

# Church. Libraries

\$10

Spring 2012



**Summer  
Bear  
Leads  
the Way  
to the  
Library**

**PROMOTION SKIT  
The  
Advice  
Lady**

**OLD LIBRARY,  
NEW LIBRARY  
Phase  
One:  
The  
Move**

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## BULLETIN BOARD

A bulletin board with a textured, light brown background. At the top center, the text 'RESOLVE TO GROW IN 2012' is written in large, bold, black letters. Below the title, several book covers are pinned to the board. In the center, a small green plant with four leaves grows out of a mound of dark brown soil. The books include: 'The Five Languages of Apology' by Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas; 'The Fitting Room' by Kelly Minter; 'Drawing Near' by John Beville; 'Friendship for Grown-ups' by Lisa Wheelchel; 'Making Room for Life' by Randy Frazee; 'Knit Together' by Debbie Macomber; 'Parenting Beyond Your Capacity' by Anne Jones; 'The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace' by Gary Chapman and Paul White; 'What's it Like to be Married to Me?' by Linda Dillow; and 'The Power of a Godly Grandparent' by Stan and Janet Ely.

—Beth Smith, librarian  
Hope Community Church, Manitowoc, Wisc.



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Reviews are the opinions of individual reviewers, not necessarily of the editor or ECLA. Prices are subject to change.

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# ECLA

## Evangelical Church Library Association

The Evangelical Church Library Association is a fellowship of individuals, churches, and publishers for the purpose of enriching lives through the ministry of well-organized church and school libraries and media centers. Founded in 1970, ECLA is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.

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## Are You Moving?

## Have You Changed Your E-mail Address?

Don't forget to send us your new e-mail address, so your subscription will continue uninterrupted. And send us your old and new mailing addresses, so we can keep your information up-to-date and make sure you get mailings.

## Promotional Hooks

### APRIL

School Library Month  
Holy Humor Month  
Financial Literacy Month  
Month of the Young Child  
2: International Children's Book Day  
8-14: National Library Week  
10: National Library Workers Day  
12: Drop Everything and Read Day  
12: Support Teen Literature Day  
21: Thank You School Librarian Day  
23: World Book Night  
30—May 6: Screen-Free Week

### MAY

Get Caught Reading Month  
3: National Day of Prayer  
May 7-13: Children's Book Week  
([www.bookweekonline.com](http://www.bookweekonline.com))  
13-19: Reading Is Fun Week  
16: Biographers' Day

### JUNE

Fiction Is Fun Month  
Audiobook Month  
National Bathroom Reading Month  
11: Children's Sunday

## Book Updates

### Reprinted

*The Action Bible New Testament* (Cook)  
*Covenant of War* by Cliff Graham (Zondervan)  
*Freedom Cry* by Matthew Burden (OakTara)  
*The Next Christians* by Gabe Lyons (Multnomah)  
*Too Much Stuff* by Kathryn Porter (Beacon Hill)  
*Traveling Through* by Barbara G. Tucker (OakTara)

### Retitled

*God's Will: Finding Guidance for Everyday Decisions* by J. I. Packer & Carolyn Nystrom (Baker, originally *Guard Us, Guide Us*)  
*What a Son Needs from His Dad* by Michael A. O'Donnell (Bethany, originally *How a Man Prepares His Sons for Life*)

## Save the Date!

Annual ECLA Conference  
October 12-13, Wheaton, Ill.

Friday: Dinner With Local Authors  
Saturday Keynote Speaker: Lynn Austin  
Workshops to help you with your ministry  
Book Giveaway

## Wanted

**W**anted: Pictures of your bulletin boards, posters, and displays.

You can give other librarians promotional ideas by submitting your photos for publication in *Church Libraries*. E-mail them as attachments to [linjohnson@eclalibraries.org](mailto:linjohnson@eclalibraries.org). Include the following information in the message:

- what it is (e.g., poster)
- name and position of the person who created it
- church name, city, and state.

## Use Our Reviews

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# Summer Bear Leads the Way to the Library

by Geneva Cobb Iijima

When Oregon City (Ore.) Evangelical Church's children's pastor, Sue Burson, wanted to increase the use of the children's library, she dreamed up a mascot to help—a cute bear named Summer Bear. She found a costume left over from vacation Bible school and designed a program around the mascot.

On Sundays from the beginning of June to the end of August, Summer Bear visits each children's class from age two through sixth grade, giving out treats: gum, stickers, candy, anything children like. The kids crowd around him to shake his paw or pet him. Some of the two-year-olds are afraid of him, so he goes only to the door. Children who want to pet him can go to him.

Summer Bear doesn't speak. He takes an assistant with him who talks to the children about the library and encourages them to visit it and check out materials by promising prizes. The kids have responded in mass.

## Participation

To participate in the reading program, children—or their parents—fill out a registration card in the children's library. They also pick up a tally sheet for reading books and/or watching or listening to audiovisual media.

These kinds of materials qualify for prizes:

- Bible reading or listening to Bible CDs

- Bible storybooks
- Materials published by a Christian publishing house
- All books and audiovisual materials from the children's library.

General-market materials do not count, even though they may be wholesome or educational. The purpose of the program is to help children grow in their Christian faith.

For every 10 minutes of reading and watching or listening, they fill in a square. On the back of the sheet, they write the names of the Christian books they have read. For audiovisual materials, they list the name of that item on

the back of an AV tally sheet.

When a child has completed a tally sheet, a parent signs it, stating that the child spent that time reading, listening, or watching. The child then returns the tally sheet to the library and chooses a treat from the treat basket.

## Prizes Offered

Pastor Sue has a large poster outside the children's library with a tree that has many limbs. Each child participating in the program is given a small bear sticker with his or her name on it. The child's bear climbs up limb by limb according to how many tally sheets turned in.

Pastor Sue said she patterned the effort after the public library program, but made it better by using a mascot and different prizes. Children receive an award each time they bring in a reading sheet showing they have read four hours of Christian materials. If they use audiovisual materials, they need seven hours to receive a prize. Most children turn in both kinds of tally sheets.

Sue shops for cheap items, such as inflatable beach balls, packs of candy, and assorted trinkets to use as rewards for children who turn in completed tally sheets. Plus a teenager donated her like-new collection of Beanie Babies to be used as prizes. Typically, the public library gives only pencils or stickers.

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*Not only has  
library use  
increased  
in the summer,  
it's also increased  
during  
the remainder  
of the year.*

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# PROMOTION

For every 10 tally sheets children turn in—up through 30—they receive \$5 gift certificates. When they have turned in 40, 50, or 60 sheets, they receive \$10 gift certificates. For the 70th, 80th, and 90th tally sheets, they receive \$15 gift certificates. Children may choose from a number of approved stores, including Toys“R”Us and Fred Meyer, for certificates. Or they may use the amount toward church-camp costs.

There is no grand prize to compete for since Pastor Sue wants the children to make their own reading goals and seek to achieve them, rather than compete against others.

## Financing the Program

When she started this summer reading program four years ago, Sue didn't have money in her Christian-education budget for the kind of program she wanted to run. At first she wondered where she could go for that funding. Then she remembered the estate of a longtime Sunday school teacher. She was able to secure the \$600 it took to run the program from this estate.

After a successful year in 2008, the question became, "Where do I get the money for another year?" A family who benefited from the program underwrote it in 2009. Memorial funds from another estate were donated to keep the program going in 2010. In 2011 grandparents of children using the program sponsored it.

Other churches may explore different possibilities. A Christian merchant might underwrite such a program. A garage sale, car wash, bake or pizza sale could also be organized. With a little enthusiasm and ingenuity most churches can find a way to run a summer reading program like this one.

## Benefits

In 2007, before the program began, children checked out 243 items from the church library during June, July, and August. In 2008, the first year Sue used a mascot, 1,182 items were

checked out for the same time period. The 2011 total was 1,700.

Not only has library use increased in the summer, it's also increased during the remainder of the year. The number of items checked out has gone up by 105 percent from the 2007-08 school year to the 2010-11 school year. For the first three months of the 2011-2012 school year, the increase was 161 percent.

Is it worth the effort?

"Oh, yes," said Sue, her eyes shining. "We're committed to helping children grow in their knowledge of the Scriptures and mature in their faith.

"I knew we were succeeding when the return box for library materials overflowed several times during the week; and we had to have people come in on weekdays to shelve books. Families even came to the church during the week to check out materials using the self check-out program.

"When children began asking me questions about their faith, I realized the program was making a difference in their lives. That's what this program is about: helping children connect bet-

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*"When children began asking me questions about their faith, I realized the program was making a difference in their lives."*

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ter with Jesus through believing in him."

*Geneva Cobb Iijima is a freelance writer who attends Oregon City Evangelical Church, Oregon City, Ore.*





# The Advice Lady

by Joyce K. Ellis

To help promote your library, use this skit during announcement time in a worship service. It uses the word *library*; but if your church uses the term *resource center*, make that substitution. Also substitute other situations, needs, or resources you want to feature. Permission is granted to make enough copies of this skit to perform it.

**Performance Time:** About five minutes.

## Setting and Props

Advice stand: a simple lemonade-stand-style booth with a bright banner that reads in large letters: *Advice 25¢*

Stool or chair for Advice Lady to sit on

Clipboard, paper, and pen or laptop computer (does not have to work or be turned on)

Baby doll wrapped in a blanket

Diaper bag with shoulder strap

Glass jar, sits on lemonade stand

Four quarters

## Characters

ADVICE LADY, woman of any age

MOTHER, young woman with diaper bag over her shoulder, carrying a baby doll wrapped in a blanket

BOY, elementary age

MAN, dressed in business suit

## Skit

(ADVICE LADY is sitting on a stool behind the booth, writing on clipboard or tapping on laptop keys.)

MOTHER: *(Walks timidly up to advice stand, looking around as if she's worried someone will see her.)* Um, Advice Lady? Is that what I call you?

ADVICE LADY: *(Stops working and smiles.)* I just paid big bucks to legally change my name to Advice Lady, so, yes, why don't you call me Advice Lady?

MOTHER: Do you really give advice for only a quarter?

ADVICE LADY: *(sarcastically)* I also paid big bucks to build this advice stand that says advice is only 25¢, so I suppose someone could sue me if I charged more. What can I help you with?

MOTHER: Well ... I'm having trouble at home.

ADVICE LADY: *(Clears her throat, and points to the jar.)*

MOTHER: *(flustered)* Oh, sorry. *(Digs in her diaper bag, produces a quarter, and drops it noisily in the jar.)*



# PROMOTION

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ADVICE LADY: *(Smiles and nods.)*

MOTHER: *(speaking rapidly)* Well, my husband is out of work. Our marriage is *more* than a little stressed. We have four preschoolers, and our three-year-old refuses to be potty trained. I think I'm losing my mind. I wish someone could sit down with me and give me some practical help. But I can't afford a counselor.

ADVICE LADY: I'm afraid that kind of advice would cost you more than I can handle for 25¢.

MOTHER: Then what's a mother to do?

ADVICE LADY: *(Thinks a moment.)* My advice is to visit our church library. We have some great books on marriage and parenting—all from a Christian perspective.

MOTHER: *(rocking baby doll)* That *would* be just like sitting down with my own private counselor, wouldn't it?

ADVICE LADY: We also have Christian magazines with articles on parenting and other topics to encourage you in your faith. The articles are usually short enough to read during your visits to the smallest room in your house—*(pauses)* if you get my drift.

MOTHER: *(brightening)* That's a great idea. We had to cancel some of our subscriptions to save money. But I never thought of checking them out from the church library. You're terrific, Advice Lady. I'll stop by today. Thanks so much.

ADVICE LADY: Glad to help.

*(MOTHER leaves, and ADVICE LADY returns to her work. BOY shuffles up to the stand with hands in his pockets, head down.)*

ADVICE LADY: *(looking up at boy)* Hello, there, young man. You look unhappy.

BOY: I'm not sad. I'm just really, really, really bored. What should I do, Ma'am?

ADVICE LADY: *(Rolls her eyes.)* Ma'am? Please ... won't you call me Advice Lady?

BOY: *(irritated)* OK, Advice Lady, what can I do so I'm not so bored all the time?

ADVICE LADY: *(Clears her throat, and points to the jar.)*

BOY: Oh, yeah. *(Pulls one hand out of his pocket, plunks a quarter noisily into jar, then jams hand back into pocket.)*

ADVICE LADY: Why are you so bored?

BOY: I get home from school a little after three, and my mom works till six. She wants me to stay inside while I'm home by myself. There's nothing good on TV, and I'm tired of my video games. So I sit and stare out my bedroom window. I'm just watching other people do stuff. Any ideas, Advice Lady?

ADVICE LADY: Have I got ideas! We have some wonderful inventions in our church library called books. They have a front cover and a back cover and great stories in between.

BOY: *(laughs)*

ADVICE LADY: It's true. Instead of people watching, you can read stories of Bible heroes who did amazing things with God's help. Or you can get lost in some great adventures and mysteries.

# PROMOTION

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BOY: We're making a long trip to see my grandma soon, and we have a DVD player in our van. Got any DVDs in there?

ADVICE LADY: We sure do—or my name isn't Advice Lady. Why don't you do some exploring after church today?

BOY: *(taking hands out of pockets)* I can't wait! Thanks!

*(BOY runs off, bumping into MAN in business suit.)*

MAN: *(jumping out of the way to avoid getting bowled over)* Whoa!

ADVICE LADY: He's just excited.

MAN: I can see that. *(Looks up at the advice-booth sign and points.)* Twenty-five cents, huh?

ADVICE LADY: *(sighs)* Per question.

MAN: That's cool. I could use some advice.

ADVICE LADY: *(Clears her throat, and points to the jar.)*

MAN: *(teasing)* Can't I wait till I see whether I like your advice or not and then pay you?

ADVICE LADY: *(Clears her throat a little louder, and points to the jar.)*

MAN: OK, OK! *(Holds up both hands as if in surrender, then plunks a quarter noisily into the jar.)*

ADVICE LADY: Now, that wasn't so hard, was it?

MAN: *(smiling)* No, I guess not. Here's the bottom line. I'm a stressed-out guy, working 60 hours a week to support my family. I feel God calling me to a closer relationship with Him. I have this strong hunger to get to know God's Word, but I can't afford the time or money to go to Bible college right now. Any advice?

ADVICE LADY: It just so happens our church library has Bible handbooks, commentaries—even some study helps on CD, so you could listen to them while commuting. Why don't you drop by and decide where you'd like to start?

MAN: The church library, huh? Why didn't I think of that? Thanks! *(Turns and starts to leave, then stops in his tracks.)* One more question: In the old *Peanuts* comic strips, Lucy only charged 5¢ for advice. Why do you charge 25¢?

ADVICE LADY: *(Taps the jar until MAN deposits another quarter.)* If you go to the church library, you'll find some helpful books on finances and how to deal with inflation.

MAN: *(hits head with palm of his hand)* Good grief!

*(The two walk off stage together.)*

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*Joyce K. Ellis is a freelance writer and has been a library volunteer.*

## A Work of Love

by Laura Gater

For more than 50 years, Columbia City (Ind.) United Methodist Church's library has been a part of the church. Located right inside the main doors, it's highly visible when people enter and leave the building.

When the congregation moved to a new building seven years ago, careful attention was given to the library's location since it had always been tucked away in an obscure spot. As a bonus, stained-glass windows from the old church building are part of the library and give it an elegant look.

### Congregational Ownership

This library is truly a work of love by church members. Much of the funding to establish it came from a couple's estate. Donna Targgart, a talented artist, painted the large wall picture of Jesus and the children; and Mick McOmber, a paralyzed Vietnam veteran, made the picture frame. Mick also built six large, wooden bookcases, two cupboards that house videos, and most of the wooden tables.

Members donated or purchased all the books, magazines, cassettes, CDs, DVDs, and videos.

Barb Kessie is the volunteer librarian. She maintains the card catalog and checks in returned items. (The library operates on a self-checkout system.)

### Library Operation

The library contains nearly 1,000 adult and children's books and other media.

The book arrangement is not the normal one for libraries, according to

Barb. She does not use the Dewey Decimal system but, rather, arranges books by category, alphabetizing them by title within each category. Some of the categories, for example, are Bible Reference, Bible Facts, Christian Beliefs, Prayer, Family Living, Parenthood, Worship, Missions, Literature, Biography, and Personal Witness.

A subject index would be a tremendous benefit, Barb believes; but it would be too great an undertaking at this point, given the number of books.

Among the bookshelves, one holds large-print books only.

Since there is no budget for purchasing books, Barb depends on donations. And some memorials to the library have been used to purchase books.

There is not much room to expand, so Barb must discard books as new

ones come in. This is her least favorite part of the job. It's difficult to decide which books are timeless and should be kept versus some that simply do not appeal to readers for long. She takes discarded books to a bookstore that sells them and gives the money to a prison ministry.

### Library Use

Most of those who browse the books and check them out do so for recreational reading. Some, like Barb, also augment their Bible studies with reference books.

"We have some wonderful reference books," said Barb. "We even have young pastors from other churches in our county coming here to use our Bible reference section."

Devotional books are utilized frequently by people who come in to borrow one when they have a meeting and need to share a devotional.

"The core of people who use the library are older members of the church and United Methodist Women book-club readers," said Barb. Like other church librarians, she struggles to get more people to use the library.

But that situation hasn't deterred her from serving in this ministry. "Although the limited space is not a 'true library,' it is a valuable one for the information it holds."

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Laura Gater is a freelance writer and a member of Columbia City United Methodist Church who uses the library.

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*It's difficult to decide which books are timeless and should be kept versus some that simply do not appeal to readers for long.*

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Old Library, New Library

# Phase One: The Plan

by Jerusha Agen

When the congregation of New Hope Presbyterian Church in Green Bay, Wisc., approved a sizable expansion of the 30-year-old building, we church librarians were excited. The expansion would mean a new library location with increased square footage. We desperately needed the extra space for our burgeoning collection of more than 8,000 media items.

I'll admit that when the process started, we didn't fully understand everything designing a new library and moving our media would entail. Over the course of the following months, however, we learned a great deal about the best way to plan for and smoothly transition into a new library space. In this series, I'll share a few of the lessons we learned—sometimes the hard way—in moving our library.

Armed with these tips, you should feel confident and excited when you're told you're in charge of moving your library to a new facility.

## Designing the Space

The first step in the expansion of a library is to design the layout of the new space. Church members who are not intimately involved with the library may be unaware of its needs or uncertain of how to address them in the new building design.

Therefore, the library director or a member of the church library committee should be closely involved with the planning of a church expansion, ensuring there is an advocate for the library

during the crucial stages of initial planning.

With a voice for the library included in designing the new building, the library should get off to a good start with the layout of a prospective room that meets space and operational needs.

## Detailing the Layout

Once the new library design is locked into the approved church building blueprint, the library director or committee must then focus on creating a detailed layout of the library interior. Shelving with the capacity to hold current media and allow for the addition of new materials must be chosen and

configured according to several considerations.

For new buildings or expansions, you'll want to follow the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to allow for handicapped access to the public areas of the library. This means you can't always fit in as many shelving units as you might expect. Creativity comes into play in this stage, as a little invention and vision can lead you to a layout that will maximize your display capacity while adhering to ADA requirements.

Since there are many regulations of which the average librarian might not be aware, it's a good idea during this phase to seek professional help. Library-supply companies often have professional designers who will work with you on designing the interior layout if you intend to purchase shelving from their company.

When seeking a quote for shelving costs from DEMCO, we received professional input on the layout for the new facility from its design department. Our library director worked with a DEMCO designer to create a layout that suited display needs, while adhering to all the ADA regulations.

Another consideration when determining the new library's design and making shelving choices is the church's expansion budget. For example, certain shelving units and types may not be fiscally possible for your portion of the funds. Research is essential for this phase, as bargains can usually be

*continued on page 31*

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*Over the course of the following months, however, we learned a great deal about the best way to plan for and smoothly transition into a new library space.*

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## Books for Single Adults

# Fulfillment Through Christ

by Cindy Grabill

Since God said it is not good that man—and woman—be alone, many single adults, particularly women, spend much time searching for a mate to complete them. They often ask God for help but believe He needs help if He doesn't act quickly enough.

The following books stress that God doesn't create half-people, and His plan includes a season of preparation before marriage. They identify Bible characters, historical figures, and contemporary heroes, all who remained single and allowed God to use them in great ways.

Since our completeness is found through God, putting these books in your library will help single adults find that fulfillment.

### **CHOOSING GOD'S BEST: Wisdom for Lifelong Romance**

by Don Raunikar

Multnomah, 978-1-59052-458-9, PB, 241 pages, \$14.99

Psychotherapist Raunikar discusses why each of the 13 types of dating does not lead to a satisfying relationship with God and takes readers through the nine stages of courtship. He helps couples develop solid foundations through friendship, shows them how to discern God's voice, and suggests

where they can find older couples to whom they can be accountable. He stresses that God will not allow two people to be more intimate with each other than they are with Him.

Raunikar tells it like it is: Dating with its preoccupation with self won't work. Courtship is biblically based. Couples following the nine stages from friendship to marriage will have satisfying, God-centered marriages. Recommend this book to anyone who wants to pursue a relationship God's way.

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*God doesn't create  
half-people,  
and His plan  
includes a season  
of preparation  
before marriage.*

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### **DID I KISS MARRIAGE GOOD-BYE?: Trusting God with a Hope Deferred**

by Carolyn McCulley

Crossway, 978-1-58134-579-7, PB, 219 pages, \$14.99

McCulley challenges readers to consider what God is doing with and through their singleness. She explains the gift of singleness, names unmarried Bible characters whom God honored for their willingness to serve Him, and devotes an entire chapter to each of the characteristics of the Proverbs 31 woman. McCulley, marketing and media specialist at Sovereign Grace Ministries, suggests specific ways single ladies can be noble, kind, wise, industrious, and of wise speech.

Readers will mature in their faith as they apply her practical ideas to their lives. Recommend this book especially to older singles who believe life is passing them by.

### **HERO: Becoming the Man She Desires**

by Fred Stoeker & Jasen Stoeker with Mike Yorkey

WaterBrook, 978-1-4000-7109-8, PB, 240 pages, \$13.99

Fred confesses his inability to maintain sexual purity but tells how he became inspired to be victorious and set

# BOOK ROUNDUP

an example for his sons. Jasen tells how his friends teased him, how he refused to watch PG-13 movies even at school, and how he fled temptation and remained sexually pure until marriage. They discuss women's needs and desires. They stress that God blesses the obedient, and His heroes live uncompromised lives for Him and conclude with testimonies that will cause men to say, "If he can do it, so can I."

Jasen's story of how he did battle and won every time is challenging and inspirational. Fred's tale emphasizes God's forgiveness and His willingness to provide multiple chances. Fred is director of the Living Trust Ministries, and Jasen works as a counselor. Recommend this book to young, single men. Specific sections are helpful to those trying to break any addiction or bad habit.

## **I KISSED DATING GOODBYE: A New Attitude Toward Romance and Relationships**

**978-1-590-52135-9, PB, 238 pages**  
**BOY MEETS GIRL: Say Hello to Courtship**

**978-1-590-52167-0, PB, 240 pages**  
**by Joshua Harris**  
**Multnomah, \$13.99**

In *I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, pastor Harris helps readers develop and maintain strong friendships with both sexes and asserts that short-term dating breeds selfishness. He shows how to abstain from lust, shows how to lead lives that please God, and suggests ways to "hustle while they wait" for God's timing.

In *Boy Meets Girl*, Harris explores the world of courtship as couples move past friendship into romance and possibly marriage. He explains the three seasons of courtship, provides tips for strong communication, and includes his own and others' courtship stories.

Harris shares his experiences honestly and deeply and gives a convincing argument against short-term dating that will motivate readers to

cultivate deep friendships first. His true stories of people who put God first in their relationships will inspire readers to do likewise. Recommend these books especially to older teens.

## **REDEEMING SINGLENESS: How the Storyline of Scripture Affirms the Single Life**

**by Barry Danylak**  
**Crossway, 978-1-4335-0588-1, PB, 256 pages, \$16.99**

Danylak presents a biblical theology of singleness. He explains the importance of marriage under the Old Covenant and how the coming of Jesus changed that. He also demonstrates how both Jesus and Paul advocated the single lifestyle through their teaching.

Danylak, a mathematician and theologian, presents a thorough knowledge of Scripture, yet writes in layperson's language. He shows through key Bible characters, including Jesus, that the single life is biblically sound and convinces readers that no verse in Scripture mandates they be married to be complete.

## **SACRED SINGLENESS: The Set-Apart Girl's Guide to Purpose and Fulfillment**

**by Leslie Ludy**  
**Harvest House, 978-0-7369-2288-3, PB, 182 pages, \$12.99**

Ludy, a bestselling author, urges single women to stop idolizing marriage and find contentment in Christ alone. She includes a wealth of service opportunities for singles, as well as stories of single women—both historical and contemporary—who listened to God's voice and changed the world.

This is a life-changing, inspiring, and challenging book. Ludy states that many people profess to be Christians but aren't willing to surrender every area to Christ, including marriage. She inspires readers to let Him take complete control and reveals through true stories how God blesses those who are obedient. Recommend this book to ev-

ery single person who wants a deeper relationship with Jesus.

## **SASSY, SINGLE, AND SATISFIED** **by Michelle McKinney Hammond** **Harvest House, 978-0-7369-2680-5, PB, 240 pages, \$11.99**

Writer and speaker Hammond urges readers to stop "plotting" to obtain the men of their dreams and make the most of their time as single women. She suggests visiting new places, developing cooking and housekeeping skills, and cultivating deep relationships with Jesus. She particularly emphasizes the importance of waiting, as God will not allow us to handle a "half-baked cookie that will make us sick."

Hammond divides her material into short sections that can be used as devotional material. Her meditations are humorous and filled with rich spiritual truths that will cause readers to mature in their faith and regard God as their "All-in-all."

## **SINGLE MEN ARE LIKE WAFFLES, SINGLE WOMEN ARE LIKE SPAGHETTI**

**by Bill & Pam Farrel**  
**Harvest House, 978-0-7369-2249-4, PB, 279 pages, \$13.99**

These bestselling authors emphasize the characteristics, needs, and differences between men and women and provide tips to strengthen communication and listening skills. They help single parents forgive and reconcile with their ex-spouses, guide children through divorce, and stress strong relationships with Jesus. Each chapter concludes with a humorous paragraph about the different ways men and women tackle a particular project.

The Farrels teach seriously courting couples how their mates "tick." They support their ideas with biblical wisdom, insight from professionals, and never-ending humor. (Don't miss the 10 reasons why God created Eve and why they believe Santa Claus may be a woman.)

# BOOK ROUNDUP

**SINGLED OUT: Why Celibacy Must Be Re-invented in Today's Church**  
by Christine A. Colón & Bonnie E. Field  
Brazos, 978-1-58743-237-8, PB, 256 pages, \$19

Many churches give single adults the message that they need to be married to be happy and well-adjusted. Various forms of media tell them they need to have sex before they die. Colón and Field dispel these and other dangerous messages and point to key people, including Mother Teresa who remained single but made an impact in the world. They affirm the biblical view of celibacy and emphasize the necessary role singles play within local churches.

These educators support each idea with numerous examples of books, authors, and television series. Recommend this book especially to church leaders as Colón and Field present a key message they need to hear: Single adults are leaving churches because they do not feel welcome, yet they are vital and need to be included. *Singled Out* gently identifies wrong attitudes and provides tips to help church people reverse this situation.

**TABLE FOR ONE: The Savvy Girl's Guide to Singleness**  
by Camerin Courtney  
Baker, 978-0-8007-5795-3, PB, 155 pages, \$15

Courtney writes of her pity parties, her feelings of alienation at her family-oriented church, and the many people who asked about when she would be married. She includes how she learned to keep her life so full that no one guessed anything was missing. She describes how she started her own holiday traditions, pursued dreams, and developed a strong family of friends. She challenges readers to strive for God's best, reminding them that true satisfaction comes from Him.

Courtney, an editor, is witty and writes in an energetic, appealing style.

Her anecdotes are ones with which they can identify, her suggestions practical. This is a fast, fun read that no single gal should miss.

**THEY WERE SINGLE TOO: 8 Biblical Role Models**  
by David M. Hoffeditz  
Kregel, 978-0-825-42776-3, PB, 144 pages, \$10.99

Pastor Hoffeditz uses about Paul, John the Baptist, Nehemiah, Anna, Ruth, Jeremiah, Martha, and Joseph as examples of single adults we can learn from. He shares details about each character's life and includes practical lessons for today's singles.

Each story has takeaway value. Readers will learn to consider their own priorities as they read about Martha, watch Joseph fleeing sexual temptation, learn tips about loneliness through Jeremiah's story, and be inspired to persevere from Anna's example. Each chapter emphasizes that single adults can make an impact on others.

**WHAT TO DO UNTIL LOVE FINDS YOU**

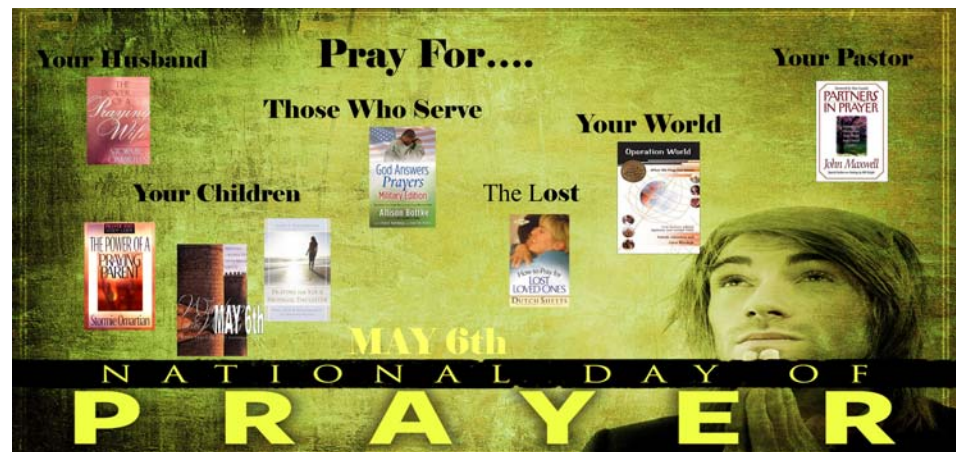
by Michelle McKinney Hammond  
Harvest House, 978-0-7369-1718-6, PB, 228 pages, \$12.99

Hammond encourages single women to use their time of singleness as preparation. Intimate human relationships begin with deep fellowship with God. She helps women take thoughts captive, show unconditional love, and become more attractive to men. She provides tips to aid them in assessing potential mates, overcome sexual temptation, and submit without argument.

Hammond writes in a fun, conversational tone. She includes humor and helpful Scripture and give examples of Bible characters either to emulate or to learn from their mistakes. Her discussions of Satan's attempts to ruin their lives will make readers more aware and cause them to guard their hearts.

*Cindy Grabill is a freelance writer and oversees the book table at her Methodist church.*

## BULLETIN BOARD



—Beth Smith, librarian  
Hope Community Church, Manitowoc, Wisc.

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Bible & Theology

### THE BIBLE IN WORLD HISTORY

Illustrated Bible Handbook Series

by Stephen Leston

Barbour, 978-1-60260-645-6, PB, 288 pages, \$14.99

Believers who are also history buffs will appreciate this side-by-side presentation of biblical and world events. Although pastor Leston is not a history professor, he clearly outlines how Scripture is historically grounded and impacts world culture.

Leston follows an introduction that covers the complexities in understanding history in general with eight chapters spanning creation to the rise of the early Church. Each chapter includes a "Reflections" section in which readers are reminded of who is in control of all history. Colorful photos of art and archaeological discoveries that grace every page and a topical index add to reader enjoyment and study. Recommended as a good addition to any library's biblical reference section. JAW

### DID ADAM AND EVE REALLY EXIST?: Who They Were and Why You Should Care

by C. John Collins

Crossway, 978-1-4335-2425-7, PB, 192 pages, \$15.99

Modern scholarship often reads the first few chapters of Genesis as myth,

meant to teach us important truths but not relate actual history. Biblical scholar Collins goes against this trend by arguing for a historical Adam and Eve. He reasons from the importance of the Fall to the rest of the biblical story, gives evidence of texts elsewhere in Scripture that presuppose the historicity of Adam and Eve, and shows flaws with theories that claim Adam and Eve are scientifically impossible.

Collins argues for "mere Adam-and-Eve-ism," without regard to whether they were a product of God's intervention in the process of evolution or a separate creation entirely. Some might find this omission problematic, but it effectively narrows the scope of his topic. While dense at times, the work is well researched, thorough, and thought provoking for anyone interested in a scholarly perspective on this topic. ALG

### THE [EXPANDED] BIBLE

edited by Tremper Longman III, Mark L. Strauss, & Daniel Taylor

Nelson, 978-0-7180-1918-1, HB, 1910 pages, \$34.99

A great improvement on *The Amplified Bible*, this volume gives not only an expansion of what the Bible says but also provides an alternate translation, a literal rendering, and the King James translation. It also provides brief historical, cultural, and theological comments to help readers better understand some passages, e.g., Ephesians 5:25-26. It strikes a balance between formal equivalence and meaning-based translations. It also cross-references parallel passages and lists textual variants where they exist in many ancient manuscripts.

The text is based on the New Century Version printed in bold face type, with alternate versions appearing in brackets in lighter type. It may take readers time to get used to using this Bible, but the contributing scholars suggest reading a passage in bold type first, then going back and reading it

again with the additions. I recommend this Bible for congregations that have serious Bible readers. LRK

### GOD BEHAVING BADLY: Is the God of the Old Testament Angry, Sexist and Racist?

by David T. Lamb

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3826-4, PB, 205 pages, \$15

This book is the most poorly titled book I have read, especially when Lamb says explicitly that he doesn't think God behaves badly. Apart from that criticism, though, he does a thorough job of refuting a New Atheist like Richard Dawkins who stated that the God of the Old Testament is a megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.

In eight chapters that would make a good book for adult Bible classes, Lamb, professor at Biblical Theological Seminary, demonstrates clearly that the Old Testament God is loving, not angry; affirming, not sexist; hospitable, not racist; peaceful, not violent; gracious, not legalistic; flexible, not rigid; and near, not distant—except in qualified ways. Discussion questions and a selected bibliography complete the book. It would be an excellent addition to your library because many people, even church members, think the God of the Old Testament contrasts in every way with the God Jesus revealed. LRK

### HEALTH, WEALTH & HAPPINESS: Has the Prosperity Gospel Overshadowed the Gospel of Christ?

by David W. Jones & Russell S. Woodbridge

Kregel, 978-0-8254-2930-9, PB, 208 pages, \$13.99

Even casual observers of the recent Whitney Houston memorial service would have noticed the proclamation of the prosperity gospel from the pulpit. Many believers may not even realize they are being persuaded by this falsehood. Jones and Woodbridge have

### SERIES UPDATE

Biblical Imagination Series

by Michael Card

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3813-4, \$16

#2 Mark: *The Gospel of Passion*



# BOOK REVIEWS

each earned a seminary doctorate and combine their expertise to present a history, overview, and critique of the popular belief commonly called the prosperity gospel.

Carefully annotated with both a Scripture and subject index, this concise evaluation reveals a core principle that Christians are not promised a rose garden, yet they are promised a relationship with a sovereign God. This biblically based, clearly written assessment is definitely recommended for any church library. JAW

## **THE HEART OF THE STORY: God's Masterful Design to Restore His People**

by Randy Frazee

Zondervan, 978-0-310-33272-5, PB, 261 pages, \$16.99

Many of us have the mistaken notion that the Bible is nothing more than a handful of stories thrown together. However, Frazee does an excellent job of dispelling that myth. In a chronological overview of the Bible, he clearly explains how each story is woven together to form one tapestry of truth.

Contrasting what he refers to as the "upper" and "lower" stories, Frazee recognizes man's inability to make sense of life without God lending His clarity through His revealed Word. Anyone who has ever wondered how the Bible fits together should read this text. In an uncomplicated, conversational style, Frazee shares interesting facts, amazing research, and solid logic. Readers discover God's plan throughout history and how they have fit into that plan all along. AKS

## **THE HOLY LAND**

**Illustrated Bible Handbook Series**  
by George W. Knight

Barbour, 978-1-60260-644-9, PB, 288 pages, \$14.99

Although it could fit within the borders of New Jersey, the geographically small nation of Israel has had a large history and many names, such as

Canaan, Palestine, and the Holy Land. Knight, a former Bible-reference editor, organized his tour guide of Israel geographically, beginning at the southernmost wilderness near the Dead Sea and culminating at Mount Hermon in the north. He gave special emphasis to biblical holy sites, such as Bethlehem and the Sea of Galilee.

Each of the 140 locations includes the meaning and pronunciation of the name, as well as identification of the site, location, and map. For example, Valley of Elah (EE-luh) means "oak" and is a valley near the city of Gath that can be seen on Map 4, one of eight color maps. Biblical significance and reference are also provided, such as the place where David killed Goliath.

Color photos enhance the readable text that can be used as a guide for either a real or virtual tour of Israel. Recommended for the reference section of any church library. JAW

## **LIFE ESSENTIALS STUDY BIBLE**

edited by Gene A. Getz

Holman, 978-1-5864-0045-3, HB, 1868 pages, \$44.99

The heart of this study Bible is brief commentaries on 1,500 "Principles to Live By" that Getz took more than seven years to compile after he retired as a professor at Dallas Theological Seminary and as a pastor. Using the Holman Christian Standard Bible text, the principles are highlighted in blue, with each one inserted in blue type as closely as possible to the text. For example, in the gospels there are three principles in the feeding of the 5,000 alone, one each in Matthew, Mark, and John. In addition, more than 250 hours of video and audio presentations may be accessed by scanning QR codes with a smartphone or tablet.

You can't go wrong in adding this book to your library. I predict teachers will turn to it often to get principles to teach to their classes. LRK

## **PASSAGES: How Reading the Bible in a Year Will Change Everything for You**

by Brian Hardin

Zondervan, 978-0-310-32919-0, PB, 217 pages, \$14.99

This guide helps readers understand the importance of studying the entire Bible by reading passages daily. Beyond that, it focuses on how the Bible should be read and what impact Scripture can have on our lives and the lives of those around us through wisdom, examples, lessons, history, commandments, prayers, and principles.

The conversational tone makes this book an engaging read. Hardin, a speaker and ordained minister, shares many examples of God's transformation work in his life. He puts his heart's desire into practice by reading passages of the Bible aloud on his daily podcast. Notes and multiple schedule plans for reading the Bible in a year are provided. I recommend this book to all Christians seeking motivation for regimented, faithful Scripture reading. TG

## **YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE BOOK OF REVELATION**

by Skip Heitzig

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4331-4, PB, 251 pages, \$13.99

Revelation is usually seen as a mysterious and difficult-to-understand book of the Bible. For believers who are pretribulation, premillennial dispensationalists like Joel Rosenberg and David Jeremiah, who recommend the book on the cover, it is hard to think of a book better able to introduce the average church member to it.

Pastor Heitzig compiled what appear to have been sermons on the book of Revelation. Though he says he has 110 volumes on Revelation in his library, there is little evidence of that fact and only a few endnotes referring to them. Nevertheless, it's a good choice for your library. LRK

# BOOK REVIEWS

## YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by Douglas A. Jacoby

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-3074-1, PB, 252 pages, \$12.99

Everyone has questions about the Bible, and Jacoby responds to ones that are frequently asked. He focuses on hot topics (evolution, homosexuality, divorce), ministry issues (female ordination, infant baptism), and even religious customs (Sunday-school classes, communion services, seminary training).

Unfortunately, some of the scriptural references Jacoby uses to prove his points are open to other interpretations. And quite often he inserts his personal opinions related to a matter that may not be quite so black and white. Jacoby has university degrees in history and pastoral ministry, but his personal theology may prove at odds with Christians who have spent many years in Bible study. This book offers interesting views but should be viewed as somewhat biased at times. JP

## Biography & Memoir

### AS GOOD AS SHE IMAGINED

by Roxanna Green with Jerry B. Jenkins

Worthy, 978-1-61795-012-4, HB, 227 pages, \$24.99

Of the senseless deaths resulting from the Tucson, Ariz., shooting in January 2011, the loss of a child stood out as especially tragic. The story of Christina-Taylor Green, as told by her mother, shows a nation's sorrow in her death but also all the joy that nine-year-old spread in her life.

In telling her story, Christina-Taylor's mother gives a lot of detail about their family and her daughter's

young life, as well as the mood of the country in regard to politics, religion, and social changes. At times it feels slow; but by the end, details add up to a complete and touching portrait of a girl who had a heart to help others. Recommended for church libraries and readers who want a meaningful, human-interest story. KH

### THE FOURTH FISHERMAN

by Joe Kissack

WaterBrook, 978-0-307-95627-9, HB, 240 pages, \$19.99

This book mixes the true stories of a Hollywood mogul addicted to success and three Mexican fishermen who survived on the ocean for nine months, drinking turtle blood and reading the Bible. Kissack, the mogul, finds his way to God; and the fishermen find their way home.

The book carries the strength of truth. The oscillation between the two stories until the end meeting provides insight into two sides of life with God and without Him. The book contains morbid images from the journey of the fishermen, but they serve to highlight the depth of their reliance on God. Kissack provides commentary that brings spiritual truth out of the unique story. This book is suited for people who are struggling with God's control in their lives. KC

### PASSION TO ACTION

by Jay & Beth Loecken with Laura Morton

Guideposts, 978-0-8249-4857-3, HB, 256 pages, \$19.99

Discontentment with life in middle-class suburbia led the Loeckens to begin seriously praying about what God would have them do differently. His answer was one they never expected, one that required them to turn their passion into action on the road.

The extremity of the Loeckens' decision may cause some readers to question whether the family heard God correctly. But they wrote from the heart,

and their mission to enable others to serve God is compelling. This book could have benefited from trimming the number of times some ideas are mentioned and from adding dialogue to enable readers to engage more fully with the story. But reminders of the importance of family and service to God make this an enjoyable narrative, especially for those seeking ways to go deeper with God. RAB

### WHEN YOU DON'T SEE HIS PLAN

by Nadine Hennesey with Rebecca Baker

Discovery House, 978-1-57293-465-8, PB, 173 pages, \$10.99

Following Christ may mean taking a step of faith into the great unknown, but He expects us to trust Him and take it anyway. Such was Nadine Hennesey's motto as God presented her calling in this captivating, true story. Through the grief of her husband's death, Nadine followed the Lord's direction to Peru, Albania, and war-torn Kosovo. There she helped feed, clothe, and shelter thousands of orphans during the past 13 years.

A gripping, emotional memoir, this book focuses on one woman's faith in God's ultimate plan. The orphans' histories are striking and bluntly described, but never overly explicit. Though it reads like Nadine's personal journal, the theme of the book is clear: The Lord's plan will work out. Nadine's story is for anyone seeking reassurance of God's power. Recommended for church libraries. VT

**He that loves a book will never want a faithful friend, a wholesome counselor, a cheerful companion, an effectual comforter. By study, by reading, by thinking, one may innocently divert and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all weathers, as in all fortunes.**

—Barrow

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Children

### Bibles & Bible Stories

**KING OF GLORY: The Story & Message of the Bible Distilled into 70 Scenes**

by P. D. Bramsen

ROCK, 978-0-97987-067-5, PB, 175 pages, \$9.95

Do you want your children to know the Bible? Do parents and teachers find it difficult to wade through adult concepts and wording to be sure youngsters will understand? *King of Glory* makes this task easier. It's a juvenile retelling of the Bible—not only the stories that are told in Sunday school, but also the big picture of God's plan for mankind. Each spread is a story from the Bible opposite a comic-strip illustration that will grab children's imaginations while deepening their faith.

Using simplified vocabulary, visual images, and storytelling, Bramsen succeeds at maintaining the integrity of the biblical material while making it comprehensible for younger minds. Even for an adult, this is an enlightening book, giving a fresh perspective on the Bible. *King of Glory* is great for every church library as a storybook with a purpose. Children ages five to 12 will find it most useful. CH

#### MY FAVORITE BIBLE

by Rondi DeBoer & Christine Tangvald

Revell, 978-0-8007-1956-2, HB, 377 pages, \$16.99

This is a teaching book, an interactivity book, and a children's study guide to key stories of the Bible. Written in short, easy sentences, the stories explain an event, scene, or miracle from the Bible. Each story covers about 10 pages and is supplemented with drawings; words in oversized, bold

## Early Readers

### SERIES UPDATES

**Backyard Horses**

by Dandi Daley Mackall

Tyndale, \$5.99

#3 *Chasing Dream*

978-1-4143-3918-4

#4 *Night Mare*

978-1-4143-3919-1

type; and the use of italics and other eye-catching fonts.

Following each story is a section called "Family Talk," in which a Bible passage that is the foundation of the story is printed, along with information for parents on how to help children interpret the meaning of the story and challenge questions, such as, "Do you think Jesus feels compassion for you when you hurt?" This section is followed by "Family Fun," in which children try to experience the story. For example, for the healing of blind Bartimaeus, children are asked to put on blindfolds and discover how difficult it is to eat lunch.

For family interaction and basic Bible teaching, this book is entertaining and functional. DEH

#### SURPRISE! BIBLE STORYBOOK

by Marjorie Redford

Standard, 978-0-7847-3194-9, HB, 37 pages, \$9.99

This board book features brightly colored drawings of key scenes from the Bible. Targeted at three- to six-year-olds, sentences contain only four or five easy words. Many of the stories include sound effects when read aloud, such as "roar, squeak, squawk" in the story of Noah and his ark.

The stories are succinct, mini-versions of Bible stories. For example, the entire story of Joseph is summarized in two pages. Each story has a chal-

lenge for the child, such as, "Can you find the cuddly kitten in the picture?" similar to *Where's Waldo?* The book presents the death and resurrection of Christ in a positive, not scary, way for children. As a read-along or a young reader's text, this book provides some foundational training in Bible knowledge. DEH

## Christian Education

**A IS FOR ADAM: The Gospel from Genesis**

by Ken & Mally Ham

Master Books, 978-0-89051-625-6, PB, 77 pages, \$16.99

Words that start with each letter of the alphabet teach children the gospel from Genesis. This is an in-depth study that scripturally and creatively gives the answers to many questions kids have about evolution, creation, sin, need for sacrifice, God's plan, salvation, dinosaurs, the flood, languages, and heaven. It can be used to lead children to the Lord and enable them to defend their faith.

The story of Genesis is presented in rhyme and wonderfully illustrated. The pages are put together in a binder with a fold-out, table stand for hands-free convenience. The whole poem is presented first, then each stanza has its own page with the leader's guide on the back of the previous page. The guide format includes information, questions, things to do, and a review, all with flexibility for age-appropriate discussions. More information for parents and teachers on each stanza is included at the close of the book. Excellent for church and school libraries. LGM

# BOOK REVIEWS

## SUNDAY SCHOOL THAT REALLY RESPONDS

by Steve R. Parr

Kregel, 978-0-8254-4064-9, PB, 256 pages, \$14.99

Here's a great reference tool for breathing life into your Sunday school. Each chapter is written with the first-responder format: emergency (problem), triage (diagnosis), prescription (Bible passages), first aid (immediate actions that need to happen), and rehab (long-term actions). The first 12 chapters deal with general organizational problems for pastors, directors, and church staff.

The second section of 12 chapters focuses on particular classroom situations and small-group problems like guests not returning, no discussion involvement, and feeling like quitting. Information on 10 principles to improve leadership skills and how to use the "triage" sections to diagnose the severity of problems is included.

This book is scripturally sound and an easy read. Parr is vice president for Sunday School and Evangelism with the Georgia Baptist Convention. Recommended for church libraries, Sunday school leaders, and teachers. LGM

## SUPER FUN SCIENCE: Multisensory Object Talks from the Psalms

by Heno Head, Jr.

Standard, 978-0-7847-2971-7, PB, 220 pages, \$19.99

Here's a text I wish I'd had when I took science. The 104 object lessons teach children ages seven to 12 not only about science, but also relevant Scripture lessons from Psalms. Each lesson

is presented as a leader's guide with the Scripture verse, action that will happen, scientific reason, supplies needed, use of supplies, and what to say about the verse while performing the demonstration. Talking about God while presenting the object lesson makes a connection that stimulates children's senses and helps them remember Bible truths.

Most of the demos can be presented with only normal school or household supplies and can be prepared quickly. Lessons that require advanced preparation are indicated by a clock icon. A handy topical index lists Bible truths. Also included is a CD that contains all the demos, plus reproducible artwork and patterns. Although Head is a retired science teacher, a science degree isn't necessary to understand and use this easy resource. Great for school and church libraries. LGM

## Curriculum

### STUCK: The Places We Get Stuck and the God Who Sets Us Free

by Jennie Allen

Nelson, 978-1-4185-4873-5, study guide, leader's guide, box of conversation cards, DVD, \$39.99

Here's a Bible study that is relevant to today's women. Allen, who has a master's degree in biblical studies, passionately describes the places we are "stuck" in—broken, mad, discontented, scared, overwhelmed, and sad—and how God can set us free. If we start with His forgiveness and grace and learn to die to self, we can grow in the knowledge and fullness of God's love.

The leader's guide has many helpful tips and suggestions on leading a group. It contains seven lessons plus a guide for the introductory meeting. Each lesson has an introduction with a list of goals, homework discussion, video time, discussion using the conversation cards, and appropriate Scrip-

ture. The DVD contains eight brief videos that help reveal hidden places and jump-start conversations.

This scriptural and easy-to-follow curriculum is a wonderful study on God's truth for women's groups. LGM

## Christian Living

### CLOSE ENOUGH TO HEAR GOD BREATHE

by Greg Paul

Nelson, 978-1-4002-0300-0, PB, 213 pages, \$15.99

For people wondering how God can really love them, Paul delivers a much-needed message. Using the structure of the "Great Story," that is, creation, Fall, redemption, and consummation, he explores the facets and motions of God's incomprehensible love. We can hear words of this love when we step back from the world and focus on God and His influence on our lives.

Each chapter contains one or more Scripture passages, an anecdote to illustrate the verses, and an application. The anecdotes relate surprisingly well to the themes. Some stories share scenes from Paul's childhood or family life. Others come from people he met or lessons learned at Sanctuary, a city ministry Paul founded to serve social outcasts. The book's encouraging words will comfort readers looking for love and purpose when they feel worthless. ARM

### COURAGEOUS LIVING: Dare to Take a Stand

by Michael Catt

B&H, 978-1-4336-7121-0, PB, 153 pages, \$13.99

Courageous Christian men and women seem to be disappearing in America, replaced by people who

## SERIES UPDATE

LifeGuide Bible Study

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3143-2,  
\$8

*Names of God*

by Douglas Connelly



# BOOK REVIEWS

readily give in to compromise and “go with the flow.” Pastor Catt challenges readers to step out in faith and exhibit courage by looking at the stories of Moses, Daniel, Ruth, Stephen, and other well-known Bible characters.

Whereas Catt takes an interesting approach by using the examples of biblical people and asking readers to apply principles from them to their own lives, his disorganized style could severely annoy readers. He tends to jump from topic to topic within chapters without transitions, leaving the reader trying to catch up with his stream-of-consciousness writing. And he often doesn't define terms and mixes metaphors. The concept of this book is admirable, but the delivery failed to bring it off. NS

## **DIE YOUNG: Burying Your Self in Christ** by Hayley DiMarco & Michael DiMarco

**Crossway, 978-1-4335-3057-9, PB, 189 pages, \$14.99**

It's only in death that we experience life. Jesus came into the world to turn man's logic on its head. Slavery is freedom, weakness is strength, and dying to self is the new life. Grounded in Scripture, *Die Young* examines what it means to be a new creature in Christ. The message is centered on fundamental Christian truths—obedience, service, love, joy, reverence—that will be especially beneficial to new or young believers trying to gain a spiritual footing. It serves as a reminder not to be conformed to this world and challenges readers to allow God to transform lives.

Unfortunately, the reading tends to be a bit confusing and dull at times because examples and illustrations are few, some lessons are repeated too often, and the tone is more like a sermon than a conversation. Still, the message is important and genuine; and the points are biblically sound. DLT

## **FLIRTING WITH THE FORBIDDEN: Finding Grace in a World of Temptation**

by Steven James

**Revell, 978-0-8007-3428-2, PB, 192 pages, \$12.99**

When you think of temptation, do you usually think of lust? Or do you remember other things, such as doubt, despair, and greed? With his characteristic style of story-based lessons, James addresses these and other common temptations Christians face on a regular basis. He brings life to Scripture by describing events through the eyes of people who were there, such as Cain and Abel.

James puts a new face on many familiar Bible stories by telling events from a first-person perspective. However, he adds dynamics not everyone will be comfortable with. For example, Joseph and Potiphar's wife kiss passionately and then Joseph takes off his shirt before running out of the room. Even so, I highly recommend this book to anyone struggling with faith issues or facing temptations. NS

## **GRUMBLE HALLELUJAH: Learning to Love Your Life Even When it Lets You Down**

by Caryn Dahlstrand Rivadeneira

**Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3801-9, PB, 256 pages, \$14.99**

It was during one of the hardest times in her life that Rivadeneira realized that honest praise to God can come as a grumble, not only a joyful exclamation during seasons of blessing. She shares wisdom from Scripture about how to love God in the midst of suffering and explains various toxins Christians need to abandon, such as envy, fear, and doubt, in order to experience hope.

Never does Rivadeneira's writing slip into the prosperity gospel: follow these steps and all your problems will disappear. Instead, she tells candid, heart-wrenching stories from her own life and gives practical advice about

how to surrender a life of unmet expectations and unexpected pain to God. Her warm, personal style will connect with women who need encouragement and a challenge to praise God in any and every situation. ALG

## **LEAD ... FOR GOD'S SAKE!**

by Todd G. Gongwer

**Tyndale, 978-1-4143-7055-2, HB, 244 pages, \$22.99**

Using a parable, Gongwer seeks to help readers become more effective leaders. The key characters drink lots of beer, bad-mouth their wives and children, and complain and whine about the people they work with. One of these men, a high-school basketball coach, then gets mentored by the high-school janitor, who later turns out to be an incognito former business magnate. (What are the odds of that happening?) Slowly, but surely (emphasis on slowly), he becomes a better coach, husband, and dad.

I cannot say enough bad things about this book. Within the first 50 pages, the two main characters repeatedly use six vulgar, offensive cuss words, including taking the Lord's name in vain. The story is lame, the editing is poor (the book abounds with typos and writing errors), and the focal characters are totally unfit for Christian literature. Avoid this book! RRM

## **LIFE INTERRUPTED: Navigating the Unexpected**

by Priscilla Shirer

**B&H, 978-1-4336-7045-9, PB, 215 pages, \$14.99**

Don't you hate it when you have your life planned out and somehow everything gets changed? That's the premise Shirer tackles. She explores how God sometimes shakes up our lives and changes our plans for something better, even if we don't recognize it at the time. She wants to help readers “learn how to see our life interruptions as divine interventions and be-

# BOOK REVIEWS

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gin surrendering to the authority and sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Christians from all walks of life can thoroughly enjoy the message of God’s sovereign care. Shirer shares her own life experiences but provides helpful biblical examples too. Her progress from career woman to mother to Bible teacher allows readers to relate to the drastic changes she had in her life. People who are dealing with difficulties of change will be comforted and inspired. KSI

## **MUSCULAR FAITH**

by Ben Patterson

Tyndale, 978-4143-1666-6, PB, 261 pages, \$14.99

Patterson challenges believers who may be coasting along a bit too comfortably in the Christian life. God’s grace is an amazing gift; and while Patterson acknowledges it as something we cannot earn, he is concerned that many of us have edged into spiritual inertia.

Serving as a campus pastor for more than 15 years, Patterson has watched hundreds of freshmen step onto campus full of hopes and dreams and a passion for Christ. His desire is to see those students develop a strong, resilient faith that will become fruitful and last a lifetime. Although he wrote *Muscular Faith* to encourage his students, he also encourages those of us hoping to grow in the same way. AKS

## **SMALL THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE: Adventures in Loving Your Neighbor**

by Margot Starbuck

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3817-2, PB, 224 pages, \$15

Are you ready to dive into the upside-down, counterculture, life-fulfilling adventure Jesus calls us to? Serving others doesn’t mean we have to sell our houses and move across the world. Jesus calls us to serve where we are, with the community around us. This book helps you discover how to use

the unique gifts, influences, and resources He has blessed you with to make a Kingdom impact.

With witty flair, Starbuck challenges readers to take the first step in the adventure of loving “the least of these.” Read this book chapter by chapter, or jump through it by following the guides at the end of each chapter. This text includes an individual and group study, which is sure to generate discussions in senior-high, college, or adult small groups. BW

## **WALKING IN THE DUST OF RABBI JESUS: How the Jewish Words of Jesus Can Change Your Life**

by Lois Tverberg

Zondervan, 978-0-310-28420-8, HB, 240 pages, \$18.99

For patrons looking for something deep that forces them to think and see God’s Word in a whole new way, buy this book. It’s challenging, not a leisurely read. Three parts take readers through hearing, living, and reading Jesus’ words in the context of first-century Jewish culture.

Complete with compelling stories and applications for today, this book is relevant and thought provoking. It looks at such questions as, “What did it mean to Jewish listeners when Jesus said to love the Lord with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength?” and “What are the deeper implications from Jesus’ teachings on prayer?” I recommend this book for anybody wanting to peel back the layers of meaning behind the words of Christ. LG

## **THE WORLD-TILTING GOSPEL: Embracing a Biblical Worldview and Hanging on Tight**

by Dan Phillips

Kregel, 978-0-8254-3908-7, PB, 315 pages, \$17.99

Focused on the New Testament’s power, this book presents how crucial it is to embrace the gospel in all parts of life. Pastor Phillips strongly warns against toning down the gospel and

shows how sticking with the truth of God’s Word is the best and only way to show the world God’s love. He demonstrates that the Bible’s gospel has the supernatural power to set this sinful world straight by turning it upside-down.

The tone is conversational, jumping from seriousness to tongue-in-cheek humor. Some references, such as Jack Bauer of TV’s *24*, won’t transfer to everyone; and, in places, the text is unnecessarily wordy. However, writing with conviction, Phillips uses Scripture to back up all of his points and present a valuable message. With countless biblical citations—used accurately—this book is a practical resource. MLS

## **Church & Ministry**

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### **GOING DEEP: Becoming a Person of Influence**

by Gordon MacDonald

Nelson, 978-0-7852-2608-6, PB, 400 pages, \$15.99

A follow-up to *Who Stole My Church*, this book follows MacDonald’s fictional congregation through the formation of a ministry tailored to cultivate deep people. Pastor MacDonald and his wife follow in the footsteps of Christ, becoming modern Christian rabbis by taking a small group of believers and training them to deepen their walks with God and with others, preparing them for a future in Christian leadership.

Though written in narrative form, this book is thorough and informative, detailing each part of MacDonald’s process: how he consults God and others for guidance through the training, how his partnership with his wife benefits their ministry, and specific ways he guides his mentees to a greater

# BOOK REVIEWS

depth of faith. The fictional nature makes the information easy to digest, though it causes occasional redundancies. These insights are useful for any church by focusing ministries on cultivating a new generation of leaders who are deep people. MM

**ZOMBIE CHURCH: Breathing Life Back into the Body of Christ** by Tyler Edwards  
Kregel, 978-0-8254-2459-5, PB, 211 pages, \$14.99

My first reaction when I saw the title was to groan. Just what I needed, more Christian teaching based on movies and pop culture instead of Scripture. However, what I found was an insightful look into the contemporary American church, validated with an abundance of Scripture. Pastor Edwards wrote about a church that goes through all the motions—beautiful facilities, great music, good programs, fascinating fellowship—but falls short in community relevance and eternal consequence. Indeed, it has the appearance of living but with an absence of life. He had me well and properly hooked when he questioned whether anyone outside of attendees would even notice if my church were to close its doors.

While *Zombie Church* certainly points out problems in contemporary churches, it is by no means a bash-'em-and-leave-'em book. Each chapter is filled with practical ways a church can reconnect with the Source of life and allow the Spirit to restore it to its Acts vitality. This book is relevant for all types of churches and Christians of all ages and maturity levels. Highly recommended. BR

**To read is to fly: it is to soar to a point of vantage which gives a view over wide terrains of history, human variety, ideas, shared experience and the fruits of many inquiries.**

—A. C. Grayling

## Contemporary Issues

**SCANDALOUS OBLIGATION: Rethinking Christian Responsibility** by Eric R. Severson  
Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-2612-1, PB, 184 pages, \$16.99

The list of issues Christians would rather ignore is long. Dr. Severson addresses a variety of these rooted in responsibility and social justice. He articulates well-crafted cases for many subjects, then leaves the conclusions to the reader.

*Scandalous Obligation* is not, nor was it intended to be, light reading. Dr. Severson, a college professor and co-director of the Center for Responsibility and Justice, is an academic, which shows in his style. The book reads much like a philosophy textbook. He incorporated many current cultural references to create a connection with a contemporary audience, but these do little to lighten the tone of the book. The bibliography demonstrates the fascinating and diverse references Severson used in his presentation. Recommended for believers who want more out of their Christian education and growth than 30-minute, Sunday-morning PowerPoint presentations based on movie clips. BR

## Evangelism & Missions

### Apologetics

**MERE APOLOGETICS** by Alister E. McGrath  
Baker, 978-0-8010-1416-1, PB, 197 pages, \$16.99

How thrilling to be a student at

King's College, sitting under the skillful tutelage of Professor McGrath. Who better to address the challenging topic of apologetics than a former atheist? Fortunately, for those of us unable to attend his lectures in London, McGrath brings his classroom to us in this book.

A salute to C. S. Lewis's classic work *Mere Christianity*, *Mere Apologetics* both challenges and inspires Christians who take seriously the Great Commission. With a cultural shift toward postmodernity, McGrath deftly points out that while reason and logic remain cornerstones of the Christian faith, aesthetics cannot be overlooked. Effective apologetics means engaging skeptics on their own terms and in their own language. He tackles common stumbling blocks and offers examples from his own life. Referencing biblical texts, along with skeptics and philosophers from antiquity to today, this book is a powerful evangelistic tool. AKS

## Evangelism

**MISSIONAL SPIRITUALITY: Embodying God's Love from the Inside Out** by Roger Helland & Leonard Hjalmarson  
InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3807-3, PB, 253 pages, \$16

Spirituality is about more than your spirit; it's about your life. The authors argue that spirituality should be a mission, manifesting itself in activity, instead of passivity. Their purpose is to motivate the church to show active and alive faith by reaching out to a world that is now connected through mass media and easy travel.

Baptist district executive coach Helland and pastor Hjalmarson make a strong, Scripture-supported argument. They use occasional anecdotes; but, for the most part, rely on research to prove their point. A 20-page index cites their sources. The book is well written but a bit dry and scholarly

# BOOK REVIEWS

sounding at times. The authors are well qualified to write on this subject because they both have extensive church and pastoral backgrounds. This is a useful book for both church leaders and members because it gives positive suggestions about how to activate the congregation's outreach. CS

## Family

### Marriage

**PLAYING HURT: A Guy's Strategy for a Winning Marriage**  
by Brian Goins  
Kregel, 978-0-8254-2673-5, PB, 148 pages, \$11.99

Pastor Goins brings insight to men who think in terms of sports, games, and "the hunt." He rightfully points out how much many men are willing to endure in terms of their jobs, friendships, and even recreation, yet how little they will endure in their marriages. He brings into play his experiences as a husband, pastor, and speaker with FamilyLife's Weekend to Remember to both educate and entertain. Each chapter includes a "Playbook for Playing Hurt" and hot-seat points on which to focus for application.

The book is well crafted and easily read. It's definitely geared toward men who love sports, outdoor activity, and guy time in the "man cave." Frequent references to sports figures and mo-

ments in athletic events will surely strike accord with them. For those of us who are not so inclined, it can bring a feeling of inadequacy or exclusion from the world of "real" men. Recommended for its intended audience. BR

### Parenting

**JUST TOO BUSY: Taking Your Family on a Radical Sabbatical**  
by Joanne Kraft  
Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-2609-1, PB, 192 pages, \$14.99

Kraft felt her family and their lives spinning out of control. They were spending all their time in sports and classes, rarely eating together and busy beyond belief. This is the American family's new normal, and she felt she would never know her family before the children would be off on their own.

So she and her husband implemented a 12-month experiment to take time from extracurricular activities and do family activities together. She shows the progression from a frantic schedule to stuttering through a reluctant first attempt at finally finding a happy and blissful time together as a family. She identifies the 10 signs that a family is too busy and how to resist being constantly distracted by the outside world.

Kraft's practical and sometimes humorous examples and direction will help families begin their own traditions and radical Sabbaths. Recommended for the families in your church. CEM

**LOVE-POWERED PARENTING: Loving Your Kids the Way Jesus Loves You**  
by Tom & Chaundel Holladay  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33167-4, HB, 272 pages, \$21.99

Endorsed by Kay and Rick Warren, this book works through parenting principles on a weekly and daily basis. The six principles are word power, mercy and compassion, serving, priori-

ties, love, and unselfishness. Practical ways to implement them and things to say, action to take, and verses to help deal in a biblical manner show parents discipline and a way to deal with children with a Jesus attitude. The point is to become more like Christ in your parenting. An important issue is that no family is perfect, but we can strive to function as Christians especially within our families.

This book doesn't only teach parents to parent. It also guides them to encourage, prepare, and give their children a lifetime way of functioning as Christ would while being Christlike to their children. Recommended for your parenting section. CEM

## Fiction

**BARCELONA CALLING**  
by Jane Kirkpatrick  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-29364-4, PB, 314 pages, \$14.99

Where is the line between doing what it takes to become famous and trading what makes you *you*? This is a question that aggravates artists, musicians, and writers like the main character, Annie Shaw. Annie's first novel was a bestseller, but since then nothing has come close in sales. Now she is making edgy, morally questionable revisions for her new editor and desperately trying to get on Oprah to market the book.

Annie is a charming character, relatable in her flaws and lovable in her unlucky life. Readers will want to cheer her on as she fumbles through her struggles for fame. In the end, she learns that success is not worth losing her dignity or testimony. This is an entertaining, happy story with good morals. It is mainly marketed for women, but its easy-to-read style makes it good for teens too. KSI

### SEQUEL

to *That's My Son*  
by Rick Johnson  
Revell, 978-0-8007-3383-4, \$12.99  
*That's My Girl*



# BOOK REVIEWS

## BEYOND THE FARTHEST STAR

by **Bodie & Brock Thoene**

Zondervan, 978-0-310-33610-5, PB, 226 pages, \$14.99

The Thoenes bring pain, loss, and love together in this heartfelt novel. A fractured family moves to small-town Leonard in hopes of a new start. Adam Wells and his family all have their problems, and they are hoping and praying that God will restore them. With a hidden secret and a daughter who longs to know who or what religious being is beyond the farthest star, it is up to the man once known as "preacher boy" to reunite his loved ones, even if it may cost him his life.

This book is well written with description that places readers in the action. One thing to look out for, however, is the use of harsher, rather crude language and a lack of character repentance. I recommend this book only to discerning Christians. AW

## BLUE MOON PROMISE

Under Texas Stars #1

by **Colleen Coble**

Nelson, 978-1-59554-915-0, PB, 320 pages, \$15.99

"Who would want to steal from us?" Lucy Marsh asks as someone struggles to break in the door of her house. "We have nothing!" Unknown to her, in that house are five silver coins worth more than a million dollars and a deed to 10,000 acres of land. With their lives falling apart, Lucy takes the only option left to save herself and her two siblings, namely marriage to a complete stranger in her mother's hometown of Wichita Falls, Texas. But the secrets of the old house continue to haunt her.

Jumping right into the story, Coble wastes no time starting the action, yet she manages to introduce and fully develop the characters. The story is nicely paced, and its Christian messages are obvious without being obtrusive. Here is a tale of a girl's search for love that is fulfilled in an unconventional way. Women 15 and older will

be particularly drawn to this story. CH

## CHASING MONA LISA

by **Tricia Goyer & Mike Yorkey**

Revell, 978-0-8007-2046-9, PB, 325 pages, \$14.99

The Nazis have the *Mona Lisa*, and France has just been liberated from the grasp of Nazi Germany. Reichsmarschall Göring intends to confiscate the painting to use as a postwar bargaining chip. To save the priceless art and even the fate of postwar France, Swiss agents Gabi Mueller and Eric Hofstadler join the race to reclaim da Vinci's masterpiece.

This is an intriguing story set during the final days of World War II in France and Germany. It's well written; but since it is set during wartime, there is some violence, though tastefully presented. Not a lot of content deals with God; it's mostly a few characters being thankful God is in control. Overall, it's a fast-paced, historical, action-oriented novel. OJ

## DELIVER ME FROM EVIL

Freedom Series #1

by **Kathi Macias**

New Hope, 978-1-59669-306-7, PB, 320 pages, \$14.99

Mara is sold into slavery by her parents in Mexico and then taken to San Diego for the sex trade. Jonathan and his sister, Leah, become involved in Mara's dramatic rescue.

While this story is fiction, it brings to light the real horrors of sex trafficking and the real dangers of Christians putting their faith into action with organizations like Breaking Chains, the Christian group that rescues children from sex-trafficking.

Although this story shows the horror of something happening in our society, Macias does it in a sensitive way with compelling characters. She shows how Christians have to respond to this heinous practice. Lisa L. Thompson of the Salvation Army's Abolition of Sexual Trafficking endorsed the book.

You will want it in your library although you may wish to be sensitive to the reader's age. Macias's stories are becoming a rallying call to Christians to stop human trafficking. CEM

## FAIRER THAN MORNING

The Saddler's Legacy #1

by **Rosslyn Elliot**

Nelson, 978-1-59554-785-9, PB, 393 pages, \$15.99

Ann Miller dreams of marrying her romantic suitor, Eli. But when she visits Pittsburgh with her father, her eyes are opened to the harsh realities of life. Abused apprentice Will Hanby awakens her compassion, and she begins to wonder if marrying Eli is really God's desire for her.

Although this is her debut novel, Elliot shows a good grasp of the inspirational, historical genre. With appealing characters and attention to detail, she ably introduces readers to 19th-century Pittsburgh. The fact that Ann and Will are both historical figures brings an intriguing sense of reality to the story, and a subplot regarding the underground railroad adds danger and depth to what might have otherwise been a simple romance. An implied sex scene may deter some readers, but the lessons regarding forgiveness and freedom are redeeming and refreshing. Fans of historical romances will especially enjoy this book. RAB

## THE GUARDIAN

by **Robbie Chevront & Erik Reed**

Barbour, 978-1-61626-278-5, PB, 443 pages, \$16.99

Anna Riley's adventure starts when she finds a young boy alone in New Orleans; or maybe the boy found her. The boy is really an angel who tells Anna that her grandfather wants to see her. Soon he dies, and Anna inherits the family responsibility of protecting an ancient scroll. But first she has to find it. Helped only by a priest, an ex-NAVY SEAL, and a missionary, she

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must keep the scroll from the hands of a corrupt and powerful cardinal. To do this she must find what the scroll refers to as “the key.”

The main characters are so lifelike the reader cheers them on during ev-

ery step of the quest. The dialogue is natural; the settings are vivid; and, by the story’s end, there is a good Christian lesson to be learned. I highly recommend this book for fans of adventure stories. JS

## INTO THE FREE

by Julie Cantrell

Cook, 978-0-7814-0424-2, PB, 400 pages, \$12.99

Cantrell engages her audience with a provoking tale of a young girl’s con-

## SERIES UPDATES

### Angelaeon Circle

by Karyn Henley

WaterBrook, 978-0-307-73014-5,  
\$9.99

#2 *Eye of the Sword*

### Bailey Flanigan

by Karen Kingsbury

Zondervan, 978-0-310-27635-7,  
\$14.99

#4 *Loving* (final book)

### Crossroads Crisis Center

by Vicki Hinze

Multnomah, 978-1-60142-207-1,  
\$15.99

#3 *Not This Time* (final book)

### Darkness to Light

by Golden Keyes Parson

Nelson, 978-1-59554-629-6, \$15.99

#4 *His Steadfast Love*

### Deep Haven

by Susan May Warren

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3483-7,  
\$13.99

#2 *The Shadow of Your Smile*

### The Four Lindas

by Melody Carlson

Cook, 978-1-4347-6491-1, \$14.99

#4 *Here’s to Friends* (final book)

### The Heart of a Hero

by Shelley Gray

Abingdon, 978-1-4267-1463-4,  
\$14.99

#2 *A Texan’s Honor*

### Hugh de Singleton, Surgeon

by Mel Starr

Monarch, 978-0-85721-058-6, \$14.99

#4 *Unhallowed Ground*

### The Inn at Shining Waters

by Melody Carlson

Abingdon, 978-1-4267-1267-8, \$14.99

#2 *River’s Call*

### Intervention

by Terri Blackstock

Zondervan, 978-0-310-20568-5, \$14.99

#3 *Downfall*

### Irish Angel

by Jill Marie Landis

Zondervan, 978-0-310-29372-9, \$14.99

#3 *Heart of Glass*

### Kauffman Amish Bakery

by Amy Clipston

Zondervan, 978-0-310-31996-2, \$12.99

#4 *A Life of Joy*

### The Midwives

by Laurie Alice Eakes

Revell, 978-0-8007-1985-2, \$14.99

#2 *Heart’s Safe Passage*

### Miller Family

by Mary Ellis

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4487-8,  
\$13.99

#4 *An Amish Family Reunion*

### The Monastery Murders

by Donna Fletcher Crow

Monarch, 978-0-85721-050-0, \$14.99

#2 *A Darkly Hidden Truth*

### Perfect Stranger

by David Gregory

Worthy, 978-1-936034-86-4, \$14.99

#3 *Night with a Perfect Stranger*

### The Resurrection of Nat Turner

by Sharon Ewell Foster

Howard, 978-1-4165-7812-3, \$15.99

*Part Two: The Testimony*

### A Shipshewana Amish Mystery

by Vannetta Chapman

Zondervan, 978-0-310-33044-8,  
\$12.99

#2 *A Perfect Square*

### Side Roads

by Sally John

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-2787-7, \$13.99

#3 *Heart Echoes* (final book)

### The Sister Wife

by Allison Pittman

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3597-1, \$13.99

#2 *Forsaking All Others* (final book)

### Snowglobe Connections

by Charlene Ann Baumbich

WaterBrook, 978-0-307-44473-8,  
\$13.99

#3 *Finding Our Way Home*

### Texas Trails

Moody, 978-0-8024-0587-6, \$14.99

#4 *A Ranger’s Trail*

by Darlene Franklin

# BOOK REVIEWS

frontation of abuse, anger, and forgiveness. As Millie fights through her challenging circumstances and bitterness, she faces physical and emotional trials that help her discern an answer for the question about God's existence. She finally finds her own joy but not without heartache and loss along the way.

Cantrell presents the story of Millie in an honest and raw manner. The book is gripping in its face-off between good and evil and the battle that ensues between the two. It addresses the age-old question of how a loving God can exist in a hateful, unfair world. However, because descriptive instances of rape and abuse are necessary for the plot line, some content is appropriate only for adults. AB

## THE LAST PLEA BARGAIN

by Randy Singer

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3321-2, PB, 372 pages, \$13.99

Assistant DA Jamie Brock must choose between her code of justice and her recently deceased father's reputation. When a powerful defense attorney is indicted for murder and tries to prove his innocence, mysteries arise that question the reliability of many people Jamie holds dear and the potential innocence of the man who supposedly killed her mother.

Singer does an excellent job of keeping Christian themes evident without hammering heavy theology into the reader's head. In this story, the ethics of the death penalty is the key issue he examines. He succeeds in infusing basic biblical ideals into his characters, allowing for strong moments throughout. The plot sustains momentum, thanks to short chapters; and even sideline developments, such as a romantic interest, manage to maintain realism and interest. Overall, this book is an excellent choice for fans of legal thrillers but will keep just about anyone enthralled from start to finish. DH

## LOST AND FOUND

by Ginny L. Yttrup

B&H, 978-1-4336-7171-5, PB, 352 pages, \$14.99

Jenna Bouvier lives in fear of her emotionally abusive mother-in-law who threatens to destroy her godly reputation. Similarly, Andee Bell lives in fear of failure, never content with success. Their lives intertwine in a pursuit of freedom. Should they respond in faith or ignore God's whispers?

Yttrup encourages readers to respond to God's voice, trusting Him regardless of circumstances. This compelling story features encouraging biblical references, believable dialogue, and a plausible plot. Her three-dimensional characters endure real-life struggles, helping the reader connect emotionally. The use of first-person, present-tense narration conveys the characters' honest thoughts; but it can be confusing at times when too much verbatim information is presented.

The book examines alcohol consumption, discusses self-image issues, and evaluates worldly recognition. Although *Lost and Found* offers freedom in the Lord, I would think twice before placing it on a school library shelf or encouraging teens to read it because of the adult subject matter. SC

## LOVE BLOOMS IN WINTER

Dakota Diaries #1

by Lori Copeland

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-3019-2, PB, 240 pages, \$12.99

Mae Wilkey is desperate to find help for her elderly neighbor, Pauline, who suffers from dementia. Pauline can't remember any living family, but Mae searches her desk and finds the name of Tim Curtis. Tim doesn't remember any relative named Pauline. However, he decides to visit after he receives two urgent letters from Mae. When no one will take care of his 92-year-old "aunt," Tom grudgingly becomes a resident of the quirky community and also of Mae's heart.

The secondary characters bring this novel to life with their odd personalities and humor. The main characters could be more well-rounded; but the dialogue is realistic, and the plot is believable. Overall, it is a somewhat typical historical romance but with refreshingly unconventional residents. The characters discuss Christianity and the Bible openly throughout the book. Recommended for women. ALA

## THE MULLIGANS OF MT. JEFFERSON

by Don Reid

Cook, 978-4347-6494-2, PB, 326 pages, \$14.99

When storeowner Harlan Stone is shot, his two best friends, pastor Cal and detective Buddy, investigate to find the intruder. The novel follows these characters from childhood to adulthood. Their friendship portrays the author's belief in second chances. Each friend is confronted with issues, such as teen pregnancy, distrust, and separation. In a world of betrayal, lies, and unmet expectations, love, faith, friendship, and forgiveness are the only things these men can hold on to.

The believable plot and dialogue take the reader to the townspeople of Mt. Jefferson in 1959 and inside the truth that in a small town everyone knows the past and present troubles of their neighbors. Flashbacks in the chapters bring the story full circle. Teens and adults will enjoy solving who shot Harlan and why, but may find the ending leaves more questions than answers. I recommend this book for school and church libraries because of its message of second chances and the importance of friendship. SCC

## A NECESSARY DECEPTION

The Daughters of Bainbridge House #1

by Laurie Alice Eakes

Revell, 978-0-8007-3466-4, PB, 346 pages, \$14.99

The last thing Lydia Gale needs just

# BOOK REVIEWS

before aiding her sisters during London's society season is blackmail. After legally helping a French prisoner acquire parole, a stranger tells her the Frenchman has escaped and she could be potentially charged with high treason. But when this Frenchman shows up at her house with a note from her blackmailer asking to be welcomed into society, Lydia strives to find out the truth.

This novel offers a dramatic tale of characters learning to trust one another despite deceit and ultimately trusting God to help them even when they feel inadequate or unworthy of His help. A few controversial elements include off-scene foreplay and a drinking and gambling scene handled in context. Nevertheless, I recommend it to women for its romantic and God-inspiring qualities. KS

## REMEMBERING YOU

by **Tricia Goyer**

**Guideposts, 978-0-8249-4812-2, PB, 272 pages, \$14.99**

When Ava Andrews is asked to accompany her grandfather to a World War II battalion reunion tour in Europe, she thinks she'll get a chance to reconnect with her grandfather and save her career. The last things she expects is the arrival of the first man she loved and her grandfather's angry silence about his experiences when she tries to interview him. But as they journey together, visiting European battle sites, Ava realizes some things are more important than the goals she clings to.

Goyer's writing and descriptions render the setting beautifully, letting the reader see the countryside, old battle sites, and cities in Europe. The characters are believable and fun to get to know. One warning: Some graphic scenes take place at the site of a liberated concentration camp, which some readers might find disturbing. For a story that grapples with Christian ethics like "love your enemies" and "the

battle belongs to the Lord," this book meets the challenge. NS

## SAVING HOPE

by **Margaret Daley**

**Abingdon, 978-1-4267-1428-3, PB, 328 pages, \$14.99**

What would you do if everything you had worked for and believed in was on the line? Kate Winslow and Wyatt Sheridan grapple with this dilemma. Kate's organization, which rehabilitates former prostitutes, faces a potential shutdown due to lack of funding after one of her girls goes missing. Wyatt's independent teenage daughter and aging mother fight his control as he tries to forget his late wife's murder.

The story about Kate's organization, Beacon of Hope, is well thought out and well told. But the descriptions are a bit static; and the plot, especially the predictable romance that develops between Kate and Wyatt, is tired. Some of the details are extraneous, and some of the dialogue seems contrived. However, the genuineness of Kate's trust in God and Wyatt's trust in biblical promises make the book inspiring for those who enjoy stories of rewarded faith. KSH

## SHADOWED IN SILK

**Twilight of the British Raj #1**

by **Christine Lindsay**

**White Fire, 978-0-9765444-9-4, PB, 276 pages, \$14.99**

In 1918 Abby Fraser and her small son return to India where her British-officer husband is stationed. The years have turned Nick into a cruel and distant stranger, but Abby attempts to win his heart back for the sake of their son, Cam. Major Geoff Richards, fresh from the Great War and broken in faith and from loss, feels a need to protect Abby and Cam from the cruelties at the Amritsar outpost. Political intrigue, unrest, Russian spies, ruthless British peers, and tension rising from a people loved by both Abby and Geoff catches

them in a grip between their duty and ideals as the revolution and terror explode.

Little do we hear about Indian history; and this story perfectly captures the era, sights and aromas, pounding action, and the spirit of the people. Plus it has a strong Christian theme. Highly recommended. CEM

## SOUTHERN FRIED SUSHI

**Southern Fried Sushi #1**

by **Jennifer Rogers Spinola**

**Barbour, 978-1-61626-364-5, PB, 379 pages, \$12.99**

How would you describe a bad week? Would losing your mom, your job, and your fiancé and being forced to move to an entirely different country qualify? That's where Shiloh Jacobs finds herself when she has to leave her home in Japan for a small town in Virginia. To make things worse, Shiloh also lacks faith in God. However, through this journey, Shiloh finds true friends who help point her gaze upward.

Overall, I recommend this book. The characters are three-dimensional, and the plot is a bit manic but fun and believable. Sometimes the Southern twang seems overdone; and the book leaves some questions unanswered. But, overall, the dialogue adds to the setting; and the ending is satisfying. This book contains hard life experiences, including miscarriages, unfaithfulness, and deception. Through these instances, Spinola beautifully displays God's redeeming love and grace. RMM

**The only way to do all the things you'd like to do is to read.**

—Tom Clancy

**You cannot open a book without learning something.**

—Confucius



# BOOK REVIEWS

## Finances

**MONEY ON PURPOSE: Finding a Faith-Filled Balance**  
by Shayna Lear  
Judson, 978-0-8170-1705-7, PB, 202 pages, \$15.99

In her introduction, Lear explains that her book is specifically targeted at helping African-American families learn to manage and invest their money more efficiently. By 2015, African-Americans will be generating 1.5 trillion dollars of annual revenue, yet only 20 percent ever have enough money to retire on; and only 23 percent are worth even \$100,000. Lear asks, "Where is all that money going?" Her research shows areas of bad habits, including the fact that African-Americans spend 300 percent more on their food budgets each week than any other ethnic group, yet they save almost nothing.

Thus, this book deems to expose areas of weakness in budgeting, spending, providing for insurance and retirement, and securing health care. Besides offering systems and plans for money management, Lear, a certified financial planner, also delves into the psychology of how people handle or misuse money. She offers guidance for using prayer, meditation, study, and discipline to alter bad habits. People of any race or nationality will find solid money advice in this book. DEH

## Men

**MAN ALIVE**  
by Patrick Morley  
Multnomah, 978-1-60142-386-3, PB, 208 pages, \$14.99

Christian men often feel they lead lukewarm lives—and they hate it. This text shows how men can fulfill their

seven "primal" needs so as to lead more spiritually fulfilling lives. Some of these needs include feeling like you "don't have to do life alone," believing God really loves and cares about you, and learning to love and be loved unconditionally.

*Man Alive* shows specific ways men can avoid problems they frequently face by drawing closer to God, turning to appropriate biblical passages, and living spiritually transformed lives. Morley, founder of Man in the Mirror, includes many personal illustrations, stories from other men, and discussion questions. Since he believes men can resist the path of God because of free will, this book is designed to provide strength and character in making wise choices. It is excellent for men's small groups. SHP

## Potpourri

**THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN QUOTATIONS**  
Barbour, 978-1-60260-767-5, PB, 515 pages, \$14.99

As a writer of nonfiction books, I frequently want to begin a chapter with a witty or insightful quotation, but most quote books only provide the established wisdom of ancient writers. This book, likewise, provides marvelous classic quotations from G. K. Chesterton, Jonathan Edwards, Matthew Henry, and Charles Sheldon. However, it is far more contemporary and far reaching. It quotes politicians, pastors, televangelists, and radio/TV personalities. The subjects are equally vast, including abortion, diligence, honesty, patience, tolerance, and worship. Each new section begins with a Scripture quotation.

Church secretaries needing bulletin fillers will love this book, as will pastors needing "zingers" for sermons. Anyone responsible for a newsletter,

Web site, or blog will cherish this treasure trove of truth, passion, and wit. My favorite quote is from Carole Lewis, who said, "When I think about Jesus having to grow mentally, I am filled with hope." DEH

## Prayer

**ANYTHING: The Prayer That Unlocked My God and My Soul**  
by Jennie Allen  
Nelson, 978-0-8499-4705-6, PB, 193 pages, \$15.99

What if we told God we would do anything? Would we be willing to give up our plans? What about our homes or easy lives? Allen writes of her inspiration and struggle in trusting God with everything and explores what the anything prayer can do in our lives.

Allen clearly has a passionate heart for God and is a credited teacher. Although her points hit home, the book could have been better organized. Many anecdotes and reflections are combined loosely without coherent strings to hold them together. Still, her words are inspiring and life changing. This book is generally helpful to a wide audience but is especially appealing to women. KH

**THE CIRCLE MAKER**  
by Mark Batterson  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33302-9, PB, 224 pages, \$19.99

Why wander in circles when you can pray in circles? Batterson contends that only impossible prayers and dreams, the ones that need God, please the Lord. These dreams, he says, must be "circled," or constantly kept in prayer, even after it appears the dream cannot come true. Readers are urged to dream big, pray hard, and think long—then be surprised by the results.

Each chapter is full of miracles Batterson has witnessed personally as

# BOOK REVIEWS

pastor of a multisite church that could not have survived without divine assistance. He cites many examples of “circled” prayers in the Bible, dreams that ended in some of the more spectacular miracles. And he refers to key biblical passages that relate to prayer, while also presenting readable, human-interest stories. MTG

## PRAYING THE NEWS

by Wendy Griffith & Craig von Buseck

Regal, 978-0-8307-5926-2, PB, 200 pages, \$14.99

Usually when you catch a glimpse of a harrowing headline, your first instinct is not to pray. But Griffith and von Buseck argue that, as Christians, it should be. Referencing both the Bible and history, they discuss the importance of praying about the news we see on television, online, and in print. They believe that earnest prayers can change the hearts of world leaders, alter the decisions of global organizations, and influence the actions of political parties. After all, God controlled the heart of Pharaoh, so why not modern presidents, prime ministers, and kings?

Griffith is an anchor for CBN News, and von Buseck is ministries director for CBN.com. Together, they created a book that is an excellent resource for Christians looking for ways to impose their faith on culture in practical ways. Reference is made to Christians speaking in tongues and expelling demonic spirits, making this a book that not all audiences will be comfortable with. LJS

## Teens

### ANSWERS BOOK FOR TEENS

by Bodie Hodge & Tommy Mitchell with Ken Ham

Master Books, 978-0-89051-622-5, PB, 95 pages, \$14.99

For teens looking for answers to

their questions about Christianity, this book provides them. It covers such topics as suffering, sex, Earth’s age, Christians’ attitudes toward gays, and the authority of the Bible. The authors use Scripture to support their discussions, including adamant beliefs that creation occurred in seven, 24-hour days. Their purpose is to explain what most Christians believe to be obvious truths.

They use simple language and exclamation points to make reading easy and draw attention to God’s majesty and power. However, the text might be too simplified for older teens. The subjects are spoken of with ease and proficiency, which might lead some teens to feel embarrassed if they were ignorant before. Hodge is a teacher, Mitchell is a journalist, and Ham is a noted creationist. Recommended for church and school libraries and primarily for young teens. LK

### CARRYING MASON

by Joyce Magnin

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72681-4, HB, 153 pages, \$14.99

Luna Gleason faces the decision between what’s easy and what’s right: living comfortably at home or honoring her friend and God. After her best friend, Mason, dies, she steps up to look after his mother, Ruby Day. Dealing with his death and her new caretaking responsibilities can be overwhelming, but Luna doesn’t give up in this reflective story of responsibility and helping the helpless, shared in a melancholy, rambling, and dramatic style. Luna understands Ruby Day better and learns that even the handicapped have lessons to teach.

This novel shares the struggle of doing right in the face of difficulty. The protagonist is spunky and strong-willed, sticking to her guns in sometimes theatrical ways. She is not always kind, but she is strong. Magnin’s greatest gift is her vivid and practical description. *Carrying Mason* is too long, winding, and melodramatic for my

taste; but some teens might enjoy it, and it does have lessons to share. CS

### THE JERK MAGNET

Life at Kingston High #1

by Melody Carlson

Revell, 978-0-8007-1962-3, PB, 217 pages, \$12.99

Would you rather be pretty or ugly? Carlson leads teen girls to answer this question. Sixteen-year-old Chelsea is a shy wallflower whose stepmom gives her a beauty makeover. This changes her interactions with her peers but not always for the better. The story suggests that outer appearances aren’t as significant as internal values, stressing inner confidence.

Carlson uses three-dimensional characters, current teen lingo, and a plausible plot to connect with readers. She addresses relevant issues, such as self-doubt and judging others based on appearances, and includes teen dating relationships without taking a stance on biblical principles. Although this book is relevant for today’s teen girls, I hesitate to put it on a church library shelf because of its somewhat crude descriptions of female body parts. KS

### THE MIRROR OF N’DE

by L. K. Malone

Kregel, 978-0-8254-2667-4, PB, 328 pages, \$14.99

Hadlay, daughter of a lowly desert trader, dreams about the forbidden

### SERIES UPDATES

River of Time

by Lisa T. Bergren

Cook, 978-1-4347-6429-4, \$9.99  
#3 *Torrent*

The Solitary Tales

by Travis Thrasher

Cook, 978-1-4347-6417-1, \$9.99  
#3 *Temptation*

# BOOK REVIEWS

legend of N'de and a loving Being. When the emperor chooses her as a servant, she struggles to prove her value and tries to assist her oppressed people. It is when she befriends the emperor's son that she has to make some tough decisions.

Basically, this story is a paraphrased Esther story presented as a Christian allegory. The main characters are developed enough for the reader to care; but many of the others, who seem to be important, are shallow. The dialogue is functional, but in some areas stiff and in others stained slightly with clichéd phrasing. The plot is good enough to draw the reader along, and there was a surprise in the middle. JS

**TAKE BACK THE LAND: Inspiring a New Generation to Lead America**  
by Rick Boyer  
Master Books, 978-0-89051-619-5, PB, 253 pages, \$13.99

This book is a call to Christian youth to grow up. Today. Right now. Boyer hardly minces words in his impassioned call to arms on three battlefields in modern America: family, church, and government. Boyer considers Christianity to be in an all-out battle against the ever-present darkness in the world.

Through carefully researched chapters and opinions that clearly come from living the life he promotes, Boyer makes a distinct argument for the benefits of homeschooling, ignoring society's age "limits," and making an effort to make God-honoring changes in the world immediately. He demands better of Christian youth than the typical rebellious mall-rat lifestyle so prevalent in present culture. Teens ought to step up and become role models, no matter how old they are. Boyer's own political opinions and biases often come out in the text, but every claim has a scriptural foundation. This book is a must-read for Christian teenagers and their parents. VT

**THE WISHING PEARL**  
**Diamond Estates #1**  
by Nicole O'Dell  
Barbour, 978-1-61626-454-3, PB, 343 pages, \$9.99

In 16 years, Olivia Mansfield has experienced more tragedy and pain than anyone should have to face in a lifetime. Every day Olivia hides her guilt regarding her father's death, outrage at what her abusive stepfather has done to her, and anger at her clueless mother. In desperation, wanting the pain and fear to end, she turns to wild living for relief. But when her best friend is killed, Olivia begins to question the choices she's made. As she searches her heart, she admits she needs God. But will she ever find Him?

*The Wishing Pearl* portrays real issues teens find themselves facing today, such as substance abuse, eating disorders, and abortion. It manages a realistic approach without graphic scenes or objectionable language. The characters include mostly teen girls with realistic attitudes, taking steps toward healing. It's a good choice for your library, especially for the girls who attend youth group. LVO

**WREATH**  
by Judy Christie  
Barbour, 978-1-61626-452-9, PB, 282 pages, \$9.99

Sixteen-year-old Wreath Willis finds herself alone after her mother's death. She contrives a plan to evade her mother's cruel boyfriend and the government foster program by skipping town and moving into an abandoned junkyard. She dreams of attending college, but she first must make it through her senior year of high school. She finds her way to Landry, La., the small town where her parents had grown up, her father had died, and her mother had become pregnant in high school. She uncovers her past and discovers a promising future, thanks to an understanding of a Savior who wants what is best for her.

This novel is well written and enticing. Wreath and the people in her life grip the reader's heart as they try to understand and cope with life's challenges. The plot is realistic, the vocabulary is teen friendly, and the spiritual message is uplifting. APR

## Women

**WORK, LOVE, PRAY**  
by Diane Paddison  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33137-7, PB, 245 pages, \$14.99

This book is exactly what the cover describes it to be: "practical wisdom for young professional Christian women." Paddison gives advice on how to balance faith, love, and employment while also adhering to Christian disciplines. She tackles important female-related issues, such as why women need to be actively involved in the church, despite family and work obligations. She helps women learn to set priorities and capitalize on their natural strengths and talents. Each chapter comes with advice based on personal experience, how-to knowledge, stories of Christian women who have maintained balanced lives, and discussion questions for group interaction.

Paddison, who has a lot of corporate experience, writes in a personal and conversational style that puts the reader into everyday situations of work, love, and faith. Her advice is wholesome and sincere, and she addresses a wide variety of topics that are fitting for women ages 18-45. This book is useful for both group and individual study purposes. KT

**A library should be like a pair of open arms.**

—Roger Rosenblatt

# DVD REVIEWS

## Children

### BLAST OFF!

**Come on Over! volume 1**

**Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72849-8, 25 minutes, \$9.99**

*Come on Over!* is a TV show featuring its creator Joel Schoon Tanis. One of the central concepts is teaching imagination, and Joel can be found imagining and playing make-believe with fellow character Brandy. His goal is to encourage kids to be creative and relational, thus, as he puts it, "living into how we were created."

The show features a simple format. It starts out with Brandy coming over to find Joel doing something fun or Joel finding Brandy in some imaginative game. After some play, their friend Hedge drops by to teach them more about their activity. Other friends drop by, some of the puppet characters tell a knock-knock joke or two, and the two leads sing at least one song. By the end, several people "come on over" to spend some time together at Joel's home.

Overall, *Blast Off!* is a solid program for children ages four to seven. It does an excellent job at inspiring creativity and shows the importance and fun that can be had when spending time with other people. It carries a short, but solid educational message and offers a carefully written example of the many talents people can have, whether it be cooking or playing a musical instrument. This DVD series incorporates many different, but simple messages to make a great program for kids. DH

## Narrative

### COURAGEOUS: Honor Begins at Home

**TriStar, 6-02341-00479-4, 130 minutes, \$24.99**

Winner of numerous film-making awards, the cinematic team at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga., has continued success with its latest production. After a noteworthy run in neighborhood theaters, *Courageous* is now on DVD and, like its predeces-

sor, *Fireproof*, has an unapologetic Christian worldview. Four law-enforcement officers face different challenges as fathers, the film evokes both laughter and tears.

Fans of the movie will especially enjoy this collector's edition with two hours of special features, including outtakes and bloopers, "the making of," a behind-the-scenes look, and commentary by writers and directors Alex and Stephen Kendrick.

While this film contains no objectionable scenes or language and is recommended for church and school libraries, it should contain a "five tissue" warning for its emotional portrayal of everyday tragedies, such as the death of a child, unemployment, poverty, and betrayal. JAW

### SERIES UPDATE

#### BASIC

by Frances Chan

Cook, 978-0-7814-0383-2, \$14.99

#7 *Communion*

# MUSIC REVIEW

## Contemporary

### GET IN, I'M DRIVING

by Ginny Owens

**SoulStride, 5-099908-21222-1, \$13.99**

A three-time Dove Award-winning singer and songwriter, Owens is known for performing her own songs. Nearly all of these are based on real

circumstances in her life and the lives of her loved ones. For example, the tear-jerking, family-oriented tune "Joined at the Heart" tells the true story of the adoption of a baby girl by Owens's close friends. Other songs reflect her easygoing side, such as the hand-clapping melodies "Get In, I'm Driving" and "Better That Way." Some songs are serious and touching, like "Rain" and "Higher Ground," which

reflect words of personal testimony as to how God's provisions are abundant, dependable, and gracious.

This CD is rich with R&B, jazz, and soulful tunes. Patrons who like steady, rhythm tunes that have lyrics with thoughtful meaning will appreciate this album. MA



## Reviewers

Ashlee L. Amann, writer  
 Molly Anderson, writer  
 Angelina Burkholder, writer  
 Ruth Anne Burrell, writer  
 Kyle Carruthers, writer  
 Sarah Cristian Cespedes, writer  
 Sarah Clark, writer  
 Lyndsey Gammage, writer  
 Mark Thomas Glenchur, writer  
 Tara Gnagy, writer  
 Amy Lynn Green, writer  
 Claire Hadley, writer  
 Kacey Heinlein, writer  
 Kelly S. Helton, writer  
 Dr. Dennis E. Hensley, writer,  
 writing professor  
 David Hestand III, writer  
 Katelyn S. Irons, writer  
 Olivia Jessup, writer  
 Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock, Bible/  
 theology professor  
 Leah Knibbe, writer  
 Maria Martin, writer  
 Ronald R. Matucik, writer  
 Lynda Gail McCracken, church  
 librarian  
 Ronni M. Meier, writer  
 Alexandra R. Mellen, writer  
 Crystal E. Miller, writer  
 Lexie V. Owen, writer  
 Jeremy Paul, writer  
 Scott H. Phillips, writer  
 Bob Rose, pastor  
 Allison Page Russell, writer  
 Kristin Schwartz, writer  
 Kristi Schweitzer, writer  
 Meredith L. Sell, writer  
 Joshua Spotts, writer  
 Carlita Stewart, writer  
 Nathan Sturgis, writer  
 Ann K. Sullivan, writer  
 Lucinda J. Sweazey, writer  
 Valerie Taylor, writer  
 Dana L. Timmerman, writer  
 Kailey Traylor, writer  
 Judy A. Waggoner, church  
 librarian  
 Anna Williams, writer  
 Brianna Wyatt, writer

## Phase One

*continued from page 10*

found with enough digging and haggling.

Library-supply companies offer the most suitable shelving, but their units can be expensive. If money is a concern, consider asking a local contractor or a handy church member to build shelves that match the design of those sold by library suppliers. (Professional unit specifications are usually listed in catalog product descriptions.) These local sources often will give you a price that is more affordable than purchasing professional models.

### Planning for the Future

A final consideration to keep in mind is the future. Instead of focusing only on your library's current needs, think ahead and try to anticipate display possibilities and other changes that will allow the new facility to carry the library into the future. Our design for New Hope Library included several features that were not possible in the previous space.

One of our additions was a kiosk to hold a notebook computer that patrons can use to search the card catalog. The floor plan for shelving also left space for mounting a flat-panel television on one wall to feature DVDs available to patrons during business hours.

One of our biggest additions was a workroom directly connected to the library and reserved for library-staff usage. This room would serve as a much-needed work and holding area for media in various stages of processing and repair, as well as for library supplies. Complete with a sink, drawers, and cabinets, such a workroom can do wonders to enable new levels of organization; efficiency; and, as a result, professionalism.

With a little expert help, as well as consultation and approval from the

*Instead of focusing only on your library's current needs, think ahead and try to anticipate display possibilities and other changes that will allow the new facility to carry the library into the future.*

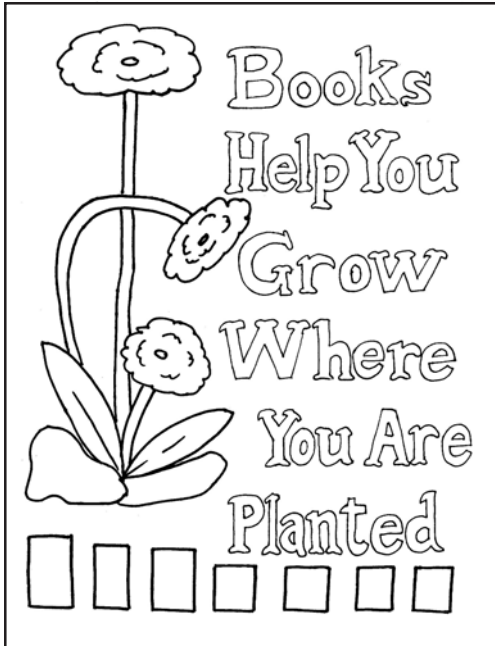
church building and library committees, our library design was completed. For any new library, some compromises and modifications may need to be made along the way to the final blueprint. But the research and attention to detail that are the librarian's hallmark serve well in this crucial stage.

The effort spent on developing the right design will provide a solid foundation for moving confidently into the next phase, the move.

*Jerusha Agen is a freelance writer and has served in church libraries for 18 years. She worked with the library director at New Hope Presbyterian Church when the library was moved to a new location..*

# POSTER/BULLETIN BOARDS

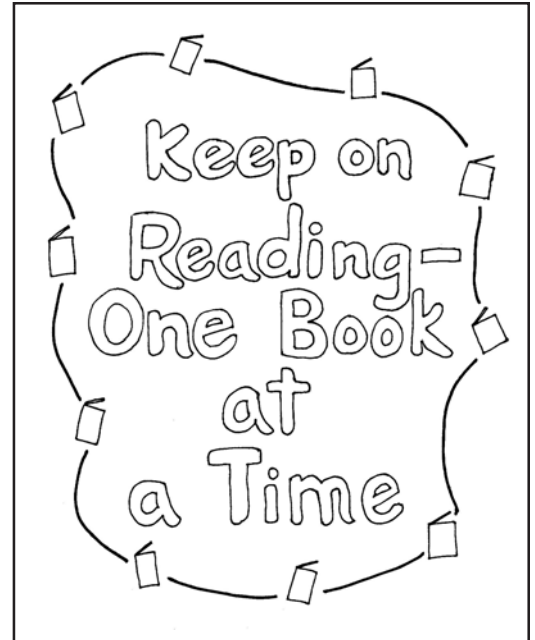
by Arlene Walker



## Bulletin Board

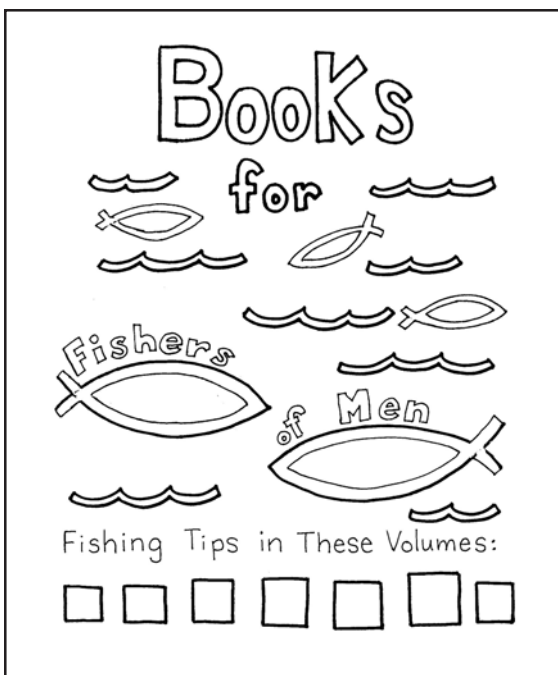
Cover a bulletin board with medium-blue paper or cloth. On newsprint, draw an oversized flower, almost as tall as the board. Use the drawing as a pattern; and cut as follows: three thick green stems, two large leaves, and three large bright-yellow flowers. Also cut two large gray rocks.

Use a marking pen to draw markings on the flowers as shown. Staple the flowers and rocks in place as shown. Cut large letters for the caption from black paper, and staple them to the board. In the space along the bottom, mount copies of book jackets from books that motivate spiritual growth.



## Poster

Use a sheet of florescent-colored poster board. Cut large letters for the caption from black paper, and glue them in place. Glue a thick cord around the edge of the caption as shown. Cut rectangle shapes from various colors of paper, and fold them to make book shapes. Write titles of books you wish to promote on the shapes, and glue them in place.



## Bulletin Board

Cover a bulletin board with teal green paper or cloth. Cut fish in various sizes from rainbow colors of construction paper. Cut letters for the caption from dark blue paper. Staple the fish and caption to the board. Cut waves from white paper to fill in the spaces, and mount them. On a long strip of paper, write *Fishing Tips in These Volumes:*. Staple it to the board, leaving space along the bottom for mounting copies of book jackets from books about witnessing.

Arlene Walker is a freelance writer and retired teacher.

# ECLA Conference CDs

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- Functions of Fiction, Allie Pleiter
- Nourishing Your Dream, Lynn Austin
- What Librarians Need to Know About Publishing: Trends in Fiction and Nonfiction and the Future of the Book, Jeff & Cindy Crosby
- Creating Web Pages for & Marketing Your Library, Cindy Kenney
- Launching a Church Library, Susan Fischer
- Life-transforming Literature, Mark Hamby
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## Get Paid for Your Ideas—and Get Published

You can get published in *Church Libraries*—and make some money to buy books. I'm looking for the following articles:

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- Staff training ideas.
- Anything else you think other church librarians can benefit from reading.
- Short, funny stories of things that have happened to you as a church or school librarian. (This one doesn't pay, but share the laughter.)
- Pictures of bulletin boards, window displays, and/or posters you've created to promote books and your library. (No pay for this one either but lots of gratitude from other librarians who need ideas.)

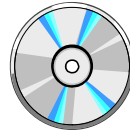
You don't have to be a professional writer. I can edit your ideas, but I need the ideas to edit. I only work via e-mail, so contact me at [linjohnson@eclalibraries.org](mailto:linjohnson@eclalibraries.org). For complete guidelines, go to [eclalibraries.org/journal.html](http://eclalibraries.org/journal.html); click on Writers' Guidelines.

—Lin Johnson, Managing Editor

# Helps for Your Library

## **Library Software Solutions by Debra Stombres—\$6**

Library software reviews from  
Winter 2010-11 *Church Libraries*.

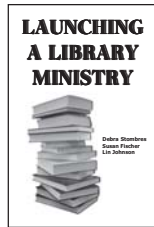


## **CDs**

See order form on inside back cover.

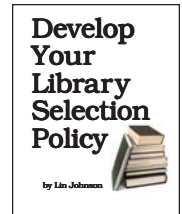
## **Launching a Library Ministry by Debra Stombres, Susan Fischer, & Lin Johnson—\$7**

Clear, concise guidance for writing a  
mission statement, staffing your library,  
furnishing and equipping the room,  
selecting books and other media, and  
processing and classifying those materials.



## **Develop Your Selection Policy by Lin Johnson—\$3**

This pamphlet will help you determine  
what to put in your library and what to  
leave out and to tailor a written policy for  
your library.



## **Church Library Classification System by William B. Haburn—\$13**

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Book/pamphlet prices include shipping & handling in U.S.  
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Check the titles you want, fill in your contact information, and send this form with a check or money order payable in U.S. funds to ECLA. Mail to ECLA, P.O. Box 353, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138-0353.

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