

# Church. Libraries

\$10

Winter 2013-14



## AUTHOR PROFILE

**Dandi Daley**

**Mackall: 400 Books  
and Counting**

## ALSO

**Start a Book-Discussion Group**

**Superheroes Reading Club**

**Faithful Stewards roundup**

# BULLETIN BOARDS



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



—Phyllis Jones, librarian, First United Methodist Church, Lawrenceville, Ill.

DID YOU KNOW THAT RIGHT BEHIND YOU IS A ROOM FILLED WITH VAST AMOUNTS OF KNOWLEDGE?

NOT ONLY WILL YOU FIND THOUSANDS OF YEARS OF HISTORY, BUT YOU WILL FIND SOME OF THE NEWEST AND MOST POPULAR AUTHORS OF THE DECADE!

HURRY BEFORE ITS TOO LATE AND CHECK OUT A BOOK. YOU MAY BE SURPRISED ABOUT WHAT YOU WILL LEARN!

# CONTENTS

## Church Libraries

Volume 42, Number 2  
Winter 2013-14

ISSN: 0739-0297, SAN: 690-1832

### Managing Editor

Lin Johnson

### Contributing Editors

Jeanetta Chrystie

Cindy Grabill

Arlene Walker

*Church Libraries* is published quarterly by the Evangelical Church Library Association, P.O. Box 353, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138-0353; 630-474-1080; Judi@eclalibraries.org; www.ECLALibraries.org.

Subscriptions are a benefit of membership in the Evangelical Church Library Association. Membership fees: individuals, churches, and schools: \$40 per year; publishers/suppliers: \$100. All memberships must be paid in U.S. currency.

**Subscription inquiries/problems, change of address, information about ECLA, questions about starting/running a church library:** Contact Judi Turek, secretary, at the above address.

**Editorial office, review products, advertising:** Lin Johnson, Managing Editor, Church Libraries, 9118 W. Elmwood Drive, Ste. 1G, Niles, IL 60714-5820; 847-296-3964; fax: 847-296-0754; linjohnson@eclalibraries.org.

Bible quotes from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®). Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. All rights reserved. ESV Text Edition: 2011.

© 2013 by  
Evangelical Church Library Association

## DEPARTMENTS

News & Notes .....	3
Book Updates .....	3
Education	
Start a Book-Discussion Group <i>by Ceil Carey</i> .....	4
Education	
Reap Benefits With a Reading Club <i>by Jeanetta Chrystie</i> .....	6
Book Roundup	
Faithful Stewards <i>by Cindy Grabill</i> .....	8
Author Profile	
Dandi Daley Mackall	
400 Books and Counting <i>by Helen Wilbers</i> .....	11

## PROMOTION

Bulletin Boards <i>by Beth Smith and Phyllis Jones</i> .....	inside front cover
Promotional Hooks .....	3
Bulletin Board <i>by Lisa Kern</i> .....	12
Superheroes Reading Club <i>by Jeanetta Chrystie</i> .....	13
Bulletin Board <i>by Phyllis Jones</i> .....	31
Poster/Bulletin Boards <i>by Arlene Walker</i> .....	32

## REVIEWS

Books .....	15
Bible & Theology .....	15
Biography & Memoir .....	15
Children .....	16
Christian Education .....	17
Christian Living .....	18
Evangelism .....	22
Family .....	22
Fiction .....	24
Men .....	28
Teens .....	28
Women .....	28
DVDs	
Children .....	29
Music .....	29
Narrative .....	29
Reviewers .....	29
Music .....	30
Children .....	30
Contemporary .....	30
Praise & Worship .....	30
Southern Gospel .....	31

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

## Join ECLA Today

### Benefits

Subscription to *Church Libraries*  
Discount on annual fall conference  
Help with your library

### Yearly Fees

Churches, individuals, schools: \$40  
Publishers/suppliers: \$100

**Make check or money order payable to ECLA in U.S. funds and mail with this form to:** ECLA, P.O. Box 353, Glen Ellyn, IL 60138-0353.

Name

---

E-mail (required)

---

Church/school/organization

---

Street address

---

City

---

State/province & zip/postal code

---

Phone

---

Home address if you want mailings sent there

---

City

---

State/province & zip/postal code

---

Phone

---

I don't want to receive publisher/supplier mailings.

Tax deductible donation to ECLA: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# 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.

### Board of Directors

Ceil Carey, copresident  
Mary Clapp, copresident  
Judi Turek, secretary  
Carol Carlton, recording secretary  
Paul Trautwein, treasurer  
Lin Johnson, *Church Libraries* editor

Christy Ewing, webmaster  
Tinna Mills, webmaster  
Diane Fisher  
Lynette Trautwein  
Donna Waln

### Corporate Members

**Publishers**  
Moody Publishers  
OakTara

**Library Suppliers**  
Jaywil Software Development

## Are You Moving? Have You Changed Your Email Address?

Don't forget to send us your new email 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 conference brochures and other mailings.

## Join the Conversations



### Facebook

[www.facebook.com/eclalibraries](http://www.facebook.com/eclalibraries)



### Twitter

[www.twitter.com/eclalibraries](http://www.twitter.com/eclalibraries)

## Book Updates

### Repackaged

*Adventure Bible Storybook Deluxe Edition* by Catherine DeVries (Zonderkidz, now with audio CDs)

*Animals All Around* (Zonderkidz, combination of *Forest Friends*; *Our Feathered Friends*; *Cats, Dogs, Hamsters, and Horses*; and *Barnyard Critters*)

*The Circle Maker for Kids* by Mark Batterson (Zonderkidz)

*David Battles Goliath* (Zonderkidz, from *The Beginner's Bible*)

*God Will Carry You Through* by Max Lucado (Nelson, excerpts from *You'll Get Through This*)

*Knights, Vikings, and a Battle of the Bands* by Karen Poth (Zonderkidz, combination of *Princess Petunia and the Good Knight*, *What's Up with Lyle?*, and *Junior Battles to Be His Best*)

*A Queen Named Esther* (Zonderkidz, from *The Beginner's Bible*)

*Undaunted Student Edition* by Christine Caine (Zondervan)

### Reprinted

*The Blood Covenant* by James L. Garlow & Rob Price (Beacon Hill)

*How We Got Our Bible Youth Edition* by Ralph Earle adapted by Mike Wonch (Barefoot)

### Retitled

*The 21 Day Financial Fast* by Michelle Singletary (Zondervan, originally *The Power to Prosper*, updated)

*The Jesus Story* by Dr. William H. Marty (Bethany, originally *The Whole Bible Story*)

### Revised

*Adventure Bible Book of Devotions* by Robin Schmitt (Zonderkidz)

*Balanced Christianity* by John Stott (InterVarsity)

*Christ in Conflict* by John Stott (InterVarsity)

## Help Wanted

**Wanted: Volunteer to create a website for *Church Libraries*, preferably in Dreamweaver software, and upload files periodically. Contact Lin Johnson at [linjohnson@eclalibraries.org](mailto:linjohnson@eclalibraries.org).**

## Promotional Hooks

### JANUARY

National Book Blitz Month

Date Your Mate Month

National Hobby Month

Get a Balanced Life Month

Business & Reference Books Month

2: National Science Fiction Day

23: National Reading Day

### FEBRUARY

Library Lovers Month

Creative Romance Month

African-American History Month

2-8: Children's Authors & Illustrators Week

22-24: Read Me Week

### MARCH

Read a New Book Month

National Craft Month

3: Read Across America

([www.nea.org/grants/886.htm](http://www.nea.org/grants/886.htm))

2-8: Return the Borrowed Books Week

6: World Book Day

16: Freedom of Information Day

## Use Our Reviews

If you or your library is a member of the Evangelical Church Library Association (membership includes a subscription to *Church Libraries*), you may quote from or reproduce the reviews in this journal in your library promotion materials.

Include this permission line at the bottom of each review: Reprinted from *Church Libraries*, Winter 2013-14. Used with permission.

## About Our Reviews

With few exceptions, we review only products that are published in the current year. Reviews in the spring issue and occasionally a few in the summer issue may include some books published late in the prior year due to the deadline lead time.

# Start a Book-Discussion Group

by Ceil Carey

A dozen or more ladies arrive at the meeting place, greeting friends, chatting, ready to talk about their ideas or only interested in what others have to say. All are book lovers. All look forward to this once-a-month event.

Perhaps the book they read this month is not one everyone loves but, rather, one that produces a variety of opinions. Several women come who haven't read it. But by the time the discussion is over, they want to hang onto their copies and read it. Now they are intrigued.

The deepest thinker of the group analyzes the book well. Others read it only for enjoyment, not looking for anything profound. Those who haven't read or finished this month's selection might hear a spoiler like, "What do you mean, her husband was dead?"

Or maybe it's an evening when a writer is present. For those who have met few authors, this makes for an exciting time, a chance to meet and listen to a local author, ask questions, buy an auto-graphed book. These evenings may be accompanied by a potluck dinner, offering an opportunity to get to know someone group members have admired only from afar.

Welcome to a book discussion group.

My own book discussion career began at the Evangelical Church Library Association's conference years ago. Author and reviewer Cindy Crosby presented a workshop on starting and leading a book discussion. Cindy made it sound so intriguing and so much fun

that, although she lived quite a distance from my town, my friend and I decided we either had to form our own group or make the monthly trip to be part of Cindy's. And thus GAB (Gals and Books) was born.

We put a blurb in the church bulletin, formed a small committee, and made our plans. Although our group began as a church group, 15 years later it has become more of a community group.

You can start a book-discussion group too. Here are the steps to take toward lively discussions and learning experiences.

## Schedule Meetings

Determine how often you want to meet and on what day of the week.

## Choose a Meeting Place

We began meeting at one another's homes, with the hostess providing a small snack. Later, other members brought food, so the hostess only had to get her home ready.

The last several years we have mostly met at casual restaurants like Panera Bread where there is a room to use for free and food and beverages are available for anyone who chooses to buy something.

When we have an author visit or for Christmas, we still meet in a home since it seems cozier.

## Choose Books to Read

The leader or group members may choose the books to read. Or, in one group I know of, each month a differ-

ent person makes that choice.

Also decide on subject matter in general. Will you read only fiction? A combination of fiction and nonfiction? Only Christian books? Or wholesome books that may not be strictly Christian? The group should discuss and determine these choices.

## Acquire Books

My group generally requests copies of the book from the local library, and the leader keeps records of books checked out and returned. Sometimes a great sale impels us to purchase copies in-

---

*Don't be afraid to try forming a book-discussion group. It is fun, a great way to connect with fellow readers, and also inspiring and spiritually uplifting.*

---

# EDUCATION

stead. This is another decision the group will need to make.

## Lead the Group

Some book-discussion groups rotate leaders each month. For my group, it has worked best to have the same person be the leader each month.

The leader asks questions and keeps the dialogue rolling without letting any one person monopolize the conversation.

Many books now have questions at the end for group use. Often you can find discussion questions on the author's or publisher's website. I have written my own questions and also requested them from the author. Many writers are gracious to provide them, but not all.

## Maintain a Member List

Keep an up-to-date email list of all group members. This is useful for communicating meeting information and changes, book title to read for the next meeting, etc.

## Invite Authors

Author visits are fun and exciting times, and most local authors will join you for no cost. They love the input of a group who has read their books.

We usually provide a potluck supper on those nights, then have the discussion and questions with the author. We have discussed Skyping but have not done that yet.

## Enjoy the Benefits

Don't be afraid to try forming a book-

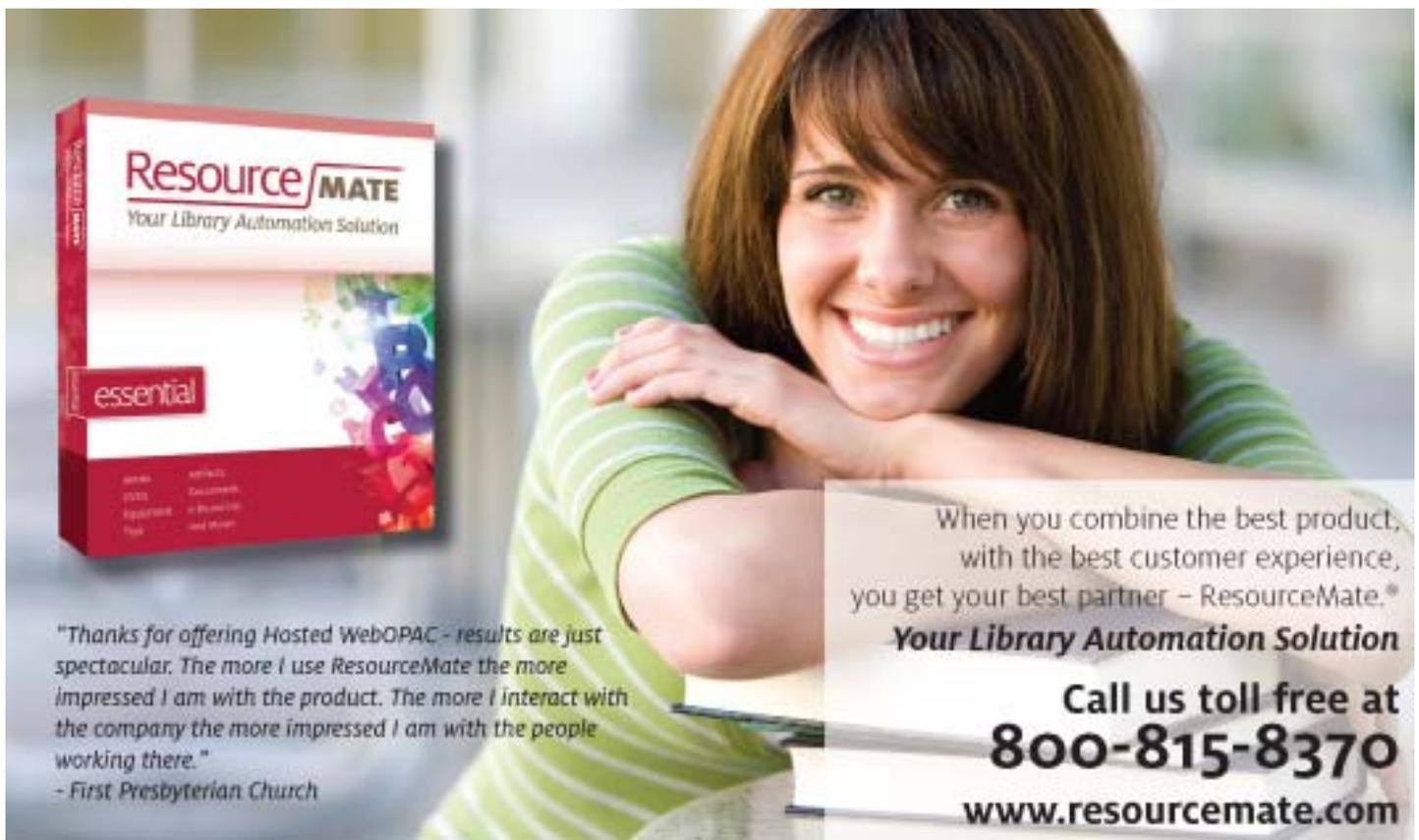
discussion group. It is fun, a great way to connect with fellow readers, and also inspiring and spiritually uplifting.

You may read books you otherwise would never open and form and strengthen friendships. Plus a group can extend the ministry of your library, publicizing it and bringing in new patrons.

---

*Ceil Carey is a retired public librarian and former church librarian. She is also co-president of the Evangelical Church Library Association.*

*If you have questions or comments about book-discussion groups, email her at [ceil@eclalibraries.org](mailto:ceil@eclalibraries.org).*



**ResourceMATE**  
Your Library Automation Solution

essential

books, articles, documents, eBooks, audio, video, equipment, and more

When you combine the best product, with the best customer experience, you get your best partner – ResourceMate.®

**Your Library Automation Solution**

Call us toll free at  
**800-815-8370**  
[www.resourcemate.com](http://www.resourcemate.com)

"Thanks for offering Hosted WebOPAC - results are just spectacular. The more I use ResourceMate the more impressed I am with the product. The more I interact with the company the more impressed I am with the people working there."  
- First Presbyterian Church

# Reap Benefits With a Reading Club

by Jeanetta Chrystie

If your church library has never held a reading club, you may wonder why you would want to try doing one. How much extra work is a reading club? Why bother? What good does it really do? Why would anyone participate? What is in it for them? How does it help the church library? Who actually benefits from a reading club?

This is why: Reading clubs have tangible benefits for children and teens, their families, the library, and the church as a whole.

## Benefits of Readings Clubs

Reading clubs provide a wealth of benefits.

### *For Children and Teens*

Today's children have so many activities that taking time to relax and read may not be a high-priority activity beyond school assignments and other organized programs. An annual or semiannual reading club for children and teens can provide a nonrequired, fun reason to read.

It helps children build their reading and language skills and develop a love of reading as a habitual activity. It can broaden children's and teens' worlds, enrich their minds, and fire their imaginations.

### *For Families*

Families reap benefits as children unplug from computer games and tele-

vision shows to read. Parents can learn more about how their child's thought processes are developing by encouraging them to talk about what they are reading and listening carefully to the child's ideas and interpretations.

Families may develop a fondness for a particular set of books that passes down from eldest child to youngest as each uncovers the treasures that flowed from Mark Twain, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Laura Ingalls Wilder. This creates family legacies of shared memories, favorite stories, and well-loved heirlooms for future generations.

---

*Libraries benefit  
when reading clubs  
create a broader  
awareness  
of the library  
among members  
and increase  
circulation numbers.*

---

### *For Church Libraries*

Libraries benefit when reading clubs create a broader awareness of the library among members and increase circulation numbers. A library filled with materials that church members actually seek out and borrow becomes an important part of the church's overall ministries.

Church staff and members are more likely to view an active church library as valuable and contributing to the welfare of members. Therefore, the library is more likely to receive funding from limited church budgets and a prime location in the event of a building project. A busy library with a budget can afford to stay current with book titles and other types of materials.

### *For the Church*

The church benefits from regular reading clubs by increasing its services to members and regular visitors. Any time there are regularly scheduled events in the church building, the library should be staffed and open. These times include before and after Sunday services, midweek prayer meetings, Bible studies, women's mission groups, other regular meetings, and vacation Bible school weeks.

As a resource for Bible-study teachers, church libraries can offer commentaries, Bible dictionaries, maps of Bible times, missionary biographies, posters of Bible characters for children's

# EDUCATION

groups, DVDs, and DVD-based Bible and book studies. By serving as a resource for other ministries in your church, the library becomes a vital resource and ministry to the whole congregation.

## Preparation for Reading Clubs

Once you decide to hold a reading club, it may be wise to take a minimalist approach for your first one. Preparations for your first reading club include four activities: education, decisions, advertising, and development.

### Education

Education simply means you need to set expectations in people's minds about the upcoming reading club. Prepare answers to the following questions:

*What is a reading club?* It is a three-month time period when we purposely focus on reading to educate our minds, enrich our spirits, and entertain our thoughts.

*Why offer a reading club?* Feel free to select from the benefits listed above and add reasons that are unique to your church.

*Who will do the work?* Volunteers who are energized by the idea, fun, and benefits of a club.

*Where will you find the money for materials, prizes, and new books?* You could organize a party, and make the materials and prizes. Also, make a list of desired books for various ages; and ask people to sign up to purchase and donate a specific book.

*When will you host the reading club?* Refer to the suggestions below under "Decisions."

*How will you convince children to participate?* A great way is to advertise the upcoming reading club for two or three weeks through eye-catching displays, announcements, and activity sheets. More on this topic is below under "Advertising."

### Decisions

Decisions you will make include read-

ing club start and end dates. Typically, a reading club will run approximately three months during the seasons that tend to have slower circulation of materials in your library. You may run reading clubs for different ages at different times of the year. For instance, a children's club may run during a summer vacation from school. A club for youth may run during the October to December holidays. Reading clubs for adults may do well after the winter holidays in January through March.

Another decision is to determine the target age groups for your first reading club. You want the age range to include as many church families as possible. Help participants feel "official" by putting themed stickers on index cards and letting children, or a parent or guardian, write their name and contact information on the card. This gives you easy access to phone numbers to retrieve overdue books. It also makes it less of a concern when children of nonmembers participate in the club because you know how to contact them if necessary.

You may want to set a certain number of books for children to read, or have read to them, to reach a goal and earn a little prize. It is best if everyone receives something for participating. This can be as simple as a handmade, club-themed bookmark or a half-page certificate of participation printed on card stock. Other simple prizes can include a popcorn party where all participants tell about their favorite books they read during the club period.

### Advertising

Advertising involves setting up themed displays, making announcements, and creating activity pages. Reading clubs usually have better participation when they focus on an age-appropriate, or at least age-friendly, theme.

Activity sheets include word jumbles, word-search puzzles, coloring pages, fold-up patterns, coded mes-

---

*A library filled with materials that church members actually seek out and borrow becomes an important part of the church's overall ministries.*

---

sages, rearranging letters of a phrase to make many words, riddles, crazy facts, and other paper-based games.

### Development

Development is the creation of a few simple reading-club guidelines with start and end dates, age groups, and reading goals. It also includes creating activity sheets to hand out and generate interest in the upcoming club. If you will be giving prizes for participation and reading goals, create or purchase them as you see how many participants begin reading church-library books.

Reading clubs offer so many benefits they are worth trying, whether your library is large or small enough to fit on a portable shelving unit. Try a reading club. You will learn and be able to make improvements with each experience.

---

*Jeanetta Chrystie is a freelance writer and church library volunteer at University Heights Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo.*

# Faithful Stewards

by Cindy Grabill

In her book *Raising Financially Confident Kids*, Mary Hunt commented that consumer debt has reached \$3.45 trillion. People believe they need “stuff” to make them happy. They drive fancy cars, live in rich suburbs, and wear the latest styles of clothes. When they die, their possessions eventually go to the junkyard.

These authors show readers young and old how to stockpile heavenly treasure by being good stewards of God’s money. They help readers live simply, give generously, save judiciously, and spend wisely. They also help readers eliminate debt and demonstrate how parents can set a good example to their kids. Since everyone needs these stewardship tips, you’ll want to add many, if not all, of them to your library.

**1/2 PRICE LIVING: Secrets to Living Well on One Income**

by Ellie Kay

Moody, 978-0-8024-3432-6, 2007, PB, 208 pages, \$12.99

It is possible for families to live on one income. For instance, stay-at-home moms don’t need professional clothes and daycare expenses. They can save more by couponing and buying sale items. Kay outlines in detail how wives can start home businesses to supplement their main income and suggests various kinds of work they could do. One-income families depend on God more, watch Him perform miracles, and are content with what they have.

Kay, a financial expert, provides a convincing argument in favor of stay-at-home moms and provides a step-by-

step presentation as to how families can live within one income if they so choose.

**8 IMPORTANT MONEY DECISIONS FOR EVERY COUPLE**

by Russ Crosson

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4622-3, 2012, PB, 224 pages, \$13.99

Married couples often experience money problems due to lack of communication, incorrect thinking, and failure to maintain a game plan. Crosson, president and CEO of Ronald Blue & Co., introduces readers to Rob and Sarah, a fictional couple who encounter such difficulties. He helps them with budget issues and provides action steps for dealing with debt. He suggests reasons why couples oppose tithing and points readers to the power Source, without whom a godly marriage isn’t possible

Crosson’s book is well-researched and helps couples develop godly marriages, as well as aid them with money issues. The fictional couple idea shows gender differences and allows husbands and wives to understand each other better. Each chapter concludes with a review and includes questions to help them develop a game plan.

**THE GRAD’S GUIDE TO MONEY: Simple Tips to Savings, Giving, and Smart Spending**

by Matt Bell

NavPress, 978-1-61291-291-2, 2013, HB, 176 pages, \$14.99

Bell, a financial speaker and writer, describes how advertisers and store

managers coerce shoppers to purchase unnecessary items. He discusses 10 financial habits where, if developed, will keep young people from “financial jail.” These include being good workers as they perform each task to the glory of God and keeping a budget. He discusses investments, bank accounts, and credit scores. Bell encourages readers to tithe and count their blessings. Finally, he shows them how to spend smart on such items as textbooks, clothes, and food.

This small, easy-to-read volume provides valuable information on pertinent topics, is biblical, and is specifically geared toward college and graduate students. Each chapter concludes with a memory verse, reflective question, and action step.

*These authors show readers young and old how to stockpile heavenly treasure by being good stewards of God’s money.*

# BOOK ROUNDUP

**LIVING RICH FOR LESS: Create the Lifestyle You Want by Giving, Saving, and Spending Smart**

by Ellie Kay

WaterBrook, 978-0-3074-4601-5, 2008, HB, 220 pages, \$16.99

Kay and her husband became debt-free after having amassed \$40,000 of consumer debt. She supports the 10/10/80 plan in which one gives 10 percent, saves 10 percent, and spends the rest wisely. Giving could include donating outgrown clothes to Goodwill, cans to a food drive, or hugging a discouraged friend. Planting vegetable gardens, cleaning heat and air ducts, and washing clothes in cold water will save money. She discusses investment and savings plans and strategies for debt elimination.

Kay includes a wealth of easy, practical ideas to make a difference in spending habits. Each chapter begins with a humorous story from her childhood related to the topic and concludes with reflective questions.

**MONEY, POSSESSIONS, AND ETERNITY, revised and updated**

by Randy Alcorn

Tyndale, 978-0-8423-5360-1, 2003, PB, 502 pages, \$15.99

Alcorn delves deeply into every topic of money management, including giving, tithing, and materialism. He explores wills, fundraising, debt, and the dangers of credit cards. He explains why money is so important to God and helps readers discern between genuine and false fundraising. He stresses the difference between earthly and heavenly treasure and paints an exquisite picture of heaven.

This book is well-researched and shows Alcorn's encyclopedic knowledge of Scripture, particularly the New Testament. His dismal but realistic portrait of American spending is convicting and will cause readers to loosen their grips on materialism, cut the credit cards if necessary, and stockpile heavenly treasure.

*Consumer debt has reached \$3.45 trillion. People believe they need "stuff" to make them happy.*

**MONEY, PURPOSE, AND JOY: The Proven Path to Uncommon Financial Success**

by Matt Bell

NavPress, 978-1-60006-279-7, 2008, HB, 208 pages, \$14.99

Bell, a personal finance writer and speaker, challenges readers to first consider their priorities: Would a better-paying job be worth leaving friends and family? Since we are to be good stewards of God's money, Bell presents a step-by-step plan to eliminate debt, shows how to set up and maintain a budget, and includes many tips to help save money.

Bell's work is biblical and filled with spiritual wisdom, yet practical and humorous at times—all to help readers manage their finances.

**RAISING FINANCIALLY CONFIDENT KIDS**

by Mary Hunt

Revell, 978-0-8007-2141-1, 2012, PB, 224 pages, \$12.99

Instead of giving their boys allowances, Hunt and her husband put them on a "salary" as each entered the sixth grade. They received \$50 a month, 10 percent of which was given away and 10 percent saved. They tried to help the boys spend the rest wisely. She discusses the mistakes they initially made—e.g., one had eight cents left after the

second day—but this method taught them to comparison shop and live simply and within their means. She warns parents of the tactics of advertisers and credit-card companies and helps them talk to their children about money and savings in age-appropriate ways.

Since parents are to set a good example for their children, Hunt first enlightens them to the eye-opening dangers accompanying money. The skills Hunt teaches will help them eliminate their own debt and use credit cards wisely. Once good habits are established, they can then help their children. The method the Hunts used is one financially responsible parents will be eager to try.

**THREE CUPS: A Lesson in Life and Money for Children**

by Mark St. Germain

Nelson, 978-1-4003-1749-3, 2011, HB, 32 pages, \$9.99

A young boy began receiving an allowance on his fifth birthday. His parents showed him how to divide his money among three cups: one each for giving, spending, and saving. Every week, he dropped money into each cup. This three-cup method taught him valuable money-management skills that he later imparted to his own son.

This story is easy to read with beautiful illustrations. St. Germain provides guidelines to help parents set up three-cup systems and suggests ideas for giving. Recommend this book for families to read together. The ideas will help parents sharpen their own money-management skills.

**THE TREASURE PRINCIPLE**

by Randy Alcorn

Multnomah, 978-1-5905-2508-1, 2005, HB, 128 pages \$12.99

"You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead." Alcorn, a best-selling author and president of Eternal Perspective Ministries, develops six key elements to this principle. He urges readers to abandon their love for

# BOOK ROUNDUP

material treasures and stockpile heavenly rewards. He suggests determining an amount for living expenses and donating the excess. He promises that God will bless these acts of faith beyond imagination.

This small book is filled with biblical truths and challenges readers to live lives of faith and give beyond their abilities. He asks readers to consider what they are living for and includes a six-step plan to help them keep on track.

## **YOUR KIDS CAN MASTER THEIR MONEY: Fun Ways to Help Them Learn How**

**by Ron & Judy Blue & Jeremy White**  
**Focus on the Family, 978-1-58997-191-2, 2006, PB, 272 pages, \$13.99**

These authors explain how to use teachable moments and the envelope system to teach money-management skills to children. They help explain to kids how to set short- and long-term goals, such as saving for a car. Much of the book includes ideas for activities for families to do together to promote learning. Each chapter begins with a humorous look at money from a child's viewpoint and includes biblical principles.

The age-appropriate exercises are fun, creative, and instructional and teach lessons about such topics as giving, monthly expenses, and the foolishness of gambling. The book concludes with anticipated questions with helpful answers. Ron Blue is a financial planner and his wife an author; Jeremy White is a CPA.

## **YOUR MONEY AFTER THE BIG 5-0: Wealth for the Second Half of Life**

**by Larry Burkett & Ron Blue with Jeremy White**  
**B&H, 978-0-8054-4432-2, 2007, PB, 240 pages, \$12.99**

Many seniors fear they will outlive their money. Financial experts Burkett, Blue, and White help alleviate these fears by providing specific suggestions

on how to make money last. They encourage simple living, warn against impulsive spending, and emphasize at least part-time employment. They even suggest what kind of work retired people might do. They discuss different kinds of insurance and include a chapter on investing. They help seniors decide when to take social security and help them prepare legally, financially, and spiritually for death.

This thorough presentation delves deeply into issues seniors face and provides helpful information to aid them in making decisions. Each chapter includes pertinent Scripture and concludes with anticipated questions and answers concerning the topic and for self-reflection.

## **YOUR MONEY COUNTS**

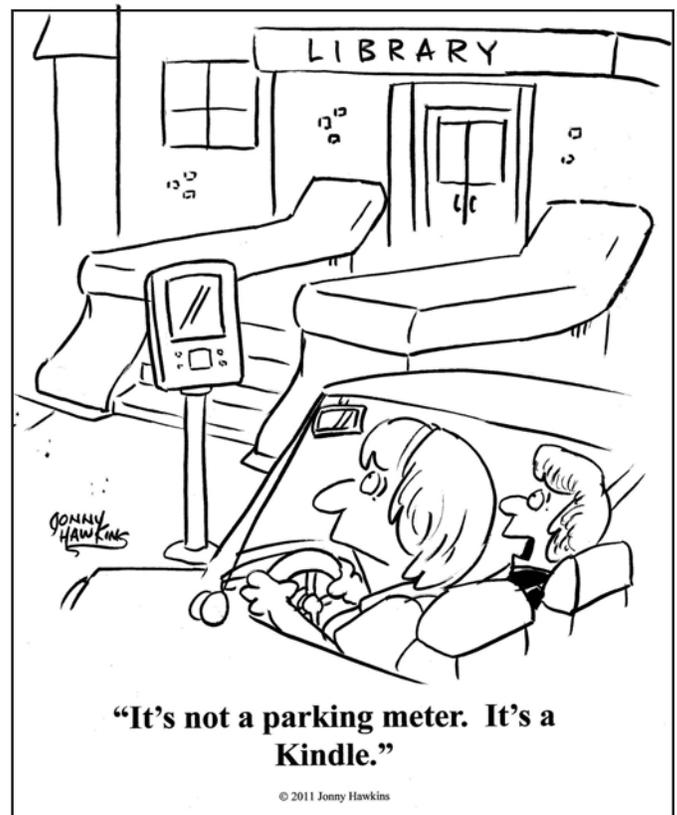
**by Howard Dayton, Jr.**  
**Tyndale, 978-1-4143-5949-6, 2011, PB, 176 pages, \$12.99**

Dayton shows readers how to

manage their finances according to Scripture. Since God owns money, each spending decision should be a spiritual one. He helps readers develop godly attitudes toward honesty, giving, and work. Dayton, a financial specialist, outlines good and bad investments and reminds readers of the guaranteed investment of eternal life. He helps parents budget and teach their children the ABCs of money and encourages them to lean on God as they battle finance-affecting storms of life.

Dayton's book includes encouraging Scripture, is practical, and is thorough. His premise that good money-management skills will deepen relationships with God will help readers live within their means as they grow closer to the Lord.

*Cindy Grabill is a freelance writer who has managed her church book table for 19 years.*



*Johnny Hawkins is the author of The Awesome Book of Hilarious and Heavenly Cartoons.*

# 400 Books and Counting

by Helen Wilbers

**D**andi Daley Mackall has made a successful career of writing young adult and children's books—more than 400 to date. These include the popular middle-grade fiction series Winnie the Horse Gentler and her novel *The Silence of Murder*, which received the prestigious Edgar Award for Young Adult Mystery Novel of the Year.

Throughout her life, her faith in Christ and her storytelling ability have entwined, allowing her to shine her light to hundreds of thousands of kids and teens.

## Childhood Inspiration

Dandi grew up in the small town of Hamilton, Mo. "It was a great place to live," she recalled fondly. "There were about a thousand people or so. It was a wonderful era. I have a book coming out in a few months called *The Secrets of Tree Taylor*, and I set it in Hamilton during the years I was growing up there. It's been a lot of fun remembering the details of that time."

She has taken quite a bit of inspiration from her childhood. Her folks, she said, first gave her an interest in telling tales. "My parents were great storytellers, so I've inherited that storytelling gene. It helps me appreciate and be able to tell a good story."

Early on she also developed a love for horses, a love that is evident in

many of her books. In Hamilton, many families had at least one horse living in their backyards. "The horses were our best friends," Mackall claimed.

## Spiritual Journey

Although her family was churchgoing, Dandi thinks she did not grasp the message of redemption until she was older. "Yes, growing up, we always went to church; but I don't believe I, personally, got the message of faith. Going to college [University of Missouri], I didn't feel as though my faith fit there.

"That is, until I met a group of kids who talked about Jesus as if they really knew Him. That was unusual for me. I'd eavesdrop when they were talking. It was in college that I found a personal faith and gained an understanding of grace. And then after that I was so excited, I started reading the Bible and couldn't believe how great it was."

After graduating, Dandi received a scholarship to study foreign languages at Stanford University, but she turned it down. "I was so excited about being a Christian, I wanted to do something full-time related to my faith."

She briefly worked for Campus Crusade for Christ before becoming a missionary behind the Iron Curtain in Poland. While there, in 1978, she wrote her first book, a nonfiction work for adults.



Dandi Daley Mackall

She continued focusing on adults for the next seven years of her career, during which time she returned to the United States and married Joe Mackall, who writes nonfiction narratives. "It's nice having a live-in editor," she said.

## Children's Author

But it wasn't until she had youngsters of her own that she discovered children's books. "If they had great children's books when I was a child, I never discovered them. So it was like rediscovering a whole world.

"When my kids were little, I wrote board books. Then when they got older, I wrote chapter books, then middle-grade, and finally young-adult novels. However, I never gave up writing for the youngest children. That's how I ended up being able to write for every age."

Dandi's two daughters and son are now grown. Daughter Jen has two children of her own, ages three and five, whom Dandi uses as a test audience. "For example, I'm now doing a toddler

## AUTHOR PROFILE

animal devotional, which is a lot of fun. So I read the individual stories to my granddaughters; and if they hold their attention, I know I've nailed it."

Her son, Dan, recently married. Both he and Jen live near Dandi in rural Ohio. Katy, her other daughter, has special needs and lives at home. She inspires Dandi in her writing and other ministries.

"We, of course, with our special-needs gal, have tried to handle bullying in different ways," Mackall noted. "It's not always physical bullying. Lots of times it's verbal, which is just as painful. Too many children don't realize what it feels like inside, yet everybody has been bullied and has been a bully in some way."

In light of that fact, Mackall wrote *Larger-Than-Life Lara*. She said the book

flowed out of her. "I wish all books came to me like this. I woke up at three in the morning. And it was like I could hear the narrator girl say, 'This story is not about me, so already you have a reason to hang it up.' It just unfolded every day."

The overweight heroine of the story faces teasing and bullying with courage and good humor. In the process, she teaches the narrator and her classmates invaluable lessons about how much words can hurt.

"This girl has a smile that just does not go away; and while people deal out meanness to her, she returns sheer kindness to them. She ends up transforming their entire school."

### Writing Ministry

The book has been adopted into school

curricula across the United States. Dandi also does school assemblies where she talks about writing and about bullying.

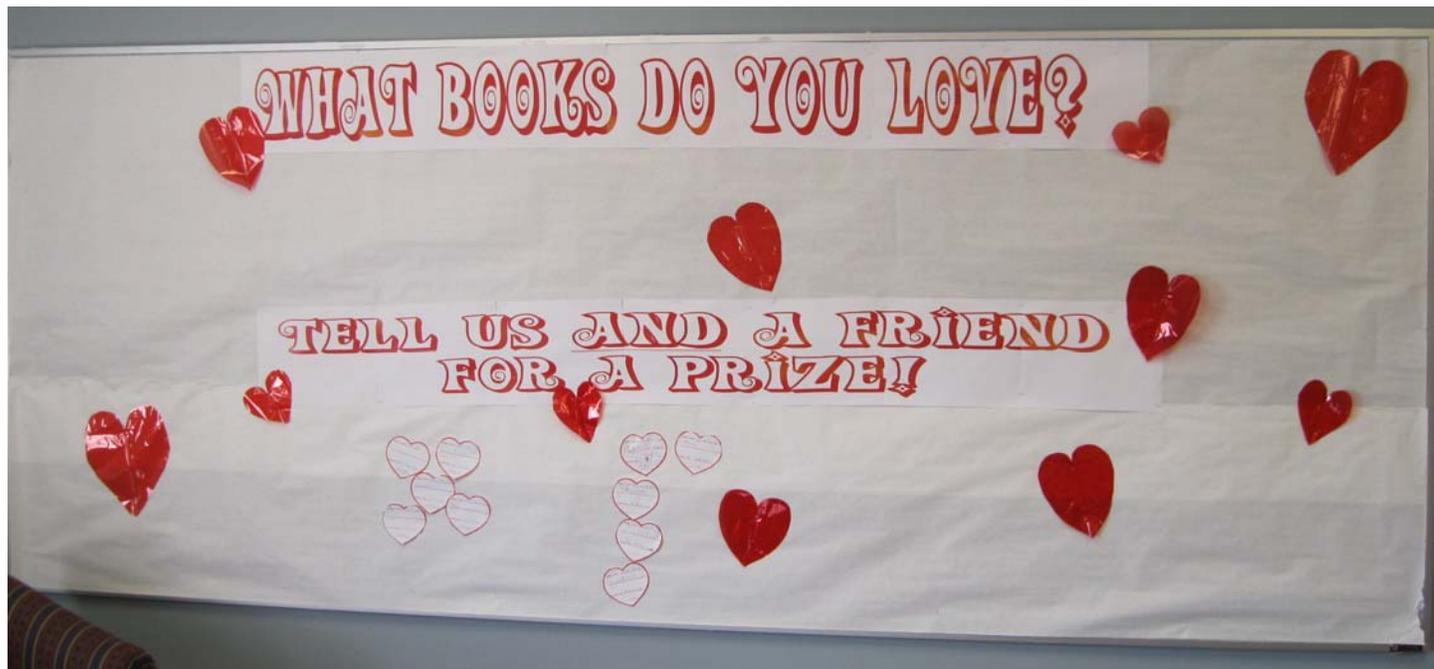
This is only one example of the way she uses writing as an outreach tool. Her family, her background, and her faith intermingle within her and give her writing a powerful, true-to-life quality.

However, Dandi said adamantly, "I don't think writing would have lasted my whole life had it not become my ministry."

---

*Helen Wilbers is a professional writing major at Taylor University and a freelance writer for The Aboite Independent, Christian Communicator, and WBCL radio. She also reviews for Church Libraries.*

## BULLETIN BOARD



The little hearts say: This is my favorite book: \_\_\_\_\_. I shared it with my friend \_\_\_\_\_.  
When kids fill out a heart, they get a prize, e.g., rubber-band bracelet packet, small airplanes, and other trinkets in the prize basket to choose from. Packages of party favors work well too.

—Lisa Kern, librarian, College Church, Wheaton, Ill.

# Superheroes Reading Club

by Jeanetta Chrystie

From comic books to IMAX movie screens, superheroes exhibit abilities beyond normal men and women. Some can fly, breathe underwater, or have x-ray vision; others have super strength or lightning speed. Whatever their super powers, they embolden readers and viewers to envision improvements in their lives.

As a reading club theme, superheroes encourage children's desires to battle evil and rescue people from danger.

## Character Backgrounds

Superheroes usually have human frailties. They often feel responsible to help other people and right wrongs because they have super abilities. This "with more power comes more responsibility" is a frequent maxim. But superheroes also tend to have an Achilles heel to prevent them from being all-powerful.

Your church may have members of many ages who collect comics, trading cards, books, and other memorabilia about specific superheroes. Some of these items are worth a surprising amount of money. If asked, perhaps some collectors would loan a few inexpensive items to the library for display in a protected display case.

One word of warning: You may have to "edit" the items people bring to display. Many female superheroes

wear tight costumes, and some church members might complain.

When we create a display that relates to our reading club theme, it helps build enthusiasm and word-of-mouth advertising about the upcoming club.

In case you are not familiar with currently popular children's superheroes, the top few are Superman and Spider-Man, closely followed by Percy Jackson (from the Percy Jackson and the Olympians books and movies) and several characters from the Star Wars movies. Female superheroes include

Wonder Woman, the Invisible Woman, and Super Girl.

Consider using local sports figures among your superheroes, as well as firefighters and other emergency personnel. And don't forget the greatest Superhero of all time: Jesus.

## Setting the Stage

If this is your first reading club, see the article "Reap Benefits With a Reading Club" on page 6. If your church library has run reading clubs in the past, then begin planning by reviewing some of your past clubs.

## Schedule a Review Meeting

Begin with a review meeting, and create two lists. The first list is of things that worked well, compliments your reading club received, and activities you especially enjoyed. The second list is of problems that came up or any complaints you received.

Based on these two lists, next review your prior year's reading-club rules. Are your rules too simple or complex? Where do you need to make changes? What do you need to add or remove from the rules?

For instance, perhaps you received a complaint that the word *rules* seems too harsh or authoritarian. You could simply change the name to guidelines before posting them near the checkout desk where patrons can easily see them.

---

*When we create a display that relates to our reading club theme, it helps build enthusiasm and word-of-mouth advertising about the upcoming club.*

---

# EDUCATION

Another example is a parent who mentioned that her young prereader felt excluded from the fun of participating in the reading club. So add guidelines that include ways prereaders can participate by choosing books for someone else to read to them.

Note: If older children read books that are far below their own reading level to help a prereader sibling, perhaps your guidelines may specify that three young-reader books are equal to one book for the older sibling. This encourages siblings of different ages to enjoy the reading club together and still allows the older sibling to receive some credit for helping the prereader participate in the club.

## Cast Roles

Based on your experiences during past reading clubs and the number of your potential participants, will your current staff of library volunteers be able to handle the extra library activity? If not, decide how you will advertise for temporary library volunteers.

Give them a sense of belonging with a group title that matches the club theme, in this case Superhero Volunteers. Train new volunteers in check-out and check-in procedures. Show them where to place donated or damaged books for handling by the regular library staff. Also, walk them through how to maintain the reading-club records of books read by each participant.

## Conduct a Script Read-Through

Finalize your revised reading-club guidelines. Determine the start and end dates, the age groups you expect will participate, and how many books people in each age group should read to reach their reading-club goals. Ideally, every participant should be able to reach the club goal for his or her reading level.

Decide how you will track participants' progress. Will you ask participants to submit a slip of paper with the

title and author of each book read? Or count each book returned between the start and end dates by adding a sticker beside that child's name on a large poster?

## Advertising and Marketing

First, develop simple advertising to introduce the upcoming reading club's dates and theme. Then ask members to loan inexpensive superhero memorabilia and collectibles for display in the library's protected display area. Or skip requesting loans and simply display superhero pictures from coloring or comic books, party napkins, or stickers.

Advertising can range from pictures placed around the church library to ads in the church bulletin or newsletter. These ads are more likely to alert parents to the upcoming reading club, so it is fun for the children when we create preclub activity sheets.

Depending on the children's activities at your church, you can hand out activity sheets in the library; or give them to teachers to distribute after Sunday school or children's worship. You can even include them in a church bulletin or children's bulletin.

Activity sheets include find-a-word puzzles, drawings to color, creating words from the letters in *Superheroes*, and letting children write if-I-were-a-superhero stories.

Create and print all of your activity sheets as part of your reading-club preparation activities. Then distribute them once or twice a week for the two or three weeks leading up to the starting date of your club. Activity sheets help build and maintain children's interest and enthusiasm for the upcoming club, thus increasing participation and reading successes.

## That's a Wrap

As the reading club nears its end date, remind children about their reading goals, and be sure they know the last date to count their reading for their

*Enjoy your status  
as a librarian  
superhero, who  
helped kids grow  
spiritually through  
reading.*

club. If you are giving out participation certificates and little prizes, be sure you have created or purchased enough for everyone.

After the reading club ends, hold a follow-up meeting. Encourage library staff members and volunteers to share their experiences. Note any changes you want to consider for the next club. Prepare reading-club statistics to advertise in the church newsletter, and give your volunteers little mementos.

Finally, don't forget to enjoy your status as a librarian superhero, who helped kids grow spiritually through reading.

*Jeanetta Chrystie is a freelance writer and church library volunteer at University Heights Baptist Church, Springfield, Mo.*

*Reading takes us away from home,  
but more important, it finds homes  
for us everywhere.*

*—Hazel Rochman*

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Bible & Theology

### **STRANGE FIRE: The Danger of Offending the Holy Spirit with Counterfeit Worship**

by John MacArthur

Nelson, 978-1-4002-0517-2, HB, 352 pages, \$22.99

No stranger to controversy, MacArthur has placed charismatics and the Pentecostal movement in his sights. Linking the fatal sin of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, to a charismatic view of the Holy Spirit, he begins his argument against "bad doctrine." MacArthur uses the majority of his book to argue against Pentecostalism, but he devotes one-third of it to an exploration of the ministry of the Holy Spirit as outlined in Scripture.

Open-minded believers, regardless of denomination, can benefit from a careful reading of *Strange Fire*. At the end, you may be shouting "Amen!" or dealing with anger; but you definitely will no longer be perched on top of the fence. Recommended as a clear, well documented, albeit one-sided view of the fastest growing religious movement in the world. JAW

## Biography & Memoir

### **LITTLE BLACK SHEEP**

by Ashley Cleveland

Cook, 978-1-4347-0529-7, HB, 201 pages, \$17.99

Cleveland, the first and only woman to win the Grammy for the best rock gospel album, shares her memories of childhood as a black-sheep daughter in a family damaged by alcoholism, homosexuality, and divorce. As a young woman, she attempted to find

her missing self-esteem and the loving nurture of her parents, but alcohol and drugs moved in. Later, as a mother of two, she allowed God to heal her. Her hope is that this memoir will bring others to God and the emotional health she has found with Him.

The story is touching and keeps your interest from the first page to the end. It is especially geared to help teenagers and adults with similar problems. BWR

### **ROAD TRIP TO REDEMPTION**

by Brad Mathias

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-6394-3, 287 pages, PB, \$14.99

Mathias, an accomplished physician, had it made. But his success gilded his vision, and he lost touch with his family. Suddenly, this all came crashing down when his wife demanded a divorce and he lost contact with his children. All would have been squandered if God hadn't decided to work in and through Mathias. He recounted how he and his family journeyed physically on a road trip and also journeyed through betrayal, pain, and suffering, ultimately experiencing a healing only God could offer.

In addition to the intriguing premise, the writing is concise and entertaining. Messages are simple enough for teenagers to understand, yet engaging enough to bring readers back for more. The book does drag at points, but overall it is insightful and biblically sound. Mathias incorporates gospel truths all Christian families can learn from, and he does so with an original voice. NCJ

### **A STORY UNFINISHED: 99 Days with Eliot**

by Matt Mooney

Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-3011-1, PB, 190 pages, \$15.99

At 30 weeks of pregnancy, Mooney and his wife, Ginny, got the shocking news that their first child had a genetic disease and probably wouldn't make it through birth. If he did, doctors pre-

dicted the child's life span would be only hours or a few days.

This book treats the reader as a friend. When Eliot lives, we share his parents' joy, fear, and sorrow. We also travel through the next 99 days with them as we learn through daily updates the stages of adjustment and religious contemplation they process to survive.

When 99 balloons were released at Eliot's funeral, the story received national attention. Mooney counsels readers on how to live life with peace of mind and hope through any of life's devastating occurrences because God is with us even in the darkest days. BWR

### **TENACIOUS**

by Jeremy & Jennifer Williams

Nelson, 978-1-59555-523-6, PB, 271 pages, \$16.99

This story follows the lives of the Williams family, who were featured on *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* after Jeremy was diagnosed with ALS. This diagnosis, along with having a child with spina bifida, pressed the family hard and made them seek God as their refuge. God, in turn, does miracles through them.

However, this important message is overwhelmed with an overabundance of background information. It takes 200 pages to get to the first main point of the story: Jeremy's ALS diagnosis. Whereas the ending is encouraging, it takes far too much perseverance to get that far. The book is scripturally sound, save for a few minor points that don't add to or detract from the story. Not recommended. JB

### **UNVEILING GRACE: The Story of How We Found Our Way Out of the Mormon Church**

by Lynn K. Wilder

Zondervan, 978-0-310-33112-4, PB, 367 pages, \$15.99

When their Mormon missionary son discovered that biblical truths in the

# BOOK REVIEWS

real Bible were in severe contrast to what the Mormon church taught, the Wilder family faced a tailspin. This well-written, interesting, and educational memoir provides a true and intimate look at one family's transition from authoritative roles in the Mormon church to a relationship with the Christian God. It shows why the contrasts between the two doctrines make all the difference in the world.

Recommended for every church library to help patrons better understand Mormonism. BWR

## Children

### Picture Books

#### CREATION

978-0-310-763633-2

#### DANIEL AND THE LIONS

978-0-310-73772-8

#### JONAH AND THE BIG FISH

978-0-310-73773-5

#### NOAH'S ARK

978-0-310-73634-9

#### The Baby Beginner's Bible by Barbara Herndon

Zonderkidz, PB, 12 pages, \$4.99

Adapted from *The Beginner's Bible*, these books are just right for preschoolers. At the end of each book is a two-paged story that parents can read to youngsters about a key event or story in the Old Testament. Afterward, the child can leaf through the book and see bright, colorful pictures with one gigantic word on the bottom of each page, such as *ARK*, *ANIMALS*, and *RAINBOW*.

Most of the words in the written story are limited to one or two syllables, and the sentences are short. Children will be able to see visual images of the key elements of the story while their parents review it and explain the lessons found therein. Nothing is frightening here. Even the lions

with Daniel have kind, cartoon expressions; and the story of creation stops before the fall of man. Children will enjoy these stories, and, simultaneously, through repetition, will begin to recognize basic words that will help them learn to read. DEH

#### PIRATES ON THE FARM

##### The Next Door Series

by Denette Fretz

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72348-6, HB, 38 pages, \$12.99

A band of pirates spends all its treasure buying a farm. They are terrible at everything. For instance, they slash the corn with their sabers, rather than pick it. They think the collection plate at church is for taking money, rather than making donations. The family next door shows Christian love by teaching the pirates how to plant, water, and harvest food and take care of animals. The pirates, in turn, kidnap the family and bring them to dinner. The pirates mean well. They even rescue the doll of the baby Jesus from the animal trough in the manger. (Oh, my!)

This story is ridiculous, which is why children will love it. The animation is exaggerated and colorful, the story is outrageous, and the words are somewhat sophisticated. A dictionary in the back of the book defines what matey and mutiny and swashbuckling mean. This book is fun! DEH

## Juvenile

#### ANDI UNEXPECTED

##### An Andi Boggs Novel #1

by Amanda Flower

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-73701-8, HB, 224 pages, \$10.99

After their parents' sudden deaths, 12-year-old Andora "Andi" and her older sister, Bethany, arrive in Killdeer to live with their zany aunt in a house that has belonged to the Boggs family for decades. Andi is cleaning the attic with her new friend, Colin, when they

discover an old trunk labeled *Andora*. Andi and Colin dig through Depression-era history to discover what happened to the other Andora, learning who in Killdeer can be trusted along the way.

Andi's story is clever, enticing, and enjoyable. Readers will feel as if they're jumping on their bikes to pedal around Killdeer with Andi and Colin. Flower allows Andi to be cynical about religion after her parents' death, but prayer plays a powerful role in the story's climax. This novel is perfect for middle-schoolers looking for a delicious mystery to captivate them. DMM

#### HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND MONSTERS

by Ron Bates

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-73607-3, HB, 352 pages, \$12.99

Howard Boward has no friends in his middle school. His mother gives him a book called *How to Make Friends*

### SERIES UPDATES

The Adventures of Lily Lapp  
by Mary Ann Kinsinger & Suzanne Woods Fisher  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2135-0, \$12.99  
#4 *A Surprise for Lily*

The Answers Book for Kids  
by Ken Ham & Bodie Hodge  
Master Books, \$7.99  
Vol. 5: *20 Questions from Kids on Space and Astronomy*  
978-0-89051-782-6  
Vol. 6: *22 Questions from Kids on Babel and the Ice Age*  
978-0-89051-783-3

Threshold Series  
by Christa Kinde  
Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72491-9,  
\$14.99  
#3 *The Broken Window*

# BOOK REVIEWS

to help him out. But Howard takes the title literally and creates a friend, a hairy monster named Franklin Stine. Howard's popularity begins to rise as Franklin becomes loved by his classmates, but he quickly realizes that fame isn't everything when the popular kids reveal their true colors and Howard's friendship with Franklin falls apart.

This book made me laugh, and the writer's style is engaging. Its one-dimensional cast of characters makes it fall short of its potential though. Howard is a stereotypical nerd striving for respect, and the popular kids are all self-centered egotists with no redeemable qualities. Nevertheless, it is an enjoyable story I recommend to 9- to 12-year olds and others who appreciate a good laugh. BB

## Christian Education

**A FAITH OF THEIR OWN: Understanding the Common Cry of Preteens** by Chris Folmsbee  
Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-3014-2, PB, 157 pages, \$13.99

Here is an encouraging and inspirational resource for parents and youth leaders of preteens. Fifth- and sixth-graders want and need guidance in their faith formation. They are inquisitive and, at the same time, skeptical as they grow physically and spiritually. Lots of personal illustrations from the author and other parents illuminate ideas, insights, and examples of practical tools for equipping preteens in their exploration of God and faith experiences. The ultimate goal is equipping children to grow into ambassadors for Christ.

This book is scripturally sound and an easy read, yet deeply theological. Chris is a parent, author, and director of Group Life at a megachurch. He has

worked with preteens and teens for almost 20 years. Recommended for church libraries, parents, and youth leaders. LGM

**A VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKER'S GUIDE TO LEADING A SMALL GROUP**

978-0-8341-5130-7

**A VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKER'S GUIDE TO RESOURCING PARENTS**

978-0-8341-5129-1

**A VOLUNTEER YOUTH WORKER'S GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING TODAY'S TEENAGERS**

978-0-8341-5128-4

by Mark Oestreicher

**Barefoot, PB, 61-63 pages, \$7.99**

These three guides give youth workers a leg up in developing and sustaining a good teaching and helpful personal relationship with teens.

*Resourcing Parents* maximizes youth worker-parent contact and interaction. Parents have the biggest influence and primary responsibility for their children's faith development, so it's necessary to invest time and energy into parent ministry. This guide offers helpful approaches and insightful perspectives on interaction, communication, encouragement, and equipping of parents.

*Leading a Small Group* is a guide to the value of this ministry for teens. Great small groups foster emotional and relational safety and provide consistency, quantity time, and a good set of values. The author presents four different approaches to small groups, as well as information on spiritual transformation, group structure, great discussions, and questions.

*Understanding Today's Teenagers* guides workers in the intrinsic nature of how God designed teens, as well as being aware of their external influences. It helps workers know how to handle physical, mental, and emotional changes teens go through and understand the formation of friend-

ships, process of speculation in faith development, cultural influences, and becoming a countercultural influence.

Oestreicher's openness in sharing his experiences and knowledge born of many years in youth work has produced these invaluable resources for teen leaders. Biblically sound, they are written in a conversational format. Recommended for the teacher resource section of school libraries, church libraries, and all youth leaders. Beware: *Resourcing Parents* has a vulgar quote. LGM

## Curriculum

**GRACE-FULL LEADERSHIP**

with John C. Bowling

Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-2426-9, \$29.99

Bowling wrote a book with the same title, based on his years as a university president, speaker, and consultant. This DVD and the accompanying facilitator's guide are designed to help stimulate discussions about what leadership is if based on patience, nurturing, forgiveness, grace, love, instruction, and encouragement.

Each of the six sessions lasts about 10-15 minutes and focuses on a specific topic, including "The Focus of Leadership" and "A Leader's Vision." The sessions are formatted to include prayer, watching the DVD, discussion, and summarization of lessons learned.

Bowling's narratives are delivered low key. He offers stories from his youth; examples from his visits to

### SERIES UPDATES

**Named Small Group DVDs**

Beacon Hill, \$29.99

*The Disciples Small Group*

978-0-8341-3053-1

*The Women Small Group*

978-8341-3055-5

# BOOK REVIEWS

Harvard and other campuses; and lessons from kingpins of industry like Henry Ford. Anyone wishing to lead more effectively and Christlike will benefit from these studies. DEH

## **HEALING WATERS: A Bible Study on Forgiveness, Grace, and Second Chances**

with Melody Carlson

study guide: 978-1-4267-4954-4, PB, 194 pages, \$14.99

leader guide: 978-1-4267-49551, PB, 63 pages, \$12.99

DVD: 978-1-4267-4956-8, \$39.99

## **HER RESTLESS HEART: A Woman's Longing for Love and Acceptance with Barbara Cameron**

study guide: 978-1-4267-6170-6, PB, 187 pages, \$14.99

leader guide: 978-1-4267-6173-7, PB, 59 pages, \$12.99

DVD: 978-1-4267-6144-7, \$39.99

## **Faith and Fiction Bible Study Abingdon**

These Bible studies have the same interesting format. Each DVD features the author answering questions that go along with the corresponding week in the study. Although based on a novel, the study guide contains everything participants will need. Reading the novel is an extra activity and surely would enhance the study but is not necessary.

*Healing Waters* focuses on a middle-aged woman of Native American descent who was widowed young and carries a lot of emotional baggage. *Her Restless Heart* is set in an Amish community and deals with a young woman caught between Amish ways and the desires of her heart, being raised by a severe father whose treatment leaves her with little confidence or belief in her own worth.

Both books are strongly based in God's Word; and the authors speak repeatedly of God's work in our lives in the DVDs, whether the subject is forgiveness or acceptance. Music and background scenes enhance the DVDs.

The studies are eight weeks and six weeks respectively, and the guides are detailed and inclusive. *Healing Waters* includes several pages for journaling at the conclusion of the book. Like many Amish books, *Her Restless Heart* includes recipes at the end.

These studies are ideal for women's Bible-study and book-discussion groups, although each participant will need to buy a study guide. CC

## **THE PATRIARCHS**

978-0-8341-3018-0

## **THE UNNAMED**

978-0-8341-3024-1

## **Named Small Group DVDs Beacon Hill, DVD, \$29.99**

These DVDs shed new light on six Bible stories each. Modern personal stories and Scripture recaps describe the Bible people with corresponding adjectives, e.g., Noah, waiting; Moses, reluctant; bent-over woman, undesirable; and the unclean woman, faithful. Helpful discussion-guide booklets are included for facilitators of small groups. Each chapter provides the components for small group discussion that lasts 50 minutes.

These studies are thought provoking and provide illumination of Scripture. Visual quality is good, but *The Patriarchs* has an audio-quality problem; when the volume is adjusted to hear the voices, the musical segments are quite loud. Companion workbooks are also available. Good for small-group leaders. LGM

## **PERFECTLY IMPERFECT: Character Sketches from the Old Testament**

by David A. Busic

Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-3151-4, DVD, \$14.99

God can take tragedy and broken lives and transform them into victory. He can teach and rescue through relationships, provisions, times of testing, the past, and even moments of solitude. Here are six sessions about biblical heroes—Cain and Abel, Hagar,

Abraham and Isaac, Rahab, and Elijah—for a small-group study. Busic, president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, comments about biblical, true-to-life heroes and our relationships with others and Christ.

The DVD includes a facilitator's guide to be used in conjunction with the book by the same title. Each session allots time for socializing, prayer, watching the DVD lesson, and discussing the questions in the guide. This study is biblically sound and good for any adult or teen group. Recommended for your curriculum resource collection. LGM

## **Christian Living**

### **ACTIVIST FAITH: From Him and for Him**

by Dillon Burroughs, Daniel Darling, & Dan King

NavPress, 978-1-6129-1391-9, PB, 224 pages, \$14.99

Rather than allowing politicians to tackle the problems of the world, the church is given a call to action. The authors give readers a gospel-centric focus on such issues as human trafficking, abortion, homosexuality, and drug dependence. Christians have not been called to talk about human need but to act in love as Jesus did.

This text is written in an easy-to-read, conversational style and covers its subjects thoroughly. The authors give not only inspiration to live out a radical version of the Great Commission but also a plan by which to achieve it through prayer, fasting, Bible study, and evangelizing. It will help older teenagers and adults grasp the weight of social issues and what they can do to help. HJF

# BOOK REVIEWS

**ALL IN: You Are One Decision Away from a Totally Different Life**  
by Mark Batterson  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33305-0, HB, 192 pages, \$22.99

Changing your entire life begins with one small decision. *All In* is about laying down your life for Christ with every action, including working ethically, witnessing boldly, sharing sacrificially, and teaching willingly. Each chapter is packed with biblical truths about what it looks like to stand out in faith. Pastor Batterson dares Christians to live sacrificially, focusing on God's will instead of personal desire. Doing so requires an active prayer life, personal discipline, and obedience to God.

On the negative side, clichés take away from the potency of some chapters, and the writing is not exceptional. However, these weaknesses are made up for in the content, which is related through powerful anecdotes and Bible verses. Any Christian looking to be more dedicated will be challenged. JD

**CRAZY BUSY: A (Mercifully) Short Book About a (Really) Big Problem**  
by Kevin DeYoung  
Crossway, 978-1-4335-3338-9, PB, 118 pages, \$11.99

Busyness can create different forms of stress that can turn into entrenched bad habits. These negative behaviors hinder relationships and stunt growth. Also, busyness keeps people too pre-occupied to face the genuine tough issues. DeYoung deals directly with these problems and their side effects. He focuses on the downside of clutter, multitasking, lack of priorities and worthy goals, and missed time in communion with the Lord.

Pastor DeYoung does a great job condensing busy tendencies into a short and straightforward book while keeping a strong foundation in Christian virtues. Although all the chapters may not apply to every reader, pertinent assessment tools and applicable personal experiences can help many in

reducing the hassles of life. The one downfall of his writing is the constant, unnecessary explanation as to why he wrote the book. CT

**FORGIVING OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS: Finding Freedom from Hurt and Hate**  
by Leslie Leyland Fields & Jill Hubbard  
Nelson, 978-0-8499-6472-5, PB, 236 pages, \$15.99

This is not a fluff book about forgiving Mom for not letting you wear makeup when you were 12 or having to be in by 9:00 on a school night. Fields's own estrangement with her father, plus many other examples of verbal, mental, physical, and sexual abuse and abandonment make this book riveting and compelling from the emotional side of the story. Dr. Hubbard adds clinical insight into the destructive nature of bitterness and the healing power of forgiveness as she concludes each chapter.

The authors explore the depth of pain that parents can inflict on their children, difficulty in coming to forgiveness, and joy that accompanies the traveler on the journey. I wish this book had been available to me as a reference during my days as a Christian counselor. Highly recommended for people troubled by horrific pasts and others who want to help them. BR

**GOD IN SLOW MOTION**  
by Mike Nappa  
Nelson, 978-1-4002-0462-5, PB, 240 pages, \$15.99

To say that Jesus accomplished more in three years of ministry than other men achieve in 30 years is a fair analysis. Human logic would have Him rush from miracle to miracle, from one personal encounter to the next in order to reach that goal. Yet Gospel accounts show that Jesus was never in a hurry. Nappa's premise is that Christ-followers can benefit from following His example. He finds life prin-

ciples in the minutia of 10 events in Jesus' ministry.

Nappa's generous use of anecdotes makes for an interesting read. It's an important addition to your spiritual-growth section. JAW

**GOD OF THE UNDERDOGS**  
by Matt Keller  
Nelson, 978-1-4002-0496-0, PB, 178 pages, \$16.99

Not perfect? Not a problem! The God of the universe wants to turn imperfect, underdog believers into world-changing legends. Keller says a person's inability, not perfection, makes an individual an underdog worth using. His book equips believers to step into the role God has planned them to assume. By using clear and entertaining language, Keller masterfully intertwines his unbelievable testimony with popular Bible characters' lives to add a modern quality to age-old underdog stories.

He captures readers with poignant anecdotes and humorous storytelling, breaking intimidating paragraphs into seamless, manageable sections. At the end of each chapter is a QR code to scan for online audio and video content that adds a new dimension to traditional writing. This book is a must-have for churches desiring to encourage their congregations in a modern way. It will particularly appeal to discouraged youth. JG

**HIDDEN IN CHRIST: Living As God's Beloved**  
by James Bryan Smith  
InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3575-1, HB, 220 pages, \$17

When Smith began to memorize Colossians 3:1-7, his whole outlook on life changed. He gained a deeper gratitude and confidence in Jesus and wrote this book so readers will find encouragement, refreshment, and enthusiasm in the central truths from this passage. Meant to be read as a devotional or used in a discussion group, this book

# BOOK REVIEWS

has 30 chapters, each followed by an affirmation, a prayer, and questions related to the key issues of that chapter, such as faith, mercy, discipline, witnessing, and obedience.

This book is similar to an inductive study, as Smith breaks down every word or phrase in the passage. He successfully keeps the book engaging by sharing personal experiences, while still including biblical studies. Although Smith makes some bold statements about the differing importance of the roles of the Trinity that may not please all readers, the book is well organized, thought provoking, and insightful. RMM

## **JESUS IN THE 9 TO 5: Facing the Challenges of Today's Business World**

by Dennis E. Hensley

AMG, 978-0-89957-179-9, PB, 184 pages, \$14.99

This is actually two books in one. Hensley provides a dozen chapters filled with solid advice based on New Testament teachings related to time management, financial stability, goal-setting, business ethics, and quality workmanship. Additionally, embedded in the book are a series of 12 fictional vignettes (a full novella) in which Jesus is on Earth in the 21st century, running a large company.

Using wit, humor, compassion, love, and wisdom, professor Hensley shows Jesus hiring personnel, training, disciplining, and motivating them. The chapters are content heavy with pragmatic insights on living a fuller, more gratifying life. His lively, engaging speaking skill comes through in the fictional sections. Readers will be entertained while simultaneously learning valuable lessons. HS

## **LIMITLESS LIFE**

by Derwin L. Gray

Nelson, 978-1-4002-0536-3, PB, 226 pages, \$15.99

Have you been tagged with a poten-

tial-limiting identity? All of us bear the shame of unwanted labels. Gray guides us down the path from limited to limitless with wisdom for Christians of all stages, particularly males.

Despite success as an NFL player and megachurch pastor, Gray is no stranger to the damage of limiting labels. He utilizes scriptural, personal, and narrative anecdotes to support his crucial message. Scripture passages are pertinent, though occasionally over-analyzed. The engaging writing rarely drags, and the "Transformation Moments" ending every chapter offer opportunities for practical application. Though Gray relies heavily on Christian success stories, he avoids prosperity theology. In fact, he speaks poignantly against the mindset of self-serving religion. My only serious complaint is some of his statistics lack supportive references. Overall, I recommend this book wholeheartedly, specifically for men's Bible studies. It shares an essential message. LW

## **LUMINOUS: Living the Presence and Power of Jesus**

by T. David Beck

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3580-5, PB, 208 pages, \$16

Is Jesus at the center of your life? This is the vital question Beck asks in his straightforward treatment of reshaping a life from living for Jesus to living with Jesus. Beck takes the reader on a journey, visiting such vital topics as being present with God and one another, along with examining personal faith issues, such as the power of surrender and need for humility.

Pastor Beck's premise is simple; and though many Christian writers have tackled it previously, his original insights and anecdotes keep the reading fresh. His writing is engaging, and the prayer exercises at the end of each chapter take practical application one step further than most books in this genre. It is an excellent text for anyone looking to revitalize a relationship with

God in hopes of shining for His glory. MDP

## **MOMENTUM: Five Keys from the Lord's Prayer to Getting Unstuck and Moving Forward**

by John Siebeling

Baker, 978-0-8010-1504-5, PB, 204 pages, \$14.99

If you've felt stuck in your life and unsure of how to get out, pastor Siebeling offers a promise that you can live a life of positive outcomes by focusing on five principles from the Lord's Prayer: honor, renewal, release, forgiveness, and pursuit. Here is a writer who understands what burdened people are going through but who also has seen all that God can do to restore folks who are ill, exhausted, financially flat, spiritually lean, or emotionally distraught. Siebeling explains that *momentum* in its Latin root means to "turn the scales." That is what he shows people how to do through prayer, Bible study, and interaction with fellow believers.

Siebeling uses examples from his life as well as those of people in the Bible to flesh out the five principles of forward living found in the Lord's Prayer. He connects the Old Testament to the New and then shows how both relate to our lives today. Each section concludes with a prayer focused on its principle, ideal for personal reflection and growth. JD

## **PLAYING GOD: Redeeming the Gift of Power**

by Andy Crouch

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3765-6, PB, 288 pages, \$25

Although we often view power as a negative concept, it is a gift from God. In four organically building parts, Crouch guides readers through power in its various earthly forms, uses and abuses, positive forces, and negative consequences. He shows how power can go and has gone terribly wrong and how, when used correctly, it can

# BOOK REVIEWS

contribute to human flourishing. He places a special emphasis on humans' unique image-bearing characteristic of holy strength and how power's utilization either enhances or diminishes our image-bearing capability.

*Christianity Today* editor Crouch is insightful and backs up his anecdotal and social discussions of power with biblical examples, featuring such passages as Genesis 1—2, John 13, and Luke 15 to present power's proper usage. This is worthwhile reading for anyone looking to reevaluate power and its worldly place within God's Kingdom. MDP

## **RAGGED HOPE: Surviving the Fallout of Other People's Choices** by Cynthia Ruchti

Abingdon, 978-1-4267-5117-2, PB, 204 pages, \$15.99

How do you deal with the pain caused by other people's choices? Ruchti explores this question by telling the stories of 26 people who were hurt by choices made by a loved one and how they turned to God to deal with the pain. In coping with betrayal, dishonesty, slander, rejection, and physical abuse, these courageous folks used prayer, Bible study, Christian outreach, and personal determination to rebuild their lives and go forward for Christ. They share insights and pass along lessons to others who may be experiencing similar disappointments and disillusionments.

Ruchti has more than three decades of radio experience. However, some of those speaking techniques don't translate well into the printed word. The book contains incomplete sentences and frequently repeated words. Also, there is more telling than showing when describing the pain people felt. Nevertheless, messages of survival and hope come through, making this an uplifting book for folks in damaged relationships. SHP

## **THE SPIRITUAL DANGER OF DOING GOOD**

by Peter Greer with Anna Haggard  
Bethany, 978-0-7642-1102-7, HB, 189 pages, \$16.99

How could doing good be dangerous? Greer, CEO of a Christian non-profit organization, is transparent about his own failures, as he warns us about the ease in which we become so caught up in our service or ministry that we forget why we are serving.

Using many scriptural passages that clearly reveal human nature, Greer exposes the way we can easily sin while doing good things. Primarily written for leaders in ministry, all Christians can relate to Greer's excellent stories and scriptural truths. Most chapters are followed by a set of discussion questions. Highly recommended for church and high-school libraries. JAA

## **THRIVING: Trusting God for Life to the Fullest**

by Nancy Grisham  
Baker, 978-0-8010-1543-4, PB, 183 pages, \$13.99

For those of us simply trying to make it through each day, this book shows how we not only can survive but also thrive in the life God promised us. Grisham, whose history includes challenges in health, finances, and spiritual warfare, shows how to accept Jesus' gift of life to the fullest. She wraps her arms around readers by providing pertinent Scripture verses, anecdotes filled with teachable moments, and personal stories (often humorous) that provide enlightenment and entertainment.

Grisham's intimate illustrations show that she had to learn to trust Christ in all situations, even when she didn't feel His presence. However, by gaining an expectation of God's goodness and protection, she developed a new outlook that she shares with readers. The book is designed as a self-study text or small-group discussion guide. The chapters contain personal reflection questions, as well as a week-

ly action step to take. Women ages 30 and older will find this book especially helpful. JD

## **TO LIVE IS CHRIST, TO DIE IS GAIN**

by Matt Chandler with Jared C. Wilson

Cook, 978-1-4347-0685-0, HB, 240 pages, \$17.99

A mature Christian faith encourages the body of Christ to nurture development. Paul guides and encourages the Philippians through this growth, and Chandler utilizes Paul's letter to lead readers into deep and mature relationships with Christ. Pastor Chandler dissects ways for Christians to mature through such actions as rejoicing, showing humility, and becoming trustworthy.

He ties passages from Philippians to his own reflective thoughts and experiences. He also quotes famous authors and other Bible verses to challenge Christians to identify their strengths and weaknesses in Christ. This book is a great choice for a small-group Bible study or personal devotional time. It allows Paul's love and advice for the Philippians to connect to a modern Christian's daily life. The concepts focus on young adults and older, especially Christians striving to strengthen their faith. LK

## **THE UNKINGDOM OF GOD: Embracing the Subversive Power of Repentance**

by Mark Van Steenwyk  
InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3655-0, PB, 188 pages, \$16

The Kingdom of God isn't even a kingdom, says Steenwyk, who challenges readers with radical ideas like this. He speaks evenly with colloquial language to address the problems of American Christianity and offers solutions to un-Americanize his own faith. Steenwyk, a former pastor and co-founder of a Christian commune, resists shying away from politics, old

# BOOK REVIEWS

Christian failures, and oversights the church is making today. He believes American church members, including himself, should “repent of Christianity” and practice “Christian anarchism.”

His ideas may seem offensive or fanatical, but Steenwyk gives logical reasons, referencing Scripture and credible theologians and philosophers and offering diverse personal experiences. The Unkingdom, he contends, is built by recognizing the harm Christianity has done in the past by not reconciling with the marginalized in our society; packaging a neatly wrapped, American-dream Jesus; and tolerating centuries-old assumptions of power aligning with religion.

Anyone who has ever asked the question “What if we’re doing it wrong?” should read this book. It offers a great opportunity to view a different perspective and broaden the range of possibilities of Christianity in America. CP

## **WOUNDED BY GOD’S PEOPLE: Discovering How God’s Love Heals Our Hearts**

by Anne Graham Lotz

Zondervan, 978-0-310-26289-3, HB, 240 pages, \$14.99

All who have been a part of God’s family for any length of time have felt the sting of a wound inflicted by a fellow Christian. Likewise, we hurt others, intentional or not. Lotz takes an interesting look at this situation through unusual eyes—Hagar’s.

Lotz inherited a way with words from her famous father, and reading her book is a pleasure. She is concise and authoritative, but not preachy. She peppers the message with personal anecdotes that validate her right to say and think the way she does. Hagar’s journey becomes the reader’s journey; and Lotz becomes a trusted advisor-friend. Highly recommended for church libraries. BR

## Evangelism

### Evangelism

**TANGIBLE: Making God Known Through Deeds of Mercy and Words of Faith**

by Chris Sicks

NavPress, 9-781-612914411, PB, 160 pages, \$12.99

Effective witnessing involves both words and actions. Sicks discusses the apologetics of mercy, stressing the necessity of both word and deed ministry and giving examples of how each may be applied. He shows special attention to both Old and New Testament examples and includes questions for discussion and reflection.

The book is well written and thought provoking. Concepts are illustrated through the use of real-life stories and cultural analogies. The author’s message regarding effective ministry is clearly conveyed and well supported with Scripture quotes. An extensive resource section provides further reading. Sicks, a pastor and former atheist, draws his arguments from personal experience and scriptural research. Due to its clear insights into ministry and witnessing, *Tangible* will make a fine addition to your library. KLK

### Apologetics

**THE BIG STORY: How the Bible Makes Sense Out of Life**

by Justin Buzzard

Moody, 978-0-8024-0857-0, PB, 192 pages, \$13.99

Pastor Buzzard wants believers to listen to their neighbors’, coworkers’, and family members’ stories and then tell them a better story. He divided the Bible into five acts: God, creation, rebellion, rescue, and home. He explores each of these thoroughly and at the end of each chapter adds a “Story Con-

### SERIES UPDATE

Answers Series

edited by Ken Ham

Master Books, 978-0-89051-788-8, \$14.99

*The New Answers Book 4*

trast,” “Action Step,” and “Recommended Reading” section.

Storytelling is an effective way to communicate ideas. Jesus confirmed that with His use of parables. Buzzard builds on that concept and expands it as a tool of evangelism. Recommended for church libraries as a fresh addition to their ministry or evangelism sections. JAW

## Family

### Marriage

**GRACE-FILLED MARRIAGE**

by Tim Kimmel with Darcy Kimmel Worthy, 978-1-617-95122-0, HB, 272 pages, \$19.99

One would assume that all Christian marriages would be happy. Not so. With surveys showing that only 10 percent of marriages are happy, there must be something missing. Dr. Kimmel, with informative observations from his wife, delves into the idea that grace, something we Christians seem to take for granted, must be purposely injected into marriages.

In two parts, the book looks at how grace is needed in a marriage and then what it looks like when it is in action. It is laced with stories from marriages that add credence to the points. This book is both compelling and easy to read. The included study guide makes this an excellent counseling tool or a

# BOOK REVIEWS

study time for couples. It will fit well in any church library. BR

**HE WINS, SHE WINS: Learning the Art of Marital Negotiation**  
by Willard F. Harley, Jr.  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2251-7, HB, 208 pages, \$19.99

Who wouldn't want a marriage where both partners win in resolving conflict? Psychologist Harley says it's possible. *He Wins, She Wins* is primarily a how-to book about learning to negotiate marriage conflicts for both husbands and wives. The author defines typical ways conflicts are handled, which often include not resolving the issues, and the resulting harm to the marriage. He then presents his four guidelines, with ground rules, for negotiation.

Harley gives some examples of the process of negotiation, but the book could have benefited from more. It includes three appendices: "Marital Negotiation Worksheet" and two questionnaires for help in the process of negotiation. Recommended for church libraries, especially as a follow-up to Harley's other books. JAA

## Parenting

**ANGRY BIRDS & KILLER BEES: Talking to Your Kids**  
by Todd Bowman  
Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-3094-4, PB, 144 pages, \$13.99

Children are unavoidably besieged daily by bad information about sex. Parents can only counteract this situation by proactively teaching their offspring about this God-given gift. Psychologist Bowman has written a practical guide on how to do so.

Bowman first debunks common sexual myths, then moves on to a discussion about biology and intimacy. He gives guidance to reluctant parents on how to start "the talk." He also discusses contemporary issues, such as

sexting and video chatting. It's a valuable parenting asset for your library. JAW

**A MAN IN THE MAKING: Strategies to Help Your Son Succeed in Life**  
by Rick Johnson  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2032-2, PB, 201 pages, \$12.99

Johnson has devoted his life to helping men become responsible, caring, nurturing fathers. In a society where athletic prowess and ability to entertain are the strongest requisites for role models, Johnson uses historical figures to demonstrate character traits that today are largely ignored. Twelve chapters introduce 12 men and the traits for which they are most remembered.

With couplings like George Washington and duty, George Müller and compassion, Abraham Lincoln and perseverance, Martin Luther King, Jr. and courage, the chapters are easy to read, informative, and useful. The only thing I found lacking was a good tie-in section at the close of each chapter that would enable the dad and son to interact. Highly recommended for mentors of boys; it's a good church resource. BR

**PARENTING YOUR POWERFUL CHILD: Bringing an End to the Everyday Battles**  
by Kevin Leman  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2020-9, HB, 267 pages, \$17.99

Dr. Leman knows how to change family dynamics and bring peace to parents and children alike. He's a parent's greatest cheerleader in the ongoing child-rearing process. In this book, he focuses on the powerful child residing in every family. He describes types of powerful children (manipulators), along with plans of action to bring about change.

Leman uses many personal illustrations and those from parents who've learned from his advice. He adds humor to lighten the content and gives

clear direction for changing parenting habits that don't work. This book helps parents learn much about themselves, their children, and techniques to bring about peaceful homes. Highly recommended. JAA

**RAISING BOYS BY DESIGN**  
by Gregory L. Jantz & Michael Gurian  
with Ann McMurray  
WaterBrook, 978-0-3077-3169-2, PB, 240 pages, \$14.99

For parents who want their sons to be heroes, this is the book for them. Jantz, a psychologist and counselor, and Gurian, a marriage and family counselor, coauthored a tremendous book for parents of boys. By using the Bible and the latest in brain science, they guide readers in raising their sons, using the acronym HERO: Honor, Enterprise, Responsibility, and Originality.

More than simply another how-to book, *Raising Boys by Design* gives solid information on how boys' brain development differs from that of girls, what boys need in a learning environment, why boys need mentors on the road to manhood, and much more. Each chapter ends with a "Next Step" section with questions to help parents learn more about their own sons and how to proceed in helping them mature. Highly recommended for church libraries. JAA

## Singles

**TRUE LOVE DATES: Your Indispensable Guide to Finding the Love of Your Life**  
by Debra Fileta  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33679-2, PB, 213 pages, \$14.99

This book transcends what most might call a dating manual. Fileta creates an image of what it means to be single, dating, or married by God's standards. Filled with personal stories of the writer and patients she treated,

# BOOK REVIEWS

the book also contains support from other reliable authors and Scripture.

Fileta's writing is witty and light to draw readers in before hitting them with a good dose of truth that is much needed. The layout of the book and the many personal stories make an easy and delightful reading experience. As a counselor specializing in relational and marital issues, Fileta is an experienced authority on the subject. I encourage older teens and adults, regardless of their current "love" situation, to read this book. LMB

## Fiction

### AN ACCIDENTAL LIFE

by Pamela Binnings Ewen

B&H, 978-0-8054-6432-0, PB, 453 pages, \$14.99

Rebecca's lawyer husband, Peter, is working for the state of Georgia to prosecute a doctor who runs an abortion clinic. The lawsuit exposes what happens to the babies who survive abortions and what kinds of rights they're entitled to. During the time the case is going on, Rebecca and Peter also find themselves expecting a child, and readers are given insight into her emotional turmoil while she comes to grips with what this new addition will mean.

This story has an agenda, but it does not come off as a lecture or sermon. Instead, by presenting characters passionate about their ethical beliefs and a story that is realistic in the way it examines all aspects of the abortion issue, we have drama working as a teaching tool. LH

### ALL FOR A STORY

by Allison Pittman

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-6681-4, PB, 349 pages, \$13.99

Monica Bisbaine writes a gossip column for the sensationalist paper *Capital Chatter*. However, the arrival of the handsome Christian, Max Moore, puts

Monica on a journey of self-discovery. Her in-depth life story reveals the complex society of the Prohibition Era, her romance with a married man, and the deep hurt caused by a bad relationship with her mother. She learns what she truly wants in life, and Max discovers the importance of God's role in redemption.

This novel explores the Roaring Twenties romanticized by *The Great Gatsby*, now realistically a fascinating Christian story. Though the book deals with drinking, crime, and sexual immorality, it does a great job of appealing to the stylish and growing minds of young women while also setting boundaries and showing the consequences of wayward living. Here is American history, romance, and Christian ethics rolled into one saga. Women 18 and older will be drawn to the main character. KG

### BEFORE THE DAWN

978-0-8249-3424-8

### SWEET SEPTEMBER

978-0-8249-3425-3

### Home to Heather Creek #1-2

by Kathleen Bauer

Guideposts, PB, 256-288 pages, \$13.99

After their daughter dies in a tragic accident, Charlotte and her husband find themselves the sole caretakers of Denise's three children. Torn from their mother and the bustle of San Francisco, Sam, Emily, and Christopher have difficulty adjusting to farm life in Nebraska with their aging grandparents. These books follow the family's struggles as everyone learns to trust in God, adjust to a new life, and find mutual healing.

The books are honest depictions of grief and finding hope in the midst of loss. Although they are written simply, in an easy style even a child could understand, the deeper, more mature themes are aimed at an adult audience. Some scenes and explanations seem contrived, but the story does not shy away from honest portrayals of pain-

ful situations and faith-oriented people.

Bauer is the pen name for the series' authors. Carolyn Aarsen provides the voice of a grandmother and lover of rural communities, whereas Tricia Goyer speaks realistically for the younger characters. The books are easy to read, yet thought provoking, making them useful to those struggling through similar life-and-loss situations. LH

### CLAUDIA: Wife of Pontius Pilate

by Diana Wallis Taylor

Revell, 978-0-8007-2138-1, PB, 326 pages, \$14.99

Through an arranged marriage, Claudia finds rare love with Pontius Pilate. The reader follows her as she struggles externally with her health and internally to support her husband through all his decisions, even when her heart and religious beliefs do not agree with his choices.

This book presents an inspiring new angle to a Christian story through an unseen character in the Bible. The story aligns quickly with Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, paraphrasing passages in the New Testament, while still explaining how Claudia's life was affected by politics, religion, the military, and love. The characters are well-developed and add dynamic elements to the plot. Some of the characters deal with controversial actions, including suicide to regain family honor. The unique insider's perspective offers a fresh view to an ancient story. RAS

### DANGEROUS PASSAGE

Southern Crimes #1

by Lisa Harris

Revell, 978-0-8007-2190-9, PB, 303 pages, \$14.99

While trying to find a possible serial killer of young girls, Avery North, instead, stumbles into a smuggling operation bringing guns and female slaves into the Southern United States. Joined by the medical examiner, Avery

# BOOK REVIEWS

begins her search for the identity and killer of the second young girl she has been assigned. As they get closer to the truth, she has a number of frightening encounters. In the end, they discover there is so much more below the surface and stop the smuggling. As the action of Avery's job goes on, she is trying to figure out her personal life.

This book has characters with who are dealing with problems and trying to overcome them in both their personal and professional lives. The action

is exciting and intense throughout, and readers are kept on the edges of their seats until the final words. Highly recommended for suspense readers. RLW

## DEADLY DEVOTION

**Port Aster Secrets #1**

by **Sandra Orchard**

Revell, 978-0-8007-2222-7, PB, 356 pages, \$14.99

Devastated by her mentor's death, Kate tries to get the police to investigate Daisy's apparent suicide by poi-

soned tea. Kate is sure that Daisy, who trained her about using herbs, would not have accidentally killed herself. She is determined to find her killer and is reluctantly helped by detective Tom Parker. As she searches, her suspect list seems filled with friends. Eventually she figures out the motive and person behind her friend's murder and gets that person to confess.

The main characters have depth, and the plot is riveting. Many characters follow Christian principles, and

## SEQUELS

to *Full Disclosure*

by Dee Henderson

Bethany, 978-0-7642-1171-3, \$15.99

*Unspoken*

to *Skip Rock Shallows*

by Jan Watson

Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3915-3, \$12.99

*Tattler's Branch*

to *Threads of Change*

by Jodi Barrows

Moody, 978-0-8024-0938-6, \$14.99

*Threads of Home*

## SERIES UPDATES

The Aidan Mysteries

by Fay Sampson

Lion, 978-1-78264-025-7, \$14.99

#2 *Death on Lindisfarne*

Alaskan Courage

by Dani Pettrey

Bethany, 978-0-7642-0984-0, \$14.99

#3 *Stranded*

Bloodline Trilogy

by Jordyn Redwood

Kregel, 975-0-8254-4213-1, \$14.99

#3 *Peril* (final one)

Blue Willow Brides

by Maggie Brendan

Revell, 978-0-8007-3464-0, \$14.99

#3 *Perfectly Matched* (last one)

The Crittendon Files

by Creston Mapes

Cook, 978-1-4347-0487-0, \$14.99

#2 *Poison Town*

The Heart of San Francisco

by Julie Lessman

Revell, 978-0-8007-2166-4, \$14.99

#2 *Dare to Love Again*

The Jevin Banks Experience

by Steven James

Revell, 978-0-8007-3426-8, \$14.99

#2 *Singularity*

Love Blossoms in Oregon

by Miralee Ferrell

Cook, 978-0-7814-0809-7, \$14.99

#2 *Wishing on Buttercups*

Marc Royce Adventures

by Davis Bunn

Bethany, 978-0-7642-1138-6, \$14.99

#3 *Strait of Hormuz*

Quilts of Love

Abingdon

*Scraps of Evidence*

by Barbara Cameron

978-1-4267-5278-0, \$12.99

*A Sky without Stars*

by Linda S. Clare

978-1-4267-5279-7, \$13.99

A Regency Romance

by Ruth Axtell

Revell, 978-0-8007-2090-2, \$14.99

*Heart's Rebellion*

The Secret of the Journal

by C. F. Dunn

Lion, 978-1-78264-034-9, \$14.99

#2 *Death Be Not Proud*

Weddings by Design

by Janice Thompson

Revell, 978-0-8007-2154-1, \$13.99

#3 *The Dream Dress*

Westward Winds

by Amanda Cabot

Revell, 978-0-8007-3461-9, \$14.99

#3 *With Autumn's Return*

Wives of the Patriarchs

by Jill Eileen Smith

Revell, 978-0-8007-3431-2, \$14.99

#3 *Rachel*

Women of Hope

by Ginny Aiken

FaithWords, 978-0-89296-846-6, \$15

#2 *She Shall Be Praised*

# BOOK REVIEWS

some share a bit of their faith journeys. Recommended. RLW

## **EVERY WAKING MOMENT**

by **Chris Fabry**

**Tyndale, 978-4-4143-4863-6, PB, 376 pages, \$14.99**

Treha Langsam's life has been anything but ordinary. She struggles with mental and physical disorders, yet she also has the unique ability to communicate with people lost in their own minds. When Devin Hillis, a filmmaker looking to make a documentary, discovers her, he begins investigating her history and gift.

Theological themes are secondary to the plot. A minor character explores prayer and forgiveness, but the main characters are separated from that. Treha's gift may be theologically questionable, as she is communicating with people who usually can't speak or think coherently. The characters are rounded and well-developed, but the plot seems a little unrealistic because what is happening isn't actually medically possible. Nevertheless, because of its fast-paced plot, crisp dialogue, and unique main character, the book is entertaining. KGJ

## **FRAME 232**

**Jason Hammond Novel #1**

by **Wil Mara**

**Tyndale, 978-1-4143-5951, PB, 423 pages, \$13.99**

Sheila finds herself running from someone after her mother's will leaves her clues to who killed President Kennedy. She took a film of President Kennedy's motorcade as he was shot and was so shocked and frightened by what her film showed she put it away never to be seen again. After her mother's death, Sheila finds the film and must decide what to do with it. She contacts Jason Hammond for help, and together they run from those who don't want the truth to come out. In the end, they are safe; and the truth does come to light.

This well-written novel has characters with depth, and the action immerses readers in the experience of it all. It's a great read for suspense fans, especially those old enough to remember Kennedy's assassination. Recommended. RLW

## **THE GOVERNESS OF HIGHLAND HALL**

by **Carrie Turansky**

**Multnomah, 978-1-60142-496-9, PB, 320 pages, \$14.99**

When Julia Foster and her family are suddenly pulled away from their mission work in India, Julia must reconsider the plan she believed God had for her life. Set in 1911 in the English countryside, this novel follows Julia and the household of Highland Hall as she takes on the challenging role as governess for the children and young cousins of Sir William Ramsey.

This historical novel is a long, but easy read. Its characters and scenery are vividly described. While the premise could be considered cliché, Turansky handles it from a fresh perspective. The use of multiple viewpoints often causes confusion; but surprise, humor, and fast-paced dialogue keep the narrative drive strong. Teen and adult women especially will enjoy the challenges Julia faces and her witty and innovative ways of inspiring her charges with virtue and ethics without being overbearing. MED

## **A MARRIAGE IN MIDDLEBURY**

by **Anita Higman**

**Abingdon, 987-1-4267-3387-1, PB, 298 pages, \$14.99**

What if the man you've remembered and still loved for nearly 20 years returns to your hometown with his fiancée—and asks you to cater their wedding? Charlotte Rose Hill, much-loved owner of Middlebury's quaint Rose Cottage Tearoom, finds herself in this hopeless predicament. As Charlotte struggles to suppress her rekindled affections for her teenage

sweetheart, their unresolved past resurfaces in the midst of Middlebury's usual mayhem. Love and loyalty collide in this heartwarming, small-town Texas romance.

This novel balances humor, mystery, and romance to produce an intriguing story targeted toward women. All the captivating characters expose genuine humanness as they struggle to align their passions with their faith in God. Though some characters' impulsive actions lead to regretful consequences, they quickly repent and seek God's forgiveness. Overall, this novel is delightfully entertaining and spiritually uplifting, a worthwhile asset to any church library. KTD

## **PROMISE TO RETURN**

by **Elizabeth Byler Younts**

**Howard, 978-1-4767-3501-6, PB, 320 pages, \$14.99**

When the Amish read "Thou shalt not kill," they take it as unconditional truth for every situation; and war is no exception. Miriam's fiancé, Henry, has decided to enlist, though it means a possible shunning from the Amish community. Miriam, torn between her family and her love, parts with Henry on an uncertain note. The subsequent events unfold with layers of an increasingly complex situation involving not only her already excommunicated sister Kathryn, but also her entire town.

While Younts's story is engaging emotionally, the writing pace is awkward. She skips from one key event to the next, not taking time to detail the months between or develop her characters. Miriam is flighty and seems to make decisions according to the author's whims. The dialogue sounds modern, which distances the reader from the 1940s setting. Although the story reflects a genuine conflict within the Amish community during World War II, the writing is stilted. ECD

# BOOK REVIEWS

## RETURN TO ME

### The Restoration Chronicles #1

by Lynn Austin

Bethany, 978-0-7642-0898-0, PB, 459 pages, \$14.99

Although there is a strong story woven through this book, the real meat is the historical biblical setting and events. King Cyrus has at last declared that the Jews may return to Jerusalem. Not all are excited at this news; many would prefer to continue the lives they have made for themselves and their families in Babylon. Iddo, one of the priests, is sure this is a sign of God's favor and immediately makes plans to move his family and begin rebuilding the Temple. What ensues is years of hard living, antagonism from the locals, separation from those who chose to stay behind, and little evidence of God's blessings. Yet Iddo doesn't falter.

With two men as main characters, this book will appeal to men, although all Austin fans (especially those who love her historical fiction) will enjoy and appreciate it. It is typical Austin fare with a strong story, compelling characters, and well-researched background. The book also includes a glossary of Jewish terms and a note to the reader with Scripture references to research for additional information. A good choice for any church library. CC

## SHADES OF MERCY

### A Maine Chronicle #1

by Anita Lustrea & Caryn Rivadeneira

Moody, 978-0-8024-0968-3, PB, 288 pages, \$14.99

Set in 1950s rural Maine, this novel follows Mercy, the teenage daughter of a respected man who treats her like a son, in her journey to find approval for her secret relationship with Mick, a boy who belongs to the Maliseet tribe. As racial tensions increase, Mick is jailed on fictitious charges, and Mercy's family becomes responsible to navigate the underlying racial drama and set him free.

This novel has an engaging plot that

accurately portrays the historical context and addresses issues of the time (racism, alcoholism, violence) in an informative and captivating manner. The characters speak in realistic dialogue for the period and have strong moral anchors, including family loyalty, religious faith, and political equality. This book is an eye-opener for contemporary readers in the way it shows Christians being willing to take unpopular stands for noble causes. SNC

## TRACES OF MERCY

by Michael Landon, Jr. & Cindy Kelley

Cook, 978-0-7814-0869-1, PB, 352 pages, \$14.99

As the gray smoke from the Civil War fades, Mercy is in a war with herself, between who she used to be and who she has the possibility of becoming. As she battles amnesia, Mercy finds romance. But how can she go on with life and love when she does not know the secrets of her past?

*Traces of Mercy* is not a predictable, cookie-cutter love story. It includes a public hanging, war violence, and attempted murder; but no gruesome details are presented. Although Mercy stays in a convent, any reader can enjoy the novel because there is not excessive religious jargon. It balances romance and self-discovery and allows readers to consider their own opinions along with Mercy. After a story twist, the novel ends abruptly, purposefully leaving readers hungering for a possible second book to conclude this unforgettable story. KMB

## WELCOME TO LAST CHANCE

### A Place to Call Home #1

by Cathleen Armstrong

Revell, 978-0-8007-2246-3, PB, 284 pages, \$13.99

When Lainie Davis becomes stuck with both a broken car and a broken heart in the small town of Last Chance, N.M., she thinks her life cannot get any worse. After being hurt multiple times

by the people of her past, it is hard for her to accept the hospitable and slightly overbearing personalities of this one-horse town. Soon, however, she begins to open herself up as the genuine love displayed by the people of the town, as well as by one particular cute, local guy, begins to put her broken soul back together.

Though at times the situations are predictable and the depictions of small-town life seem more stereotypical than accurate, the story itself is a powerful tale of God's grace and His ability to forgive and heal the hopeless. AT

## WHEN MOUNTAINS MOVE

by Julie Cantrell

Cook, 978-0-7814-0425-9, PB, 416 pages, \$14.99

Nightmares of the past haunt Millie, keeping her up at night and leaving her afraid of the future. Her past has not only left her hurting and scarred, but it's now threatening her newlywed life. She deals with past identity issues, poor career-path choices, and even detrimental relationships, all having the potential to harm her marriage.

Teen and adult women can learn a lot from Millie's broken past and find strength in her healing. Cantrell does a good job with character development, although the plot is somewhat predictable. This book is set in the 1940s but makes little mention of World War II. Readers should be aware that there are mature themes but no graphic scenes. This book also includes a section in the back with discussion topics and writing prompts that make it a great choice for book clubs. TLB

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Men

### **FIGHT: Winning the Battles That Matter Most**

by **Craig Groeschel**

**Zondervan, 978-0-310-33374-6, HB, 160 pages, \$15.99**

*Fight* addresses a growing problem in our culture: men with weak wills. Lust, anger, and pride threaten to derail men's lives and tear apart their families; but those led by the Holy Spirit will find their true calling as warriors of God. Pastor Groeschel examines the story of Samson and finds a life full of mistakes and second chances, much like the lives of many men today.

Men (and many women) of all ages can identify with Groeschel's challenge to weed out the negative factors in their lives. However, the call to purity is mainly focused on family men, bolstered by Groeschel's humorous, personal examples as a father. Recommended for church libraries and men's discipleship groups, *Fight* is easy to read, is entertaining and insightful, and leaves a lasting impact. NVH

## Teens

### **GOD'S GRAFFITI**

by **Romal Tune**

**Judson, 978-0-8170-1733-0, PB, 151 pages, \$13.99**

Gang membership, drug dealing, and abandonment shaped who Tune was. Seemingly bound to meet the low expectations others had for him since birth, he tells his testimony of discovering who God intended him to be. From Moses to a demon-possessed boy, he gives eight biblical examples of what God can do with a broken person. Lessons include a sense of mission, personal discipline, a strong focus on righteousness, and good use of time

and opportunities.

This book is written for troubled teens who can relate to the author's stories of a difficult, tragic, and graphic childhood. Tune discourages a victim mentality, as he inspires troubled teens to realize what God loves about them. To God, they are unique, not stereotypes. Tune challenges readers to realize that the power to change a negative lifestyle is within their hands. MM

## Women

### **BECOMING MYSELF: Embracing God's Dream of You**

by **Stasi Eldredge**

**Cook, 978-1-4347-0535-8, HB, 253 pages, \$22.99**

Eldredge seeks to help women rediscover their inner beauty, self-confidence, creativity, and life goals. Using personal illustrations and enlightening stories, much as she did in *Captivating*, Eldredge delves deep into the heart of women's issues today. She touches on personal image, career ambitions, family enhancement, spiritual nourishment, and even physical conditioning. She aims to show women how to assess where they currently are and then determine how to get to where they want to be.

This is more than a self-help book. It's also a counseling journal. Eldredge writes with a voice of a concerned friend who wants to walk alongside readers in their own spiritual journeys to completeness as women. It's a good book for females who seek healing and restoration to their true identity in Christ. I recommend it to women ages 16 and older. EEL

### **A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO HEARING GOD'S VOICE**

by **Leighann McCoy**

**Bethany, 978-0-7642-1094-5, PB, 231 pages, \$13.99**

Where is God's voice when life is a

house of cards tossed by the wind? McCoy offers powerful, uplifting insights that reveal how to hear and respond to God's voice in everyday life. Battling cancer at the time she wrote the book, she addresses the situations where God's promises fail to line up with reality. By creatively retelling familiar Bible stories, she explains that God allows hardship in order to enable us to grow. Her life of battling reoccurring cancer has taught her to let God define what is good.

When folks ask where God is when they are in the pits, McCoy says He is in there with them—thinking higher thoughts and navigating better ways. He fulfills His promises, so His children can achieve His purposes. She challenges teens and adults to hear and respond to God's voice daily. This book is a Bible study, autobiography, and devotional all in one. JC

### **WOMEN LIVING WELL**

by **Courtney Joseph**

**Nelson, 978-1-4002-0494-6, PB, 240 pages, \$15.99**

Diehard feminists will probably hate this book. It goes against everything they champion. Joseph shows the reader how women can have a fulfilling life. She begins with the most important relationship a woman can have: connecting with God. Tips on respecting one's husband, homeschooling children, and maintaining a tidy home follow. She has little to say to a separate group of women who are unmarried or childless.

Lest this book be pigeonholed as being written in the 1950s, Joseph addresses social media and how technology impacts our contemporary lives. Recommended for church libraries that need to update their section of books for women. JAW

## Children

### THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE

#### The Jesus Storybook Bible #1

by Sally Lloyd-Jones

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-73843-5, 55 minutes, \$9.99

Although presented as a movie, this DVD is primarily still shots of cartoon-like scenes from the book with the same name. The camera moves in and back for close-ups, and there are some static drawings that float or are pulled across the screen. It is a narrated book; and the narrator, David Suchet (TV's Poirot), is delightful in his lilting, surprising, singsong readings.

The stories are realistic, as in the story of how pretty Rachel was more popular than plain Leah, yet God chose Leah to have one of her sons provide the lineage for the birth of Jesus. Sometimes there is comedy, as in the telling of the tower of Babel, in which confused workers are seen dropping bricks on each other or bumping into one another with building tools. Eleven stories are offered in this first volume, all from the Old Testament. For parents too tired to read a bedtime story, this DVD will be a fine substitute. DEH

## Music

### LIVE AT CORNERSTONE

#### with Canton Junction

Difference Media, 8-19113-01000-0, 85 minutes, \$19.99

I don't usually watch DVDs of performances. I like the adrenaline that pumps in a concert hall, and that's hard to duplicate on tape. But Canton Junction did it in this DVD. The upbeat tempos and great harmonies of this traditionally Southern gospel quartet kept me riveted to the big screen from start to finish. I especially enjoyed the facial interaction among the singers as they belted out old favorites and new songs.

I would have enjoyed seeing the talented instrumentalists a bit more. Their contribution was worthy of more face time. One of the highlights is the bonus track of the guys at the piano, where they did an astounding rendition of "Just A Little Talk With Jesus/Jesus On The Main Line Medley." I'll watch this DVD more than once, and your patrons will too. Highly recommended. BR

## Narrative

### NOT TODAY

Lionsgate, 0-31398-17293-2, 102 minutes, \$19.99

Caden Welles turned his back on God, but many people are praying for him. Their prayers are answered dramatically when God turns Caden's wild vacation in India into a frantic search for a child whose father unknowingly sold her into prostitution.

Designed to expose human trafficking, *Not Today* encourages viewers to help with this issue. The film has some documentary-like features. Text appears on the screen in varying fonts, sometimes juvenile or distracting, but emphasizing important points. Overall, it is a powerful film with decent acting and a compelling plot. Teens and adults will be impacted by the film's cause and its suggestions for getting involved. EMW

*Reading is everything. Reading makes me feel like I've accomplished something, learned something, become a better person. Reading makes me smarter. Reading gives me something to talk about later on. ... Reading is bliss.*

—Nora Ephron

## Reviewers

Julie A. Agen, church librarian  
 Kelsey M. Baker, writer  
 Josh Beaumont, writer  
 Tatiana L. Bickler, writer  
 Brian Branscum, writer  
 Lindsey Megan Brown, writer  
 Julia Camara, writer  
 Ceil Carey, former church and public librarian  
 Erin Christine Davis, writer  
 Jaclyn Davis, writer  
 Siena N. Clymer, writer  
 Marian Elyse Douglas, writer  
 Kaitlyn T. Duchien, writer  
 Joseph Duncan, writer  
 Hillary Jo Foreman, writer  
 Kristin Gaffney, writer  
 Jeff Grogan, writer  
 Lauren Haynes, writer  
 Dr. Dennis E. Hensley, writer  
 Lauralei Hutsell, writer  
 Kaitlyn G. Jameson, writer  
 Lin Johnson, editor, writer  
 Nathan C. Jones, writer  
 Laura Koenig, writer  
 Kathryn L. Kroeker, writer  
 Emily E. Love, writer  
 Lynda G. McCracken, church librarian  
 Michael McLean, writer  
 Ronni M. Meier, writer  
 Deanna M. Menke, writer  
 Nichole N. Parks, writer  
 Charnell Peters, writer  
 Scott H. Phillips, writer  
 Michael D. Prihoda, writer  
 Barbara Winslow Robidoux, editor  
 Bob Rose, pastor  
 Hannah Schaefer, writer  
 Rebecca Allison Schriener, writer  
 Tiffany J. Solecki, writer  
 Joshua A. Spotts, writer  
 Corrie Thompson, writer  
 Alycia Tim, writer  
 Nick Van Heest, writer  
 Judy A. Waggoner, church librarian  
 Rebecca Love White, teacher  
 Luke Wildman, writer  
 Ellen M. Williamson, writer

# MUSIC REVIEWS

## Children

**SHINE!**

by **North Point Kids**

**North Point, 5-099972-190623, \$9.99**

Andy Stanley's North Point Church ministry released this album to entertain young children while simultaneously exposing them to biblical stories, lessons, and teachings. The goal is to help youngsters take this singable knowledge and use it to shine for Jesus. Admittedly, the music style is similar to much contemporary worship music, in that it employs a praise band with a lot of percussion and hand-clapping. But it does provide clear, memorable principles of the Bible through song.

The fact that children now have some new tunes for vacation Bible school, Sunday school, and youth activities makes this CD a welcome addition to the body of sing-along, youth-oriented praise music. JAS

## Contemporary

**BRING YOUR NOTHING**

by **Shane & Shane**

**Fair Trade, 7-36211-60619-8, \$11.99**

This mixture of songs addressed to God, reminders of God's love, and affirmations of belief challenges listeners to let God grow their faith. The prayer of "Faith to Believe" sums up the overriding message of this CD: "Give me the faith to believe you/When I'm stuck here in my fear/Give me the strength to trust you/When my vision's blurred by tears/Give me a hope for tomorrow/Because today has gone so wrong/I'm on my knees/Give me the strength to believe."

The lyrics are challenging, and the harmonies of this male duet are pleasant to listen to. This CD is a great reminder that we bring nothing to God, and He gives us everything we need

in return. Add this CD to your collection, and promote it; it won't stay on the shelf long. LJ

**CASEY DARNELL**

by **Casey Darnell**

**North Point, 5-099972-190821, \$9.99**

This fresh collection of new songs encourages listeners to sing along with worship leader Darnell as he praises God and weaves faith into relationships. Starting with the praise of "Marvelous" ("How awesome is the Lord our God/Rich in grace and full of love") and ending with the reminder of how God's grace, love, and forgiveness changes us in "Never Be the Same," this CD is full of outstanding songs. My favorite is "Over and Over" with its strong affirmation of faith: "When all I've got are questions/And the promises made/Well, I will choose to believe that/You are the only way."

Despite some clichés like "throw in the towel," the lyrics are strong and point listeners to God; the music is upbeat. Recommended for your music collection. LJ

**HOW MERCY LOOKS FROM HERE**

by **Amy Grant**

**Sparrow, 5-099922-651822, \$13.99**

Listening to this CD is like spending time with a friend who offers hope in a variety of circumstances. From the chorus of the first track, "If I Could See" ("I'd see that love will conquer hate/There's always hope, it's not too late/I'd find the truth is easy to believe/If I could see"), to the reminder of God's mercy in the title song ("When you face your greatest fear/Losing all that you hold near/Open up your eyes my dear/Oh, how mercy looks from here"), the lyrics point listeners to God's perspective and truths from His Word that relate to their daily lives.

It's been 10 years since Grant released a CD, and this one is worth the wait. She is joined by other well-known singers on five of the songs. In the liner notes, she explains the inspiration for

many of the songs, adding more meaning to them. Recommended, especially for people who've lost sight of God's working in their lives. LJ

**MATTHEW: THE PENULTIMATE QUESTION**

by **Michael Card**

**InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3805-5, \$12.98**

Card's fingers lovingly play piano keys as his voice rolls like velvet, slow and sure. Soft and steady, his music is compelling and gentle, inviting listeners into the peace and rest God desires for us. He uses music to invite us into a time of silence and solitude with God. Each song introduces listeners to another aspect of Jesus, such as His humanity, judgment, royalty, grace, peace, and love.

The first song, "This Is Who You Are," says, "You're always making peace with time/You suffer for what's right/You freely offer mercy/From a heart now filled with light." Card demonstrates that Jesus has called His followers to be doers of good deeds during our time on Earth. Whereas the CD is more likely to make one lapse into meditation, rather than get up and go to the gym, each song offers an opportunity to set aside the business of the day and meet quietly with God. HS

## Praise & Worship

**GLORIFY**

by **Cornerstone Sanctuary Choir**

**Difference Media, 8-29569-82402-1, \$13.99**

In its debut album, the choir puts to music the praises of believers throughout generations. This CD has it all—from lively renditions of powerhouse classics, such as "Got Me Some Joy" and "Victory Is Mine," to covers of con-

# MUSIC REVIEWS

temporary worship favorites like “Your Great Name” and “Be Welcome Here.” Also included is a title track that is an original composition.

The Cornerstone Sanctuary Choir has 150 members and is based at Cornerstone Church in San Antonio, Texas. Several congregational members are featured on the album. Although they have energy and passion, they lack depth and resonance as lead singers, particularly those featured in “Your Great Name” and “Irresistible.” Despite this weakness, *Glorify* is sure to attract listeners of all ages and backgrounds. The Christian faith has the ability to bring about fellowship, and this choir has successfully captured the sound of enthusiastic worship. TJS

## KEEPS ON CHANGING

by Seth Condrey

North Point, 5-099972-190722, \$9.99

Serene musical notes weave an album of praise in which pop melodies explore the grace found in a morning sunrise, a storm, and times of stress. The message of these original lyrics is that grace keeps on changing to meet our needs. The songs maintain a hymnal feel in regard to the music, but the lyrics reflect themes of more contemporary songs now in the Christian market, such as “As the Deer Panteth” and “Amazing Love.”

Condrey’s voice invites his audience to embrace an endearing, traditional message. However, with a steady rhythm marking the album, it has a bit of sameness without an ultimate climactic track. The album isn’t overly energetic, nor are its concepts radically innovative; but for those who enjoy music for the pleasure of being comforted, this CD meets that need. NNP

## Southern Gospel

### SHOW ME YOUR WAY

by Canton Junction

Difference Media, 8-19113-01005-5,

\$13.99

For patrons who like Southern gospel quartet singing, *Show Me Your Way* is a must addition for your library.

With all the best of its heritage, these four men will have toes a-tappin’ and souls rejoicin’.

Tim Duncan’s rich bass, reminiscent of J. D. Sumner, lays a foundation for the sweet harmonies that set Southern gospel apart from other quartet singing. Pastor Matthew Hagee soars on the high tenor, and Aaron Crabb belts out the lead with enthusiasm and quality. Rounding out the group is Shane McConnell, no stranger to the recording industry. Highly recommended. BR

## BULLETIN BOARD



—Phyllis Jones, librarian, First United Methodist Church, Lawrenceville, Ill.

# POSTER/BULLETIN BOARDS

by Arlene Walker

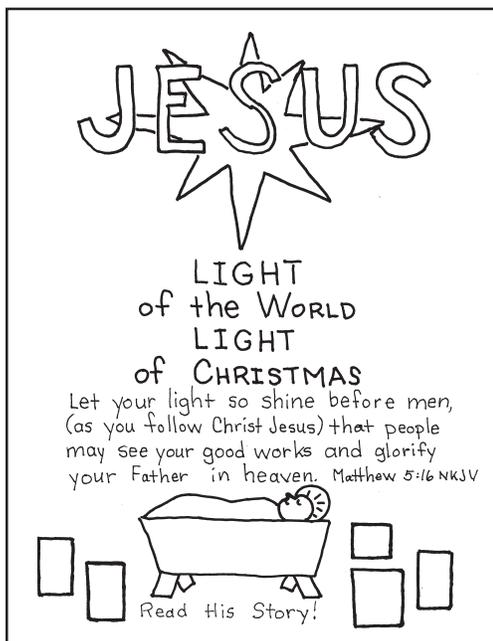
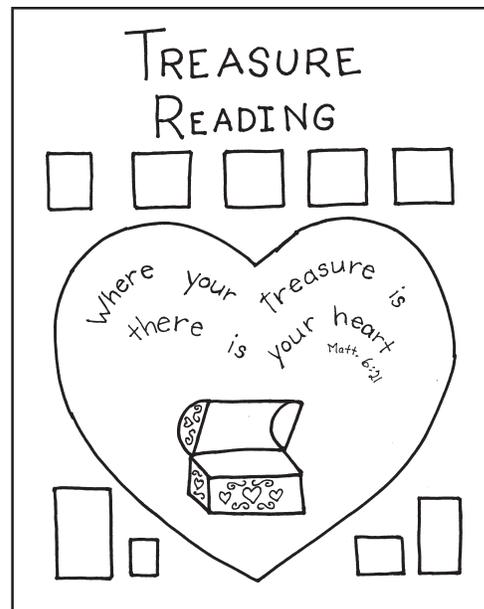


## Poster

Use a large, medium-blue sheet of poster board. Draw the chair, cup, fireplace, and clock, making them large enough to fill in most of the space between the caption and books. Print the caption with a thick black marker, and label the objects with a medium black marker. Around the word *Books*, arrange copies of book covers from titles recently added to your library.

## Bulletin Board

Cover a bulletin board with fabric printed with a heart design. Cut a large heart from pink paper. Using a pencil, write the verse as shown, then trace the letters with a black marking pen. Draw and cut a treasure chest from gold paper; embellish it with sequins or glitter. Mount additional book jackets above and around the heart shape as shown. Cut letters for the caption from black paper, and staple them as shown.



## Bulletin Board

Cover a bulletin board with light blue cloth or paper, and cut an oversized star from a large piece of cardboard. Cut a piece of gold cloth that extends at least one inch beyond the edges of the star. Lay the cloth on a flat surface with the right side down. Lay the cardboard star on the cloth so there will be one inch or more on all sides. Fold the cloth toward the back side, trimming away excess; and glue in place. Carefully cut slits near the center where the points of the star meet. Work with a small area, cutting and folding over the edges to cover all parts of the star with cloth.

Cut oversized letters for the word *JESUS*, and embellish the letters with silver glitter. Arrange the star and the word *JESUS* near the top of the board. Draw a manger with the baby on white paper, or cut pieces from colored paper. Mount near the bottom of the board. Write the caption and verse with a pencil and ruler on white paper, and trace them with a black marker. Mount the caption and verse as shown. Arrange copies of book jackets depicting stories or inspirational material about Jesus in the remaining space.

Arlene Walker is a freelance writer and retired teacher.

# ECLA Conference CDs

Check the CDs you want, complete the information at the bottom, and mail this form with a check or money order in U.S. funds payable to ECLA.

- Getting Your Church to Support the Library, Keith Duff
- Creating Community With Books, Caryn Rivadeneira
- Fantasy Books for Children and Teens, Melody Green
- The Challenge of Change, Lynn Austin
- Selection Policy, Lin Johnson
- Prescription for the Discouraged Librarian, Lynn Austin
- How Books Can Carry God's Blessing, Julie-Allyson Ieron
- Archiving Your Church History, Pat Howard
- Functions of Fiction, Allie Pleiter
- Nourishing Your Dream, Lynn Austin
- Launching a Church Library, Susan Fischer
- Setting Goals, Building Milestones With a Servant's Heart, Lynn Austin

**PRICES:** \$6 each

**SHIPPING & HANDLING:** free in U.S.; Canada: add 15%

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_ CDs x \$6 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping & handling, Canada \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ECLA**  
**P.O. Box 353**  
**Glen Ellyn, IL 60138**  
**630-375-7865**  
**mary@eclalibraries.org**

## 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*. Email 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.

# Helps for Your Library

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

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

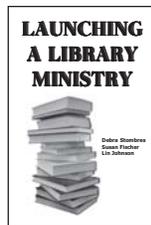


## **CDs**

See order form on inside back cover.

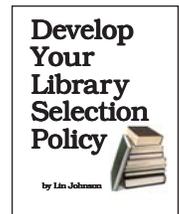
## **Launching a Library Ministry by Debra Stombres, Susan Fischer, & Lin Johnson—\$7**

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**

Dewey Decimal system adapted  
for church libraries.

Book/pamphlet prices include shipping & handling in U.S.  
Email [mary@eclalibraries.org](mailto:mary@eclalibraries.org) for extra shipping costs to other countries.

---

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.

- Library Software Solutions, \$6
- Launching a Library Ministry, \$7
- Develop Your Selection Policy, \$3
- Church Library Classification System, \$13

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_