity of young people in Gaza? Why or why not?
9. Chapter 10 focuses on "October 2023-Present," covering the time up to the book's publication (no longer the present!). This is likely to be a more painful part of the discussion, but we mustn't look away from these atrocities. Try to stay with these heartbreaking stories and truly listen to the young writers' voices.
- What are the young people experiencing at this time? What is happening?
 - Read aloud "I Miss You, My Brother" by Mahmoud Alyazji (pages 291-293). What do you feel as you listen to these words?
 - What are the hardships and horrors Orjwan Shurrah deals with as she tries to protect and care for her children in Gaza in 2023? What aspects of her story strike you the most (pages 291-300)? Discuss specific challenges facing mothers in Gaza.
10. What has happened in the years since this book's publication? What is the situation in Gaza now? Is it better, worse, different, or the same? Why do you think so?



Alternate Option: If you do not have time to do a full book study, you can still provide a meaningful short discussion experience for use with a large or small group during an event. Select **one** essay, read it together—either aloud or silently—and then discuss it as a group using just one or two questions. This can be a useful learning experience. It can also serve as a “teaser” or “preview” to encourage deeper participation by inviting interested participants to read the book in full after the event. If further engagement with the book is your goal, you may even think about having a few copies available for direct sale or borrowing at the event.

12. This book includes many descriptions of suffering that are very difficult to read—and infinitely harder actually to experience. In an onslaught of horrific news, how do we keep ourselves from falling into apathy, numbness, despair, or cynicism? How do we keep both our minds and our hearts open to others—those who live down the street and those who live half a world away?
13. In the introduction to the book, Ahmed Alnaouq and Pam Bailey write, “The stories from *We Are Not Numbers* show two truths that cannot be denied: the extent to which WAN’s members are like young people everywhere, with the same hopes and passions, and the significant talent they could contribute—if they were simply allowed to thrive” (page 8). In what ways can we work towards a world where young people from Gaza—and young people from all around the world—are truly allowed to thrive?
- At the heart of both the book and the project behind it is an effort to persuade readers to see the full humanity of young people in Gaza, such that their lives might be reckoned as “more than numbers” and that readers might come to see each person as a whole individual. In your opinion, was the book successful at achieving this goal?

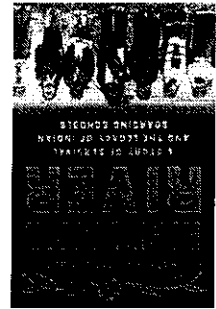
“Tell them,
Tell them,
we are more than numbers,
more than silent echoes
in a ledger of loss,
we are families
entwined in love,
friends,
living in the shadows
of our hopes,
bound by dreams.” (Page 333)

11. The last entry, a poem by Huda Skaik, begins with this stanza:



MEDICINE RIVER: A STORY OF SURVIVAL AND THE LEGACY OF INDIAN

BOARDING SCHOOLS
BY MARY ANNETTE PEMBER



From the mid-19th century to the late 1930s, tens of thousands of Native children were pulled from their tribal communities to attend boarding schools. Sponsored by the U.S. government but often run by religious orders with little to no regulation in a calculated attempt to dismantle tribes by pulling apart Native families. Children were beaten for speaking their Native languages; denied food, clothing, and comfort; and forced to work menial jobs in terrible conditions, all while utterly deprived of love and affection. Ojibwe journalist Mary Pember's mother was sent to a boarding school in northern Wisconsin at age 5. Bringing together her own family's story, investigative reporting, and historical insight, Mary Annette Pember invites readers into a deeper understanding of the profound legacy of Indian Boarding Schools. (V)

Discussion Questions:

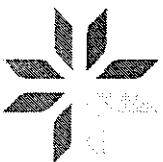
1. Was the broader history of Indian boarding schools in the United States and Canada familiar to you before you read this book? If so, from whom did you learn this history? If not, why do you think you weren't taught this history previously?
2. This book alternates between sharing a larger history of Indian boarding schools in the United States and Canada and sharing the very intimate history of the author's family, especially her mother, Bernice, a boarding school survivor. Mary Annette Pember describes her process as "part journalistic research, part spiritual pilgrimage" (209). How did you experience this as a reader? How was this style and approach different from a book that was exclusively journalism or exclusively memoir? How does this format invite us to think differently about the human impacts and intergenerational consequences of Indian boarding schools?
3. What is the blessing and burden for Mary of being her mother Bernice's "secret comrade" (page 18)?
4. In Chapter One, "Poking," Mary Annette Pember writes:

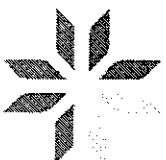
"As a professional journalist, I have been researching boarding school history in the United States and Canada for more than twenty years. As the child of a boarding school survivor, there wasn't a time when I wasn't, in one way or another, investigating this history. My mother—caught her whole life in the terrible tension of vouchsafing and withholding the details of her experience—had always hated my interrogations. Why do you always have to go poking? she demanded. Poking is what journalists do. It's also what children do. I hoped to find my mother's records, details left out of her stories" (page 20).

Read and discuss this passage. What motivates Pember's "poking"—both as an effective journalist and as the daughter of a survivor? What is she searching for in the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions archives at Marquette University four years after her mother's death? What does she find? How does she respond? (See especially pages 20–22.)



5. What was life at the sister school (St. Mary's) like for young Bernice? What did she endure there? How does the traumatic experience of life at an Indian boarding school continue to impact Bernice later in her life?
6. Considering the book as a whole, discuss the core mother-daughter relationships: Cele+Bernice and Bernice+Mary. What are the Cele+Bernice and Bernice+Mary relationship dynamics like, and how do they change (or not) over time? What are the structural factors that have shaped these most intimate relationships? How does that connect to the broader history that Pember describes?
7. In 2021, the remains of some of the students who died and were buried at Carlisle between 1879 and 1896 were repatriated to Rosebud. These students were Dennis Strikes First, Rose Long Face, Lucy Pretty Eagle, Warren Painter, Alvan One That Kills Horse, Friend Hollow Horned Bear, Dora Her Pipe, Maud Little Girl, and Knocks Off or Ernest White Thunder. Why was the act of repatriation important? What was the role of the Sicanqu Youth Council from Rosebud in the repatriation? What lessons can we learn from these young leaders' actions? (See pages 59 and 60.)
8. Read aloud the last paragraph of Chapter 3, "The Sister School Comes to Odanah," beginning with "At first Bernice..." What do you notice in the paragraph? How does this version of sanctimonious and supremacist "charity" make Bernice feel? Do you think the donors, mostly white Christian women, were aware of the impact of their actions?
9. How do poverty and dispossession shape the choices available to a family or individual across different periods of U.S. history, as described in Medicine River? What was the role of disease, especially flu and tuberculosis? (Hint: Large disease outbreaks appear in more than one place in this history, and it may be interesting to look at these crises side by side.) What about gender-based violence? What impact do these factors, individually and in combination, have on the choices made by individual family members and by communities, as described by Pember?
10. What is a Wendigo? How does it show up in the book?
11. The Cairicarag team in the Yukon Kusokwim delta in Alaska has a very different approach to trauma intervention and mental health. What do they do? What are the traditional Yup'ik teachings and practices that undergird the Cairicarag approach? Why do you think this approach is effective, where other approaches have failed? (See Chapter 8, "Poking Trauma," pages 169-180.)
12. Read aloud the paragraph in Chapter 9, "Accountability Before Reconciliation," that begins with "Later Sister McKenzie apologized to me personally..." and ends with "simply doesn't exist" (page 207). What is the problem of the church that Mary Annette Pember diagnoses? What do you make of her assessment? Does any of this critique also register as an accurate diagnosis of your own religious (or secular) institution(s)?
13. What does the author learn about her family's history in Chapter 10, "Jingle Dress Healing"? How do these revelations shed a different light on the memories described earlier in the book?





14. What is the history of the jingle dress? How does the jingle dress show up in Mary Annette Pembro's story? (See 232-236.)

15. How does this book illustrate the traumatic intergenerational impacts of the Indian boarding schools and the broader history of settler colonial violence in the United States and Canada? What does the book suggest about the best path forward? What might accountability look like? What might healing look like? As part of this discussion, read and reflect on the following short passage:

"Healing will take a while. It will take longer than one generation to undo more than five hundred years of colonization. But before any sort of meaningful work toward justice begins, for the federal government or churches, we require a thorough accounting of what happened from the perspective of those who were harmed." (See page 208.)

Going Deeper: The story of Indian boarding schools has continued to unfold since the publication of the book. Research news articles on recent developments related to repatriation of remains, accountability, truth and healing, land back, memorialization, and more. Bring these learnings to your group. Explore ways that you and your group can meaningfully support efforts for truth, accountability, justice, and healing.

Resources for Continued Learning

To learn more, visit The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition at boardingschoolhealing.org.

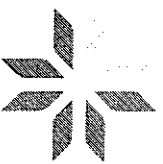
To follow Mary Annette Pembro's journalistic work at ICT News, visit icnews.org/author/mary-annette-pember.

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

This certifies that

_____ has completed plan _____ of
the Reading Program of United Women in Faith
and is hereby awarded this certificate by

Presented on the _____ day of _____, 20____



United
Women
in Faith

Program Resources Coordination/Management

President