

# Church. Libraries

\$10

Winter 2012-13



Emmanuel Community Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

## A Church With Two Libraries

**Update  
Your Old  
Testament  
Commentaries**

EDUCATION

**Training  
the Next  
Generation  
of Librarians**

PROMOTION

**Coin Collecting  
Reading Club**

PROMOTION

**6 New Poster  
and Bulletin  
Board Ideas**

**ResourceMATE**  
Your Library Automation Solution

essential

works with  
your  
equipment  
fast

simple  
document  
in minutes  
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

## BULLETIN BOARD

*Celebrate the Miracle of Christmas*

THE CASE FOR CHRISTMAS  
LINGS for the holidays  
The Shepherd's Christmas Story  
The Christmas Story

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

# CONTENTS

## Church Libraries

Volume 41, Number 2

Winter 2012-13

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; 630-375-7865; 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.

© 2012 by  
Evangelical Church Library Association



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



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

## DEPARTMENTS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| News & Notes .....   | 3 |
| Book Updates .....   | 3 |
| Library Profiles   |   |
| A Church With Two Libraries <i>by Gloria Doty</i> .....                          | 5 |
| No Room for the Books <i>by Gloria Doty</i> .....                                | 6 |
| Education  |   |
| Training the Next Generation of Librarians <i>by Jeanetta Chrystie</i> .....     | 7 |
| Book Roundup   |   |
| Update Your Old Testament Commentaries <i>by Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock</i> ..... | 8 |

## PROMOTION

|  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| Bulletin Board <i>by Beth Smith</i> .....                      | inside front cover |
| Promotional Hooks .....  | 3                  |
| Bulletin Board <i>by Phyllis Jones</i> .....                   | 4                  |
| Coin Collecting Reading Club <i>by Jeanetta Chrystie</i> ..... | 13                 |
| Poster/Bulletin Boards <i>by Arlene Walker</i> .....           | 36                 |
| Bulletin Board <i>by Phyllis Jones</i> .....                   | inside back cover  |

## REVIEWS

|                           |    |
|---------------------------|----|
| Books .....               | 15 |
| Bible & Theology .....    | 15 |
| Biography & Memoir .....  | 17 |
| Children .....            | 18 |
| Christian Education ..... | 20 |
| Christian Living .....    | 21 |
| Church & Ministry .....   | 24 |
| Evangelism .....          | 25 |
| Family .....              | 25 |
| Fiction .....             | 27 |
| Finances .....            | 31 |
| Science .....             | 31 |
| Teens .....               | 31 |
| Women .....               | 32 |
| Reviewers .....           | 33 |
| DVDs .....                | 34 |
| Biography .....           | 34 |
| Children .....            | 34 |
| Documentary .....         | 34 |
| Narrative .....           | 35 |
| Music .....               | 35 |
| Contemporary .....        | 35 |

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

**Cover photo:** A church member enjoys a reading break in the library at Emmanuel Community Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

## 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

Crossway Books  
Judson Press  
Lamplighter Publishing  
Moody Publishers  
Tyndale House Publishers

#### Suppliers

Jaywil Software, Inc.

### Advisory Board

V. Gilbert Beers  
Author and former president, Scripture Press Ministries  
Larry Fullerton  
Pastor, Black Rock Congregational Church, Trumbull, Conn.  
Doug Ross  
President emeritus, Evangelical Christian Publishers Association  
Paul Snezek  
Retired director of learning resources, Buswell Library, Wheaton College  
Mark Taylor  
President, Tyndale House Publishers  
Ferne Weimer  
Library consultant, Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc.

## Are You Moving? Have You Changed Your E-mail Address?

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

## Book Updates

### Repackaged

*The Berenstain Bears' Good Deed Scouts to the Rescue* by Jan & Mike Berenstain (Zonderkidz, combination of *The Berenstain Bears' Kitten Rescue*, *The Berenstain Bears' Neighbor in Need*, and *The Berenstain Bears and The Little Lost Cub*)

*The Berenstain Bears Treat Others Kindly* by Jan & Mike Berenstain (Zonderkidz, combination of *The Berenstain Bears Show Some Respect*, *The Berenstain Bears Forgiving Tree*, and *The Berenstain Bears Gossip Gang*)

*Christmas in Apple Ridge* by Cindy Woodsmall (WaterBrook, combination of *The Sound of Sleigh Bells*, *The Christmas Singing*, and *The Dawn of Christmas* [new])

*Princesses, Pirates, and Cowboys* by Karen Poth (Zonderkidz, combination of *Princess Petunia's Sweet Apple Pie*, *Who Wants to Be a Pirate?* and *The Fairest Town in the West*)

*The Sweetest Story Bible* by Diane Stortz (Zonderkidz, with audio CD read by Roma Downey)

### Reprinted

*Exploring the Evidence for Creation* by Henry Morris III (Harvest House, originally Institute for Creation Research)

### Retitled

*How to Talk So Your Husband Will Listen and Listen So Your Husband Will Talk* by Rick Johnson (Revell, originally *The Man Whisperer*)

*The Judge* by Randy Singer (Tyndale, originally *The Cross Examination of Oliver Finney*, WaterBrook)

*Perfectly Unique: Praising God from Head to Foot* by Annie F. Downs (Zondervan, originally *From Head to Foot: All of You Living for All of Him*)

*Your Life with Cancer* by Kay Marshall Strom (Beacon Hill, originally *The Cancer Survival Guide*)

### Revised

*8 Important Money Decisions for Every Couple* by Russ Crosson (Harvest House)

*The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Numbers-Ruth* edited by Temper Longman III & David E. Garland (Zondervan)

*From God to Us: How We Got Our Bible* by Norman L. Geisler & William E. Nix (Moody)

*The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here for?* by Rick Warren (Zondervan)

## Promotional Hooks

### JANUARY

National Book Month  
National Mentoring Month  
National Hobby Month  
Business & Reference Books Month  
2: National Science Fiction Day

### FEBRUARY

Library Lovers Month  
Creative Romance Month  
African-American History Month  
3-9: Children's Authors & Illustrators Week  
14: Read to Your Child Day  
22: World Thinking Day  
25—March 1: Read Me Week  
(www.bookem-kids.org)

### MARCH

Read a New Book Month  
National Craft Month  
2: Read Across America  
3-9: Return Borrowed Books Week  
7: 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 2012-13. Used with permission.

# NovelCrossing.com Launches As First One-Stop Site for Christian Fiction Fans

Christian fiction readers now have the first all-in-one site to discover the latest information about Christian fiction, including updates, recommendations, new releases, commentary, and exclusive articles from their favorite writers. Novel Crossing.com: The Intersection of Faith and Fiction is a website aimed at building a community of Christian fiction readers by being the most inclusive site on the subject of inspirational novels.

Developed by WaterBrook Multnomah Publishing Group, Novel Crossing.com features content from all publishers of Christian fiction, allowing readers to discover new titles from across the publishing universe. Currently the site provides data on 10,000 titles from 50 different publishing houses.

“While there are a number of informative sites featuring Christian fiction book reviews and interviews, no one

site combines a searchable database of books and authors, across all publishers in this category, with reviews, interviews, features, and a community component,” said Shannon Marchese, WaterBrook Multnomah senior fiction editor.

“We built Novel Crossing to fill that gap. We wanted fans of Christian fiction to have a ‘one-stop’ destination for finding authors and new reads, for leaving comments and making friends who love the books they love.”

NovelCrossing.com is a rich resource with such features as:

- An expansive Christian fiction catalog representing titles from a wide variety of publishers, along with tools for giving readers recommendations on new authors and books.
- An assortment of original content, including polls, lists, contests, and videos—updated daily by authors, bloggers, professional reviewers,

industry editors, and Novel Crossing staff.

- One-sentence reviews where readers fill out tweetable-length reviews and post them at NovelCrossing.com or share them on any social media site.

- Full-length reviews from Novel Crossing.com members and reviews integrated from other reviewer programs, such as Blogging for Books.

- Custom content where Novel Crossing members can customize their experiences on their home pages, based on their own areas of interest. Members receive e-newsletters tailored to their tastes.

- Social-media tools, including discussion boards, personal bookshelves, and easy-share buttons.

Membership to NovelCrossing.com is free. In addition to the content and resources, readers can purchase books through the “buy buttons” from their favorite retailers or local bookstores.

## BULLETIN BOARD

After you are done sledding in the snow, rest and read a book with hot cocoa!

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



# A Church With Two Libraries

by Gloria Doty

Unlike most churches with libraries, Emmanuel Community Church in Fort Wayne, Ind., has two. But Kathy Bruce, a self-described bookworm who is in charge of both, doesn't mind the split focus—and is glad she doesn't have to work alone. A volunteer librarian for 10 years, she has several other volunteers who assist her.

Although the building is large, both libraries are easy to find, due to signs in the hallways. Weekly promotion notices in the bulletin keep the 2,000 members aware of their existence and offerings.

### Introducing the Libraries

One of the two libraries is for children. Decorated in a kid-friendly nautical theme, it invites children in with bright colors and simple furniture. The theme is complete with a huge fish tank built into one wall.

This library is home to hundreds of books for children from preschoolers through preteens. Different colored stickers on the book spines designate various age-appropriate levels. DVDs and CDs are also available for check-out.

The overflowing return basket attests to the library's use.

The adult library is also situated in an inviting room. This one has floor to ceiling bookshelves and comfortable furniture. (The only thing missing is a

fireplace and a dog lying at your feet.) The books are arranged by categories, authors, and series. In addition to books, audiobooks, movies, and CDs are available. There is also a section of resource books for parents of special-needs children.

Although Kathy had shelved 50 returned books one week, she thought that was a small number for the size of her congregation.

However, this library is more than a place to check out materials. When people have to wait for others who are busy in the building, they go to the library to read, rather than waiting in their cars. On Sunday mornings, men and women grab cups of coffee and use the room to visit or read while they wait for a family member. The church is a busy place, and the library is open at all times.



*The aquarium in the children's library provides additional enjoyment for kids.*

## Stocking the Libraries

Both libraries receive books and other media through various sources. Kathy buys some materials with reward points accumulated when members shop at a local Christian bookstore and designate their points to go to Emmanuel Community.

Although money is allotted in the church budget, most books are donated. Kathy screens these to make certain they are appropriate before adding them to the shelves.

## Running the Libraries

Although Kathy has a list of materials on her computer, she doesn't use a formal cataloging system.

Lending is strictly on the honor system. Each library has a large binder for entering checkout information: borrower's name, title of the item, and date. Although she encourages patrons to return items within four weeks, there is no penalty or phone call if they do not.

"In the beginning, I wanted to make sure items were returned," Kathy said, "but I changed my thinking on that. If someone is reading the book and enjoying it or perhaps has loaned it to a friend to encourage him or her, that is all that matters."

---

*Gloria Doty is a freelance writer in Fort Wayne, Ind.*

**So please, oh PLEASE, we beg, we pray,**

**Go throw your TV set away,  
And in its place you can install,  
A lovely bookshelf on the wall.**

— Roald Dahl,  
*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*

# No Room for the Books

by Gloria Doty

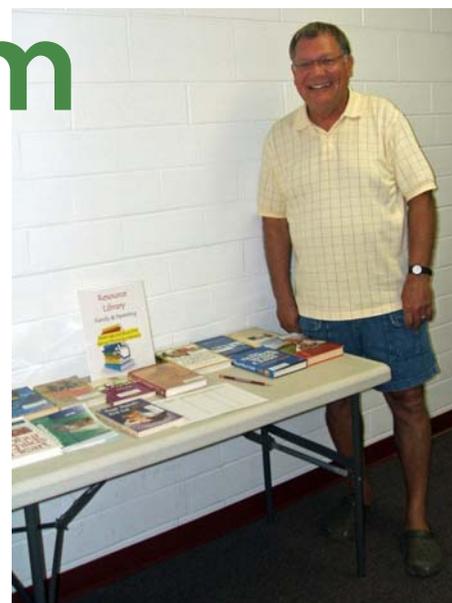
Since Southwest Lutheran Church, a congregation of approximately 200 members in Fort Wayne, Ind., doesn't have a library room, it operates from a library table. Located prominently in the hallway everyone who enters the building uses, it has high visibility. Dave Waldrop is the unofficial, volunteer librarian in charge of this relatively new endeavor.

## Operating Without a Room

Although the church has more than 500 books—most of them donated—the lending program has been in existence for less than a year. Due to the limited space, only one category of books (e.g., marriage and relationships) is displayed on the table and is changed each month. Plus Dave promotes the availability of books in the weekly bulletin.

Even though only a limited number of books are on display, signs make people aware of many other books stored in a room if they choose to browse them.

While the lack of room availability prohibits the display of more than a table full of books at one time, Dave's future goal is to have the books that aren't on display be grouped by subject matter. Doing so will keep the



*Librarian Dave Waldrop oversees the library table display.*

search for a specific title from being a daunting task.

The church also has a collection of books for children and teens. Instead of being on a table in the hallway, these are handled separately by the children's ministry leader and youth leader, respectively.

Anyone can check out books or resource materials. All lending is on the honor system. Borrowers write their name, book title, and checkout date in a notebook. Dave is not overly concerned with books being returned in a timely manner—or ever—if someone is using them to grow in God's Word and be encouraged.

## Building Lives

Dave realizes that people can use the public library for general-market books. His desire is to provide Christian resources that will enlighten, entertain, and encourage people in their faith walks.

And he doesn't need a library room to do that.

---

*Gloria Doty is a freelance writer who attends Southwest Lutheran Church.*

# Training the Next Generation of Librarians

by Jeanetta Chrystie

Recently, a teenage girl in my church expressed an interest in joining the library staff. We librarians are excited that she chose the library as her introduction into the “working world,” even though this is volunteer work.

She changed her style of dress to more “grown-up” clothing choices. She is eager to learn what we do in the library and to be seen by children and adults as moving into the adult world. Her presence adds to our ability to handle the after-worship-service rush of children checking out books.

It is interesting and heartwarming to watch as children accept her as an authority figure when she is in the library. Naturally shy around many adults, her confidence is growing. Frequently, when older adults comment with surprise at seeing her working behind the library counter, she smiles and offers to check out their books.

You, too, can help young people in your church blossom as you train the next generation of librarians.

## Training by Coaching

An effective way to train someone in a new skill is through coaching techniques. Our library staff consists of several volunteers who work on Sundays before Sunday school or after the worship service and others who work on Wednesday nights. Some librarians focus on helping people find a book to

read, checking materials in and out, and replacing books and CDs on the shelves. Others primarily catalog and prepare materials for circulation, handle donations and requests, and dress our display window.

Our new worker wanted to work on Sundays after worship services. So the library director started by training her to check out materials. She learned where the library cards are in various types of books and where cards are stored for CDs, DVDs, and board books without pockets. Additional on-the-job training opportunities arose naturally, and soon she learned how to update the record book of checkout counts by category for the day.

Next, she took over filing the check-out cards. She also learned where we keep the key to open and empty the book return bin in the hallway.

As a result of her service, I found myself with additional free time while working. This situation became a bonus as I began “reading” the shelves and rearranging any books that had been incorrectly replaced on a shelf.

## Training by Example

During a particularly slow morning due to poor weather, I offered to show our new trainee how to reshelv various materials. As we worked, we chatted about several of our patrons’ favorite types of books and ways the library acquires materials to stretch our funds as much as possible.

When a trainer shows enthusiasm for a task, it increases morale in accomplishing it. Training new volunteers with an enthusiastic smile and positive demeanor helps everyone enjoy the process. And showing interest in becoming better acquainted with a new worker helps that person feel valued and affirmed.

Use the addition of a new staff member as an opportunity to remind existing volunteers of preferred processes. Offer to cross-train existing volunteers in other tasks while you are training the new person.

Help new volunteers feel part of the staff quickly by having a welcome party after they have been on staff for a few months. This can be as simple as giving a small gift to everyone, eating

*continued on page 33*

*In both training and supervising new volunteers, the five most important words are: “You did a good job.”*

# Update Your Old Testament Commentaries

by Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock

*Editor's note: Dr. Keylock wrote a roundup of Bible commentaries that appeared in the Summer 2003 issue. "Complete Your Commentary Section" is posted (password-free) on our website at [eclibraries.org/churchlibrariesonline.html](http://eclibraries.org/churchlibrariesonline.html). The companion article, "Update Your New Testament Commentaries" was in the Fall 2012 issue.*

If you're a typical church librarian, you get a lot of questions about what books you can recommend on the Old Testament that answer such questions as:

"Can you recommend a commentary on Genesis?"

"What book can you recommend on why God commands the death of women and children in the Old Testament?"

"Can you recommend a commentary that will help me with the interpretation of this verse or passage in the Old Testament?"

Questions like these are why you need an up-to-date reference section with Old Testament commentaries.

To help you choose the best ones, I reviewed most of the Old Testament commentaries published in the last decade from 11 evangelical publishers:

B&H, Baker, David C. Cook, Eerdmans, InterVarsity, Moody, Thomas Nelson, Kregel, P&R, Smyth & Helwys, and Tyndale. (Some of these publishers also publish books that would not be considered evangelical.)

Since church library budgets vary, I recommend the best one or two commentaries in paperback and hardcover, although I advise hardcovers for these reference books because, hopefully, they will get a lot more use in your library than paperbacks can stand.

---

*Old Testament commentaries tend to appear in series that are adapted to particular orientations and needs.*

---

Old Testament commentaries tend to appear in series that are adapted to particular orientations and needs, so I included a chart of these on page 12 to help you decide whether you want a series or a particular commentary in your library. For example, there are commentaries by well-known preachers that are basically expositional. Exegetical commentaries comment on every verse (or even word for the lengthier ones)—what it means and the background of the times in which it was written.

More recently, commentaries have appeared on what the church fathers or Reformation leaders said about particular books. And there are commentaries written for a specific group, such as African Americans or women, although none were in the Old Testament commentaries I received.

## **Pentateuch**

### *Genesis*

The publishers I mentioned have published no fewer than eight commentaries on Genesis alone. Two of them are by outstanding preachers: D. Stuart Briscoe's paperback (PC, Nelson) and the long (703 pages) hardcover by R. Kent Hughes (PW, Crossway).

# BOOK ROUNDUP

One commentary, by Joyce L. Gibson, is in The Smart Guide to the Bible series, patterned after the “dummies” series (SGBS, Nelson). It’s a good introduction for new believers and beginning Bible students.

Two are specialized commentaries on the whole book of Genesis, theological in nature or bridging the gap between exegesis and systematic theology: James McKeown (THOTC, Eerdmans) and R. R. Reno (BTCB, Baker).

Two are on only part of the book: John L. Thompson’s on Genesis 1–11 (RCS, InterVarsity) and Kenneth A. Mathews’s on Genesis 11:27–50:26 (NAC, B&H), which is 960 pages and half of a two-volume set, using the New International Version. I recommend the latter as the best commentary.

## **Exodus**

If you want contemporary applications and a paragraph-by-paragraph exposition of Exodus, you may want to add Maxie D. Dunnam’s (PC, Nelson) or J. A. Motyer’s (BST, InterVarsity) paperback. If you have scholars in your congregation who want to know the latest critical scholarship on Exodus, choose Thomas B. Dozeman’s commentary, also in paperback (ECC, Eerdmans).

But for most libraries, I recommend Douglas K. Stuart’s thorough hardcover commentary (NAC, B&H).

## **Leviticus**

Smyth & Helwys sent a CD of Lloyd R. Bailey’s hardcover commentary on Leviticus combined with Numbers (SHBC). Two paperback commentaries on Leviticus are by preachers: Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook) and Gary W. Demarest (PC, Nelson). My choice, however, is the hardcover by Nobuyoshi Kiuchi (AOTC, InterVarsity).

## **Numbers**

The only commentaries on Numbers from the past decade are both by

*Exegetical  
commentaries  
comment on every  
verse (or even word  
for the lengthier  
ones)—what it means  
and the background  
of the times in which  
it was written.*

preachers: Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook) and James Philip (PC, Nelson).

## **Deuteronomy**

Smyth & Helwys sent a CD of Mark E. Biddle’s hardcover commentary on Deuteronomy (SHBC). The other two are by preachers: Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook) and Ajith Fernando (PW, 765-page hardcover, Crossway). All three are good, but none stood out as outstanding.

## **Historical Books**

### **Joshua**

Commentaries on Joshua are often combined with those on Judges and Ruth, as they are in the books by Joseph Coleson, Lawson G. Stone and Jason Driesbach (CBC, Tyndale) and Rebecca Bertolini (SGBS). John A. Huffman, Jr., a pastor, wrote a commentary on Joshua (PC, Nelson). There is no recent hardcover on Joshua I recommend, but I can recommend the J. Gordon McConville and Stephen Williams’s paperback (THOTC, Eerdmans).

## **Judges**

The only volume on Judges I received and can recommend is the thin paperback by Old Testament professor George M. Schwab (GOT, P&R). Others are combined with Ruth and are by pastors: David Jackman (PC, Nelson) and W. Gary Phillips (HOTC, B&H). (See others under Joshua.)

## **Ruth**

Other than the books listed under Joshua and Judges, two paperback commentaries on Ruth are by pastors: Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook) and Dean R. Ulrich (GOT, P&R). The only hardcover I received on Ruth is combined with Esther by Iain M. Duguid (REC, P&R). I would recommend its addition to your library, but it has only about 60 pages of commentary on Ruth.

## **1 and 2 Samuel**

Commentators have served these books of the Bible well. Smyth & Helwys sent a CD of Tony W. Cartledge’s commentary (SHBC). Two paperbacks by preachers are from Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook, on 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles) and Kenneth L. Chafin (PC, Nelson).

There are four hardcover commentaries on these books. Pastor Richard D. Phillips’s is on only 1 Samuel (REC, P&R). One is by a Lutheran professor, is the second edition, and is also only on 1 Samuel: Ralph W. Klein’s (WBC, Nelson). One is by two professors of Old Testament, Stephen J. Andrews and Robert D. Bergen (HOTC, B&H).

But I recommend the most thorough commentary, the hardcover volume by David Toshio Tsumura (NICOT, Eerdmans).

## **1 and 2 Kings**

A huge commentary is a paperback by seminary president and former pastor Russell H. Dilday (PC, Nelson). Walter Brueggemann wrote a hardcover volume with CD (SHBC, Smyth & Hel-

# BOOK ROUNDUP

wys). Warren W. Wiersbe's combines 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles (Be Series, Cook).

A pastor who has a hardcover commentary on 1 and 2 Kings is Gary Inrig (HOTC, B&H). Another hardcover is by former pastor and college president Philip Graham Ryken (REC, P&R). And a Methodist retired professor, Simon J. DeVries, released a second edition of his commentary on 1 Kings (WBC, Nelson).

You will learn all kinds of things from these commentaries; but, in my opinion, none of them is just right for a church library.

## **1 and 2 Chronicles**

The only commentary I received on 1 and 2 Chronicles is by Leslie C. Allen, a professor of Old Testament (PC, Nelson). It is more exegetical than most in the series, so I recommend it for your library. (Also see other commentaries under 1 and 2 Samuel.)

## **Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther**

The two hardcovers I received comment on all three books: pastor Knute Larson and freelance writer Kathy Dahlen's (HOTC, B&H) and professor of Old Testament Gary V. Smith's (CBC, Tyndale). I recommend the latter. Warren W. Wiersbe wrote a paperback on Nehemiah (Be Series, Cook).

## **Poetic Books**

### **Job**

Many commentators have written about Job: scholar Samuel E. Balentine (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys, CD); pastor Warren W. Wiersbe (Be Series, Cook, paperback); David L. McKenna, head of a Christian school (PC, Nelson, paperback); and former pastor David R. Jackson (GOT, P&R, paperback).

Hardcovers include a variety of formats: one combines Job, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs by August H. Konkel and Tremper Longman III (CBC, Tyndale), one on Job 38—42 by David J. A. Clines (WBC, Nelson), and one on

only Job by pastor Steven J. Lawson (HOTC, B&H).

They are all good, but none of them fits perfectly into a church library, in my opinion.

### **Psalms**

Psalms is a favorite book of commentators. However, most do not cover all 150 psalms in one volume. For example, Warren W. Wiersbe does so in two paperback volumes (Be Series, Cook). Steven J. Lawson also covers all the psalms in two volumes (HOTC, B&H). Mark Futato's commentary on Psalms is combined with Proverbs (CBC, Tyndale). If your budget allows only paperbacks, I recommend you buy Geoffrey W. Grogan's exegetical and theological commentary (THOTC, Eerdmans).

The two recent hardcovers I recommend cover only part of Psalms. Peter C. Craigie revised Marvin E. Tate's commentary on Psalms 1-50 (WBC, Nelson; Tate also wrote the older volume covering Psalms 51-100); and Allen P. Ross recently wrote volume 1 of his commentary on Psalms, covering Psalms 1—41 (KEL, Kregel).

### **Proverbs**

Three of the commentaries on Proverbs published in the last decade are in a preaching series: the late seminary president David A. Hubbard's (PC, Nelson), pastor Raymond C. Ortlund, Jr.'s (PW, Crossway), and pastor Warren W. Wiersbe's (Be Series, Cook). The CD of the commentary by Milton P. Horne is combined with Ecclesiastes (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys). George M. Schwab covers Proverbs in the same volume as Psalms by Mark Futato.

But, undoubtedly, one of the greatest commentaries on Proverbs in the past decade is in hardcover by master scholar Bruce K. Waltke (2 vols., NICOT, Eerdmans). I highly recommend it for all church libraries; Waltke comments on every verse of Proverbs, often extensively.

### **Ecclesiastes**

As I wrote under Proverbs, the CD on Ecclesiastes by Milton P. Horne is combined with his commentary on the book of Proverbs (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys). The late David A. Hubbard commented on both Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon in one short volume (PC, Nelson), as do David George Moore and Daniel L. Akin (HOTC, B&H) and Daniel C. Fredericks and Daniel J. Estes (AOTC, InterVarsity). Two commentaries are on only Ecclesiastes: Peter Enns's (THOTC, Eerdmans) and Craig G. Bartholomew's (BCOTWP, Baker).

I recommend Peter Enns for a paperback and either Fredericks and Estes or Bartholomew in hardcover for your church library.

### **Song of Songs**

In addition to commentaries mentioned under Ecclesiastes, Paul J. Griffiths (BTCB, Baker) and Richard A. Norris, Jr. (CB, Eerdmans) wrote books on the Song of Songs. My recommendation, however, is the commentary combined with Lamentations by Duane Garrett and Paul R. House (WBC, Nelson).

## **Major Prophets**

### **Isaiah**

More has been written in the last decade on the book of Isaiah than any other book of the Old Testament. David L. McKenna, best known as a college and seminary president, wrote two volumes on Isaiah (PC, Nelson). Warren W. Wiersbe wrote one volume on Isaiah (Be Series, Cook). Although not strictly a commentary, Bryan E. Beyer wrote a historical and theological survey called *Encountering the Book of Isaiah* (EBS, Baker).

There is a Jewish commentary on Isaiah 40—66 by Shalom M. Paul (ECC, Eerdmans) and an early and medieval Christian commentary by Robert Louis Wilken (CB, Eerdmans) that looks like Eerdman's answer to Steven A. McKin-

# BOOK ROUNDUP

*More has been written in the last decade on the book of Isaiah than any other book of the Old Testament.*

ion's editing of comments on Isaiah 1—39 (ACCS, InterVarsity).

It is hard to choose between the best hardcover commentaries by Gary V. Smith (2 vols., NAC, B&H) and John D. W. Watts (2 vols., WBC, Nelson). Both are more than 1,000 pages long and by excellent scholars who enlighten users on every verse of Isaiah.

## **Jeremiah and Lamentations**

Jeremiah hasn't fared as well as Isaiah as far as commentaries go. The much-published Warren W. Wiersbe wrote a paperback on him (Be Series, Cook). And I've seen the CD of Terence E. Fretheim's commentary (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys).

If you are limited to paperbacks, I recommend Robin A. Parry's commentary on Lamentations (THOTC, Eerdmans). Jeremiah is combined with Lamentations in the volume edited by Dean O. Wenhe (ACCS, InterVarsity) and in that by the late pastor Fred M. Wood and former professor Ross McLaren (HOTC, B&H).

## **Ezekiel**

The Old Testament scholar and pastor Douglas Stuart wrote one of the most scholarly homiletic commentaries on Ezekiel (PC, Nelson). Margaret S. Odell (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys, CD), and the indefatigable Warren W. Wiersbe (Be

Series, Cook) wrote commentaries also.

If you want to know what Luther or Calvin or any of the other Protestant Reformers had to say about Ezekiel, consider the commentary edited by Carl L. Beckwith (RCS, InterVarsity).

If you want exegesis of the book, I recommend either Mark F. Rooker's (HOTC, B&H) or David L. Thompson's (CBC, Tyndale, combined with Daniel).

## **Daniel**

Sinclair B. Ferguson, professor of systematic theology, wrote *The Preacher's Commentary* volume on Daniel (PC, Nelson). You may want to consider Warren W. Wiersbe's *Be Resolute* (Be Series, Cook). If you want a Reformed view of Daniel, consider George M. Schwab's *Hope in the Midst of a Hostile World* (GOT, P&R). Or if you want Daniel to be made easy, add Daymond R. Duck's volume (SGBS, Nelson).

If you want a dispensational view of Daniel, consider John F. Walvoord's hardcover commentary revised by Philip E. Rawley and Charles H. Dyer (JWPC, Moody). Three other hardcovers on Daniel are by Eugene Carpenter (CBC, Tyndale, combined with Ezekiel), Iain M. Duguid (REC, P&R), and Sharon Pace (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys).

These are all good commentaries, but none are outstanding. So choose the one that best suits your congregation.

## **Shorter Prophets**

Commentaries on the 12 shorter prophets (erroneously called the minor prophets) come in all kinds of combinations, not many on only one book.

In the single-book category, Michael P. V. Barrett wrote *Love Divine and Unfailing* on Hosea (GOT, P&R, paperback), and J. Andrew Dearman wrote one in hardcover, *Salvation through Judgment and Mercy* (NICOT, Eerdmans). Bryan D. Estelle commented on Jonah (GOT, P&R), and Bruce K. Waltke wrote *A Commentary on Micah*

(no series, Eerdmans).

Surprisingly, Zechariah has three commentaries on it: Bryan R. Gregory's paperback, *Longing for God in an Age of Discouragement* (GOT, P&R), pastor Richard D. Phillips's hardcover (REC, P&R), and George L. Klein's hardcover (NAC, B&H).

Most of the commentaries on the shorter prophets are a combination of several prophetic books: James D. Nogalski on Hosea through Jonah and Micah through Malachi (SHBC, Smyth & Helwys), pastor Lloyd J. Ogilvie on Hosea through Jonah (PC, Nelson), Trent C. Butler on the same books as Ogilvie with Micah thrown in for good measure (HOTC, B&H).

Richard D. Patterson and Andrew E. Hill commented on all 12 of the shorter prophets (CBC, Tyndale). Retired seminary president Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. discussed seven of these prophets from Micah to Malachi (PC, Nelson). Stephen R. Miller commented on the same books except Micah (HOTC, B&H).

Pastor Richard D. Phillips wrote on Jonah and Micah (REC, P&R), Richard A. Taylor and E. Ray Clendenen on Haggai and Malachi (NAC, B&H), and Old Testament professor Andrew E. Hill on the same two prophets plus Zechariah (TOTC, InterVarsity).

I recommend Dearman on Hosea and Patterson and Hill on the 12 shorter prophets—and others if you have the money in your budget.

---

*Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock is the retired vice president for academic affairs and graduate professor of New Testament at Evangelical University and Seminary and former professor of Bible and theology at Moody Bible Institute.*

# BOOK ROUNDUP

## Commentary Series

| Abbreviation | Series Name   | Publisher      | Comments  |
|--------------|---|----------------|---|
| ACCS         | Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture               | InterVarsity   | Gives the early church fathers' comments on Scripture. Excellent but too specialized for most church libraries.           |
| AOTC         | Apollos Old Testament Commentary                        | InterVarsity   | Content looks good. Five volumes so far.  |
| BCOTWP       | Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms | Baker          | Limited series of commentaries intended for scholars, pastors, and Bible study leaders                                    |
| Be Series    | Be Series   | Cook           | Lay level by Warren W. Wiersbe  |
| BST          | The Bible Speaks Today                                  | InterVarsity   | Emphasizes the message of the books.  |
| BTCB         | Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible              | Baker          | Offers a theological, rather than an exegetical orientation, tends to cross "boundary lines" to mainline denominations.   |
| CB           | The Church's Bible                                      | Eerdmans       | Eerdmans' answer to ACCS, it has comments from the Middle Ages too.   |
| CBC          | Cornerstone Biblical Commentary                         | Tyndale        | A newer series based on New Living Translation.   |
| EBS          | Encountering Biblical Studies                           | Baker          | Academic-level series designed for Bible school and seminary students.  |
| ECC          | Eerdmans Critical Commentary                            | Eerdmans       | A newer series mostly by mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish scholars.  |
| GOT          | Gospel according to the Old Testament                   | P&R            | Paperback series by Reformed pastors.   |
| HOTC         | Holman Old Testament Commentary                         | B&H            | Some of these commentaries are by excellent scholars, but they are too thin to be exhaustive or thorough.                 |
| JWPC         | John Walvoord Prophetic Commentary                      | Moody          | Excellent in what it does by the major dispensationalist scholar of the last generation.                                  |
| KEL          | Kregel Exegetical Library                               | Kregel         | Kregel has made an auspicious start on its new series.  |
| NAC          | New American Commentary                                 | B&H            | Southern Baptist series, usually excellent and getting better.  |
| NICOT        | New International Commentary on the Old Testament       | Eerdmans       | Probably the best series, almost complete.  |
| PC           | Preacher's Commentary                                   | Nelson         | Some of the best preachers and scholars wrote this paperback series.  |
| PW           | Preaching the Word                                      | Crossway       | Equivalent to PC but in hardcover.  |
| RCS          | Reformation Commentary on Scripture                     | InterVarsity   | One of the newest series. Does for Luther, Calvin, and other Reformers what ACCS did for the earlier period.              |
| REC          | Reformed Expository Commentary                          | P&R            | Relatively new series with a Reformed emphasis.   |
| SGBS         | Smart Guide to the Bible Series                         | Nelson         | Imitation of the "dummies" series. As the covers say, "The Bible Made Easy."  |
| SHBC         | Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary                         | Smyth & Helwys | Includes a CD in the back inside cover of all commentaries.   |
| THOTC        | Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary                   | Eerdmans       | Includes theological interpretation of the text.  |
| TOTC         | Tyndale Old Testament Commentary                        | InterVarsity   | This has long been the best set for beginning students of Scripture, but its brevity doesn't allow for comprehensiveness. |
| WBC          | Word Biblical Commentary                                | Nelson         | The excellent set is nearing completion; somewhat mixed theologically in the Old Testament.                               |

—Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock

# Coin Collecting Reading Club

by Jeanetta Chrystie

Every coin tells a story. Some coins have pictures of presidents or famous buildings, while others show historical discoveries, animals, plants. And many include symbols of a country's values and national pride. Collecting coins can be a fun and educational hobby for all ages, plus a child can learn history, geography, and math.

A coin collecting reading club can help children improve their reading ability and comprehension, build their organizational skills, develop goals and priorities, feel proud of accomplishments, build healthy self-esteem, and become interested in history and other cultures.

Here's how to organize such a reading club.

## Decide on the Basics

Begin your reading-club plans by making a few decisions that serve as guidelines for preparing necessary materials. For planning ease, I've grouped these basic decisions under the journalistic 5 Ws and an H: who, what, where, when, why, and how.

### Who

Select the ages of eligible children. Will participants be divided into age groups? Will age groups have different reading goals?

### What

Determine whether certain types of

books will be required for defined age groups and the number of books children should read to reach the reading goal.

Will you allow older children to count reading a child's picture book, e.g., if the child is developmentally challenged?

Will you promote certain subject areas by requiring a book about missions, biography, science book, Christian growth book, or other topics?

### Where

Where will you display the progress chart? The place determines its design of the chart. It should be easy for both parents and children to view.

Where will you store any enrollment and activity sheets for easy access?

Will only books from the church library count toward the reading club? Will you count books read to younger siblings for both the younger and older sibling?

### When

Choose the beginning and ending dates, including the last date for submitting book reports or however you plan to track children's reading activities.

Will you wait to begin the reading club until the school year is completed? May a book that was checked out before the official starting date be counted by turning in a book report

on it during the club dates?

### Why

When we identify our reason for doing something, it provides energy and motivation. Do you want to increase circulation? Do you want to remind church members of the library's helpful books and materials? Do you hope to increase participation in reading among children and in their families?

Do you hope to gain new library volunteers? Do you seek additional library funding or gifts of books as a result of the reading club?

---

*A coin collecting reading club can help children improve their reading ability and comprehension . . . and become interested in history and other cultures.*

---

# PROMOTION

## **How**

Decide how you will track the books read. This decision also affects the progress chart's design.

Will you place stickers on individual markers? Alternatively, will you write all the children's names on a chart and stamp a design next to the names for each book read? Will the children read books to "fill" an imaginary bank on the tracking poster?

How will you credit children for having read a book? Will they fill out a form? Write a review? Record the title and author on a bookmark?

Once these rules are determined, print them for distribution to the children who join the club and their parents. Post a simple set of rules near the circulation desk and by the display where children keep track of their reading progress. These little reminders can help avoid misunderstandings.

## **Create Club Materials**

Before your reading club begins, you'll need to prepare some items. Theme-specific planning is more fun and helps build anticipation for the upcoming club. Items to create include enrollment sheets, progress chart, report bookmarks, completion certificates, and any prizes you will award.

### **Enrollment Sheets**

Include places for each child's full name, address, and phone number. Ask for parent or guardian names, so you can call to retrieve any overdue books. Include a place for an alternate address and phone number, such as an additional parent or guardian. You might want to add pictures of coins to the enrollment sheets with a craft stamp, stickers, or photocopier.

### **Progress Chart**

The progress chart can be a poster on which you will list the names of the children who enroll in the club. It should be large enough to allow room

for each child's name and to track the number of books read to date, while still fitting into the chosen display area. Decorate it to fit the coin theme.

### **Book-report Sheets**

A book report can be as simple as a bookmark-sized piece of paper on which children write their name and the title and author of the book. When a child checks out a book, insert a report form to return with the book for reading-club credit.

### **Completion Certificates**

Colorful certificates are for children who read a specified number of books during the club period, some of which may be from preselected categories.

### **Prizes**

If you plan to award additional prizes, then also select or begin making them. Inexpensive bags of assorted coins from many countries are available from Amazon.com. Little net bags of chocolate "coins" are also a popular prize. (Be sure the child is not diabetic or allergic.)

In deciding whether to make or purchase awards, consider both your available budget and the number of awards you are likely to need. Are funds budgeted for the reading club?

Or do you prefer to ask for donations of materials or volunteers to craft some awards? Can you place a see-through coin bank, made from a plastic container, in your library or building foyer and ask church members to donate interesting coins as prizes?

### **Advertise the Club**

One way to generate interest in an upcoming reading club is to advertise it by sharing interesting facts. You can create an eye-catching and informative window display. Perhaps some church members enjoy collecting coins and will loan a few items for display in a secure area.

Another creative advertising idea is

---

*When we identify our reason for doing something, it provides energy and motivation.*

---

to make a miniature Mount Rushmore by pressing a quarter, nickel, dime, and penny into modeling clay to show the former President's heads. Let the clay dry, and display it at the checkout area. Let the children tell you the name of each President and something special about him to win a small prize, such as a chocolate coin.

If you want to create activity sheets to distribute, you can find child-friendly information about coin collecting from two reliable websites: [www.busybeekidscrafts.com](http://www.busybeekidscrafts.com) and [www.coin-collecting-guide-for-beginners.com](http://www.coin-collecting-guide-for-beginners.com). Also check your public library for children's books on coin collecting.

### **Plan Your Review**

Each reading club needs regular feedback about its effective areas and any areas that need improvement. Encourage all volunteers to share stories during and after the club period. What changes might improve the next one?

Thank everyone who helped make the club a success, and give one another well-deserved pats on the back. Some children may have rediscovered the library, the excitement of a new hobby, and the feeling of success.

---

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

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Bible & Theology

### 77 FAQs ABOUT GOD AND THE BIBLE: Your Toughest Questions Answered

by Josh McDowell & Sean McDowell  
Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4924-8, PB, 227 pages, \$12.99

Most of us have questions about the Bible, but it's sometimes hard to express them or know who to ask. The McDowells, who have spoken a combined 15,000 times to youth and adult audiences, identified the top 77 most frequently asked questions about God and the Bible. They cover everything from "Where did evil come from?" to "What is the real purpose of the Bible?" They quote often from Scripture but don't use it exclusively to answer each question. They also include points from history, science, and psychology; stories from their personal experiences; and basic points of logic.

Josh, a well-known apologist, and his son, an educator, answer these questions directly, concisely, and in a manner anyone can understand. This is a great book for believers and unbelievers alike as it both helps strengthen faith and answer your most pressing questions about Christianity. WGF

### AFTER YOU DIE: Unveiling the Mysteries of Heaven and the Afterlife by Frank Santora

Howard, 978-1-4165-9731-5, PB, 257 pages, \$14.99

What happens after you die? Is there a God? Heaven? Hell? How should death affect the way you live? Pastor Santora provides straightforward, biblical answers for our confused culture. He presents broad theological concepts in ways non-Christians can understand. Every statement is backed by Scripture and thorough research.

This book is easy to read. The writing style is upbeat and full of hope, with short chapters to keep readers plowing ahead. Relatable illustrations from the author's life make the book enjoyable. Add it to your library since it will impact both Christians and non-Christians who are searching for plain answers to the important questions in life. BF

### THE BIBLE STUDY HANDBOOK by Lindsay Olesberg

InterVarsity, 978-0-8309-1049, PB, 240 pages, \$18

How does one study the Bible effectively? Longtime student of Scripture and Bible-study leader Olesberg says the solution is inductive Bible study in which one allows the text to explain itself via observation, interpretation, and application. The three sections of her book present a practical process. The first two sections, "Foundations" and "Building Blocks," establish the basis for biblical study and this method. The third, "Tool Box," is a potpourri of tips and exercises about everything from textual analysis to group study. It is followed by a number of appendices.

Olesberg's anecdotes and writing

style make this a readable book. Like a real tool box, the "Tool Box" section is jumbled but still useful. Though the method is not new, it is comprehensive. And her tips for adapting the method to a group setting are invaluable. It's worth the money. HW

### THE CHURCH: The Gospel Made Visible

by Mark Dever

B&H, 978-1-4336-7776-2, PB, 177 pages, \$12.99

Many of today's churchgoers are woefully ignorant of the biblical doctrine of the church. Pastor Dever seeks to remedy this situation. The three parts of this book consist of the doctrine of the church biblically, historically, and systematically and practically. Part 1 focuses on the nature of the church, attributes, marks, membership, polity, discipline, purpose, and hope. Part 2 contains the history of the idea of the church, its ordinances, and organization. Part 3 considers a Protestant, gathered, congregational, and Baptist church. The book concludes by asking, "What Does This Matter?"

This book is intended primarily for Baptists, but also for all those who hold Scripture to be the authority for all

## SERIES UPDATES

### Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament

Zondervan

#### 1 & 2 Thessalonians

by Gary S. Shogren

978-0-310-24396-0, \$32.99

#### Acts

by Eckhard J. Schnabel

978-0-310-24367-0, \$59.99

#### Colossians & Philemon

by David W. Pao

978-0-310-24395-3, \$36.99

### The New International Commentary on the Old Testament

Eerdmans, 978-0-8028-2628-2, \$50

#### The Book of Judges

by Barry G. Webb

### The NIV Application Commentary

Zondervan

#### Deuteronomy

by Daniel I. Block

978-0-310-21048-1, \$39.99

#### Job

by John H. Walton

978-0-310-21442-7, \$29.99

# BOOK REVIEWS

matters of doctrine and life of the local church. Dever understands Revelation 3:22 to apply the message of chapters 4 to 22 to local churches. He wrote with a somewhat pedestrian style, but the subject is an important one. It would have been a better book, I suggest, with multiple authors but still worthy of a place in your library. LRK

**A COMMENTARY ON THE PSALMS: Volume 1 (1-41)**  
**Kregel Exegetical Library**  
**by Allen P. Ross**  
**Kregel, 978-0-8254-2562-2, HB, 887 pages, \$44.99**

If this first volume is representative, Ross has written the most thorough commentary on the book of Psalms in the past decade, at least. Before he discusses the first 41 psalms, he devotes introductory chapters to the value, text and ancient versions, titles and headings, interpretation history, poetry, literary forms and functions, place in worship, theology, and exposition of Psalms. He freely admits many difficulties in the Hebrew text remain unsolved in spite of the fact that a host of commentaries have been written on it.

The book was written primarily for busy pastors, but also for teachers and serious Bible students. So it moves from exegesis to exposition, giving both exegetical and homiletical outlines. An Old Testament professor, Ross is a careful scholar, so you can safely add this volume to your reference section. LRK

**THE END: A Complete Overview of Bible Prophecy and the End of Days**  
**by Mark Hitchcock**  
**Tyndale, 978-1-4143-5373-9, HB, 503 pages, \$22.99**

This classic dispensational (premillennial, pretribulational) interpretation of Bible prophecy carries endorsements from Charles Ryrie, Dwight Pentecost, and Tim LaHaye. LaHaye even says it is “a must-read for anyone who wants to know what’s going on in this

world today!” In fact, the author, a former attorney and pastor, admits this volume is an update and representation of Dwight Pentecost’s *Things to Come*.

The book is divided into 14 parts that cover the five main views of the Rapture; Judgment Seat of Christ; marriage of the Lamb; seven-year Tribulation (divided, as expected, into two three-and-a-half-year periods), Anti-christ; Christ’s second coming; Millennium; second coming of Satan; Great White Throne; and new heaven, earth, and Jerusalem.

This book is easy reading, and I recommend it for all dispensational churches. LRK

**THE EXPLICIT GOSPEL**  
**by Matt Chandler with Jared Wilson**  
**Crossway, 978-1-4335-3003-6, HB, 208 pages, \$17.99**

Many people attend church their whole lives without hearing the complete gospel. Some churches rightfully stress personal salvation in Christ but fail to look beyond to a world in need, whereas others passionately serve the poor but get carried away and emphasize good works over God’s grace. Chandler explains the need to reconcile the gospel “on the ground,” which zooms in on the relationship between an individual Christian and God, putting the gospel into action while defining each Christian’s place in the entire scope of creation.

Pastor Chandler expertly weaves humorous anecdotes with profound truths to illustrate the importance of living out the full gospel. Highly recommended for all Christians, Chandler’s message addresses a real challenge the church faces today. NVH

**GOD AS HE WANTS YOU TO KNOW HIM**  
**by Bill Thrasher**  
**Moody, 978-0-8024-0422-0, PB, 271 pages, \$13.99**

In order to experience God fully, one

must know God. Dr. Thrasher draws readers into a deeper communion with God through the study of His divine attributes.

Thrasher, a professor at Moody Bible Institute, aims to reach mainstream Christians with this easy-to-read, devotional-style, theological guide. His blend of personal stories and Scripture is both enlightening and entertaining. He leads readers to a greater understanding of God’s character by making biblical examples easier to relate to and less theologically profound. Nevertheless, teachers and researchers may find the sidebars and charts useful in interpreting theological concepts, particularly controversial matters such as predestination. Missing at times, however, are comparisons of Thrasher’s and opposing theologies. Overall, persons seeking a relatable companionship with God will find this book of value. MK

**THE GOD WHO MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN: The Missionary Heart of the Book of Exodus**  
**New Studies in Biblical Theology**  
**by W. Ross Blackburn**  
**InterVarsity, 978-0-7397-2629-2, PB, 238 pages, \$24**

The goal of the whole book of Exodus, Blackburn argues, is missionary. He addresses an issue in biblical theology, the exposition of missions in Exodus, and the delineation of missions across part or all of Scripture. He approaches Exodus from a canonical perspective as a whole, as opposed to the fragmented approach of the form critics. Each of the eight chapters begins with a hermeneutical problem, points to the Lord as a missionary, then shows how that missionary understanding solves the problem.

Dr. Blackburn is an Anglican rector and Bible professor. Though the book is written from a confessional, evangelical perspective and is readable, it will be of interest primarily to well-educated Bible students. LRK

# BOOK REVIEWS

---

## **THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ISAIAH 53: Encountering the Suffering Servant in Jewish and Christian Theology**

edited by Darrell L. Bock & Mitch Glaser

Kregel, 978-0-8254-2593-6, PB, 334 pages, \$27

This in-depth exploration of an important Bible chapter was written by leading evangelicals, with an introduction by Glaser of Chosen People Ministries and a conclusion by editor Bock. Two sermons on Isaiah 53 serve as appendices. The book is divided into three parts: "Interpretations of Isaiah 53," "Isaiah 53 in Biblical Theology," and "Isaiah 53 in Practical Theology."

This book grew out of a conviction that Isaiah 53 is the best chapter in the Bible to use in sharing the gospel with Jewish people. If you have a lot of Jewish people in your community or patrons interested in Bible study, be sure to add this book to your collection. It could be used as a text for a Sunday-school class or small-group study. LRK

## **THE HENRY MORRIS STUDY BIBLE**

annotated by Henry M. Morris

Master Books, 978-0-89052-657-7, HB, 2204 pages, \$39.99

It's amazing that the late Henry Morris as a scientist with no theological training commented on every book of the Bible in the King James Version. No one else to my knowledge has done that. Evangelical Old Testament scholars who share his belief in the inerrancy of the Bible will be uncomfortable with his dogmatism on many points; but he thought it best to express his own convictions, even at the risk of losing some readers who hold different views.

As expected, this study Bible supports literal, biblical creationism and a literal approach to the whole Bible. It is Baptist in ecclesiology, premillennial in eschatology, noncharismatic in pneumatology, and moderately Calvinistic in soteriology. It has 22 appen-

dices on creationism and related matters, including "A Creationist's Defense of the King James Bible." Morris fans will want this book in the library. LRK

## **JESUS AND THE JEWISH FESTIVALS**

Ancient Context, Ancient Faith Series by Gary M. Burge

Zondervan, 978-1-310-28047-7, PB, 144 pages, \$14.99

Holidays and festivals are hallmarks of most religions, and Judaism is no exception. In an informative and colorful book, theologian Burge connects biblical accounts of Jesus and centuries-old Jewish festivals.

Color photos or drawings enhance nearly every page of well-documented historical information. Viewing familiar texts, such as the parables, through first-century Middle Eastern context enriches readers' understanding of Scripture. You should have this title in your reference section. JAW

## **THIRTY DAYS IN THE LAND WITH JESUS: A Holy Land Devotional**

by Charles H. Dyer

Moody, 978-0-8024-0284-4, PB, 247 pages, \$14.99

Having made more than 60 trips to Israel and other Middle East countries, Dyer has accumulated regional anecdotes, geography lessons, historical reference points, and theological perspectives on Scripture that most of us would never be privileged to.

For 10 years he served as Provost of Moody Bible Institute. Now he is the host of the popular radio program *The Land and the Book*, in which he teaches listeners about how the weather, terrain, culture, and government of Israel and its neighbors impacted biblical characters and events. This book version of the radio show adds a devotional element to those stories. Dyer challenges readers to see God's hand working in the locales and settings of

Bible stories and then apply similar blessings to their own circumstances. It's a book that entertains while teaching. DEH

## **UNDERSTANDING THE BIG PICTURE OF THE BIBLE: A Guide to Reading the Bible Well**

edited by Wayne Grudem, C. John Collins, & Thomas R. Schreiner

Crossway, 978-1-4335-3162-0, PB, 159 pages, \$14.99

Reading the Bible does not always mean you're really reading the Bible. This book helps readers look for underlying themes in the Old and New Testaments in order to get the big picture. Each section of the Bible, such as prophetic books, gospels, and epistles, are discussed in detail. This book also addresses such topics as Roman culture and Jewish religious groups during the transition period between the testaments.

The book is a sound compilation of essays written by some of today's top evangelical scholars. Each writer provides extensive biblical evidence for topics that range from the Pentateuch to Revelation. Timelines of the Old and New Testaments and intertestamental events are provided at the end. This book would benefit men and women desiring an analytical approach to the Scriptures. TG

## **Biography & Memoir**

---

**FINALLY FREE**

by Michael Vick with Brett Honeycutt & Stephen Copeland

Worthy, 978-1-617950-69-8, HB, 285, \$24.99

Despite Vick's shady reputation, his life story teaches an important lesson: God gives second chances. Vick guides readers along his faith journey from the

# BOOK REVIEWS

beginning of his childhood to his time before, during, and after his months in jail. He exposes his sins and mistakes, using them to teach God's grace, forgiveness, and salvation.

This book offers hope and inspiration. Anyone wrestling with sin or poor life decisions should dive into it. Vick's story is a starting point to bring strugglers back on track with their lives. It's a saga of personal repentance and biblical forgiveness that needs to be heard. NC

## **NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD**

by Rose Marie Miller

New Growth Press, 978-1-936768-68-4, PB, 251 pages, \$15.99

If you've ever wanted to hear the honest struggles and revelations of a missionary and Bible teacher, this book is for you. Miller shares the truths God taught her in this compilation of intimate reflections and biblical studies. The importance of prayer receives special emphasis, as does meditation, Scripture memorization, and witnessing.

Miller speaks from her experiences as a pastor's wife, mother of five children, and missionary in Ugandan villages and inner-city London. She uses personal stories to reveal biblical truths. At times the retelling of the same anecdotes becomes redundant, but the messages the stories deliver retain their power. The book lacks stylistic continuity among sections, although they are united by the common theme of God's omnipotence. General readers will find this book encouraging, but it will be especially interesting to pastor's wives, moms of large families, and missionaries. ES

## **UNSTOPPABLE: The Incredible Power of Faith in Action**

by Nick Vujicic

WaterBrook, 978-0-307-73088-6, PB, 256 pages, \$19.99

Despite being born without limbs,

Vujicic knows everything in life happens for a reason and God has a plan for everyone. He shows us how his faith in God became strong and why we should share that same faith.

*Unstoppable* is, at times, a truly touching book with many great messages told through the life experiences of a man who has overcome many adversities and learned to surf, write, deliver speeches, and teach. We can learn a lot from Vujicic's optimism, attitude, and lessons. However, the book stumbles in the delivery of those lessons. The writing is, while readable, dry and occasionally tedious and repetitive. It's a shame because some of the messages are well worth learning. MALT

## Children

### Early Readers

#### **ANIMAL STORIES FROM THE BIBLE**

by Lois Rock

Lion, 978-0-7459-6220-7, HB, 47 pages, \$14.99

We're familiar with Bible stories that feature animals, such as the serpent in the garden and the lions in Daniel's den. However, this little book tells those stories from the perspective of the animals themselves. In one tale, the raven relates how Noah used it to help determine if the flood waters had receded or not. In another story, the whale tells about God calling on it to swallow Jonah and keep him for three days. Even some imaginary animals are presented, such as telling the story of the lost sheep from the perspective of the wolf who didn't get a meal because the shepherd left the 90 and 9 to rescue the lost lamb.

Two pages at the end of the book offer summaries and references as to

where the biblical version of the story is located. There are fewer illustrations than usually found in a picture book and a lot of narrative. Plus puns and in-jokes make this fun reading for older children. For youngsters who may be tired of too many repetitions of standard Bible stories, this book offers variety and entertainment while still bringing home biblical messages. DEH

#### **FOOD FOR A FISH: The Whopping Story of Jonah and the Whale**

978-1-4347-0366-8

#### **GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY: The Amazing Story of Jesus' Birth**

978-0-7814-0622-2

#### **Magnificent Tales Series**

by Kelly Pulley

Cook, HB, 28 pages, \$7.99

Using exaggerated cartoon characters with bulging eyes and oversized fingers and toes, along with singsong rhyming verses, these books present well-known Bible stories in one- and two-syllable words. Each story ends with a strong moral lesson, such as, "It's never too clever to run from God's wish, / or you might just end up being food for a fish."

Sensitive matters, such as trying to explain how Mary could get pregnant without being married, are passed over with simple language like "Trust God and you'll see." Some liberties are taken, such as having the heavenly host of angels reflect both genders and a variety of human ethnicities. But the stories remain biblically accurate, even if greatly simplified. These books are entertaining while being foundationally loyal to Scripture. DEH

#### **JESUS FEEDS THE HUNGRY**

978-0-310-72519-0

#### **JESUS HEALS THE SICK**

978-0-310-72518-3

#### **The Beginner's Bible**

by Crystal Bowman

Zonderkidz, PB, 24 pages, \$3.99

These short books present a paragraph of information on left pages, us-

# BOOK REVIEWS

ing mostly words of one and two syllables for beginning readers, with a colorful illustration on the opposite pages. The episode of Jesus feeding the hungry explains how Christ sustained the 5,000 with only three fish and five loaves provided by a little boy, but the story concludes by emphasizing that what Jesus really fed everyone was a message of God's love, provision, and protection.

Likewise, the story of how Jesus healed numerous people shows instances of Christ giving blind back their sight; lame back their ability to walk; and lepers their ability to have clean, healthy skin again. However, the em-

phasis is on the fact that what Jesus truly came to do was to heal them from their sinful condition and instill faith in God in each of them. Only by doing this would they become whole and well.

The drawings are simplistic but colorful, featuring Jesus with children, animals, parents, soldiers, and the disciples. The stories are basic but biblically accurate, and they drive home a deeper message than the obvious miracles showcased. DEH

## MARY'S SONG

by Lee Bennett Hopkins

Eerdmans, 978-0-8028-5397-4, HB, 30 pages, \$17

In truth, it is the swirling, bright chalk and colored-pencil drawings that convey the power of this ancient story. Mary quickly summarizes the message of Gabriel, trip to Bethlehem, and Jesus' birth. These terse comments, however, are amplified with two-page spreads of drawings. Mary then tells of the noise in the manger caused by visiting shepherds and noisy barnyard animals. Again, two-word sentences ("Crickets chirped," "Sheep bleated") are illustrated with expansive drawings of animals, insects, and birds. Finally, everyone leaves; and Mary is left to cuddle and soothe her baby. A solo word "quiet" is given a two-page illustration of mother, baby, manger, stars, and a village.

Thus, for young children who are still more attracted to visual images, rather than words, this book will be appealing. DEH

## MY LOOK AND POINT BIBLE

by Christina Goodings

Lion, 978-0-7450-6206-1, HB, 224 pages, \$16.99

This book is designed for parental (or grandparental) interaction with young children. It presents Bible stories, such as Noah's flood, Jonah and the great fish, Jesus' birth, feeding of the 5,000, and Jesus' resurrection, by

separating key objects in those stories, labeling them, and then asking youngsters to identify them. The words are easy to repeat, so even a two-year-old can mimic what is shown and read. Soon, the child will be able to point to the object in the picture and voice its name. Eventually, the child will be able to tell the entire Bible story.

The drawings are rudimentary but obvious and colorful, giving them a cartoonish attraction to children. This book not only will help kids learn to pronounce words, it will also help them develop reading skills while instilling Bible knowledge in their young minds. When learning is also fun, retention is greater. DEH

## A TRIP THROUGH THE BIBLE

by Tracy Harrast

Kregel, 978-0-8254-5554-4, PB, 24 pages, \$9.99

Through condensed summaries and colorful supportive illustrations, this short book presents key stories and lessons from the Old and New Testaments, including creation, the great flood, the exodus, David's defeat of Goliath, Jonah in the big fish, Jesus' birth, parables, miracles, and Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. The pages also have little boxes of added information, such as "God created Eve from Adam's rib because he said it was not right for man to live alone." Added sidebars contain lists, such as the plagues of Egypt and Ten Commandments.

Most of the words have only one or two syllables for young readers, and the drawings are bright and alluring. The book concludes with a list of 96 questions with answers on separate pages. Some are simple, like "How many stones did David pick up?" and others require discussion with parents, such as "Why did Mary give birth in a stable?" Though not big, this book is content rich. DEH

## SERIES UPDATES

### I Can Read!

Zonderkidz, \$3.99

### The Berenstain Bears

by Stan & Jan Berenstain with Mike Berenstain

### Faith Gets Us Through

978-0-310-72501-5

### God Made the Seasons

978-0-310-72509-1

### Get Involved

978-0-310-72090-4

### VeggieTales

by Karen Poth

### Pirate in Training

978-0-310-73207-5

### Princess Petunia and the Good Night

978-0-310-73206-8

### The Imagination Station

Tyndale, \$4.99

### #8 Battle for Cannibal Island

by Marianne Hering & Wayne Thomas Batson

978-1-58997-674-0

### #9 Escape to the Hiding Place

by Marianne Hering & Marshal Younger

978-1-58997-693-1

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Juvenile

### THE BLUE DOOR

Threshold Series #1

by Christa Kinde

Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72419-3, HB, 256 pages, \$14.99

Everyone has a guardian angel, but few people get to meet theirs. Prissie Pomeroy is a 14-year-old girl with the ability to see into the supernatural world. The day she spots a strange boy perched in an apple tree, her life is changed. It soon becomes clear he is not the only angel in town. It isn't clear why Prissie has this ability, but the angels continue to assure her God knows what He is doing.

Although this book offers a fresh perspective on the reality of angels in our world, the story is less than thrilling. Kinde excels at description, but her novel lacks any real sense of plot. Elementary-school students may

enjoy this book for its easy dialogue and everyday characters, but the lack of action could bore and frustrate more advanced readers. MJ

### THE LION ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JESUS

by Lois Rock

Lion, 978-0-7459-6936-7, HB, 128 pages, \$19.95

Though written in easy-to-understand language and supplemented with bold, colorful artwork and photographs, this amazing handbook should not be limited in use to elementary-school children. It is jam-packed with historical data, Jewish and Christian dogma, geographical surveys, political and military references, Middle Eastern cultural studies, and cross-referencing sidebars with pertinent material from the Old Testament (e.g., explanations of the prophecies related to Christ).

This book is a gold mine for understanding Jesus' life and teachings, impact of His healings and sermons on those who followed Him, and how His message can be carried out today. The detailed index, plus well-organized lists and biblical locations of miracles, parables, and key events related to Jesus make this handbook a ready source of pertinent information for anyone teaching Sunday school, doing an independent Bible study, or trying to help young family members get a better grasp of Jesus' ministry. DEH

## Christian Education

### GOSPEL-CENTERED DISCIPLESHIP

by Jonathan K. Dodson

Crossway, 978-1-4335-3021-0, PB, 173 pages, \$12.99

Discipleship is a central tenement of

Christianity, yet even the most seasoned believers can struggle to initiate a plan of individual outreach. Some people describe discipleship as personal, spiritual growth in holy living. Others say it's a life dedicated to missions and service. Pastor Dodson defines discipleship as being grounded in the Great, or Gospel, Commission. A gospel-based disciple has a balance of what is "rational (learner), relational (family), and missional (missionary)."

This book addresses discipleship by defining it in the first two chapters, uncovering motives and catalysts for discipleship in the next three chapters, and then explaining how to apply discipleship to daily action in the last three chapters. A dedicated discipler for two decades, Dodson combines sound theology and action-evoking application with incredible smoothness of writing and power of message. WY

### MULTIPLY: Disciples Making Disciples

by Francis Chan & Mark Beuving

Cook, 978-0-7814-0823-3, HB, 320 pages, \$14.99

*Multiply* calls every Christian to follow the biblical command to disciple, and it provides practical steps by which to do so. The material is designed to be explored by a Christian mentor and pupil, thus making the book itself a practice in discipleship. Each chapter includes weekly study questions, and a corresponding video is available online for mentors.

The text contains five sections, the last two of which are primarily directed toward newer members of the church and include an overview of basic biblical history. The earlier sections examine the importance of Bible study and membership in the local and global church and are equally beneficial to both new and mature Christians. The authors use Scripture to illustrate and strengthen every argument as they engage in a convicting discussion of life as a disciplemaker. AS

### SERIES UPDATES

#### Swipe Series

by Evan Angler

Nelson, 978-1-1400-31842-1, \$9.99

#2 *Sneak*

#### Zonderkidz Biography Series

*The Admiral: The David Robinson Story*

by Gregg & Deborah Shaw Lewis

978-0-310-72520-6

*Reaching New Heights: The Kelly Clark Story*

by Natalie Davis Miller

978-0-310-72542-8

*Speed to Glory: The Cullen Jones Story*

by Natalie Davis Miller

978-0-310-72633-3

Zondervan, \$6.99

# BOOK REVIEWS

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CHANGES EVERYTHING

by **Henrietta C. Mears**

**Regal, 978-0-8307-6407-5, HB, 269 pages, \$17.99**

Sunday school can be relevant and life-changing today. Mears elaborates on five categories to a successful ministry: winning people to Jesus, the Bible, close personal relationships, a complete plan that ministers from birth to adult, and changing lives. Information on steps to building an effective Sunday school and teacher training are included. Chapters on age categories include insights on characteristics, teaching methods, activities, appropriate settings, learning styles, reaching out to families, and ministering to needs. More recommendations for building a Sunday school discuss organization, worship, curriculum, and long-range planning.

The original content has been updated to reflect changes in technology and current trends. Henrietta Mears is synonymous with Sunday school. Her God-given expertise on growth, curriculum, teaching, and students is profoundly demonstrated in this reference book. Every Sunday-school leader and church library should have a copy of this excellent resource. LGM

## Curriculum

### THE JOY OF SEEKING GOD FIRST with Anita Keagy

**Vision Video, 7-27985-01469-2, 2 DVDs, 240 minutes, \$29.99**

Too often we pursue other things and people before God. Keagy seeks to remedy this situation. She shares a short, dramatic account of her life and what Acts 17:22-28 spoke to her and says to us today: We need to read God's Word and receive the blessings of knowing Him. In sessions 2 and 3, she provides key principles of seeking God and how He provides spiritual nourishment through prayer, the Bible,

Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. She also discusses roadblocks to seeking God. The next three sessions focus on seven steps to setting your heart on seeking God, natural rewards of seeking Him, and a 21-day challenge of reading a chapter a day in the Gospel of John with specific steps for daily devotions.

Keagy speaks to a small audience in a homey, comfortable setting. She is an excellent speaker—captivating and articulate—and uses lots of personal illustrations. Each close-captioned session is 40 minutes long. Workbooks are available for small groups. Recommended for church libraries, Sunday schools and small groups. LGM

## Christian Living

### CHARACTER: The Pulse of a Disciple's Heart

by **Norman Blackaby & Gene Wilkes**  
**New Hope, 978-1-59669-347-0, PB, 237 pages, \$16.99**

Godly character doesn't develop overnight. Desiring to define such character and understand how it is formed, Blackaby and Wilkes delve directly into the Bible. With a focus on the stories of individuals, including Ruth, Paul, and Nicodemus, they explore how God works in believers, while continually encouraging believers to dig into Scripture for themselves.

Blackaby, a leadership and Old Testament professor, and pastor Wilkes approach this issue fairly, showing both good and bad in the lives of the individuals they cover. They're also careful to emphasize God's role in shaping believers. They provide thought-provoking ethical and moral challenges at the end of every chapter, as well as present additional Bible passages for study. Although occasionally the writing feels a bit repetitive, over-

all this book is thought provoking and worth the time. CAM

### COME, SIT, STAY: Finding Rest for Your Soul

by **Ellen Vaughn**

**Worthy, 978-1-936034-64-2, HB, 269 pages, \$19.99**

Vaughn employs well-known dog commands as an analogy for believers trying to live out Jesus' command to "Come to me" and find rest for their souls. The book's quick-to-read chapters blend personal storytelling, biblical content, and quotes from significant current and past Christian leaders.

A gifted writer whose past credits include collaborative books with Charles Colson and Steven Curtis Chapman's wife, Vaughn is a busy wife and mother of three teens. Witty and earthy at times (some slang may offend conservatives), her book has memorable images, like chiding those who want a designer "Salad Bar God." The recent spate of spiritual formation books by women give this title competition. But its verbal energy and "we're in it together" tone appeals to readers turned off by academic treatments. Recommended. JZ

### DISABILITY AND THE GOSPEL: How God Uses Our Brokenness to Display His Grace

by **Michael S. Beates**

**Crossway, 978-1-4335-3045-6, PB, 191 pages, \$15.99**

Citing statistics that one in six Americans have disabilities and more having invisible relational or emotional

### SEQUEL

to *A Grace Disguised*

by **Jerry Sittser**

**Zondervan, 978-0-310-24325-0, \$19.99**

*A Grace Revealed*

# BOOK REVIEWS

impairment, Beates says the church needs to be more proactive in enfold-ing these people in church life. He doesn't want them set apart in "spe-cial" ministries but within the worship-ing community. In this book, birthed in his D.Min. dissertation, and also as the father of a severely disabled young adult daughter, Beates examines what Scripture, early-church writers, and current secular and church leaders say about the church's role in serving the disabled.

This book carries a warm endorse-ment by Joni Eareckson Tada, in whose ministry Beates served. While present-ing the disabled as made in God's im-age and wrestling with why God per-mits disabilities, the book is thin on practical suggestions and examples. Probably better for a Bible school or seminary than a church library. JZ

## **FORGIVENESS IS NOT AN OP-TION: A Journey to Freedom and Healing**

by Anna McCarthy

**Ambassador International, 978-1-62020-015-5, PB, 192 pages, \$11.99**

We have difficulty forgiving little infractions, so how do we forgive someone who has hurt us traumati-cally? McCarthy presents a biblically based guide to help readers under-stand what it means to forgive and how to go about forgiving and being for-given. She uses examples from the lives of Job; David; Jonah; Peter; Thomas; and even modern day individuals, in-cluding herself and her quest to begin to forgive those who had wronged her.

The book is designed as a narrative for insightful personal development, but it can double as a small-group study text since each chapter ends with a study guide and discussion ques-tions. A key aspect of this book is that it demonstrates a lack of forgiveness displeases God and continues to weigh on the person carrying the grudge. Freedom from anger, bitterness, and hatred is possible; and McCarthy of-

fers methods by which to obtain this freedom. JB

## **GLORIOUS RUIN: How Suffering Sets You Free**

by Tullian Tchividjian

**Cook, 978-1-4347-0402-3, PB, 178 pages, \$17.99**

If you're human, you have suffered. But as Tchividjian explains, no amount of commonality makes suffering un-derstandable, minimal, or beneficial. How can anyone benefit from the death of a child, loss of a job, or termi-nal disease? *Glorious Ruin* ponders this and other troubling questions Chris-tians face when dealing with suffering. With anecdotes, his own story, and quotes from scholars, Tchividjian ex-plores the topic with an honest, fair approach.

He explains the thoughts behind un-healthy worldviews of suffering and gently reveals encouraging themes found in the Bible, especially God's profound truth in the book of Job. He does not minimize suffering but pro-poses that sometimes a painful ruin is a step in the process toward glorious freedom. This short, easily understood book provides a holistic perspective to suffering. Recommended for any Christian struggling with understand-ing the purpose of suffering. EBW

## **GOD TOLD ME: Who to Marry, Where to Work, Which Car to Buy ... and I'm Pretty Sure I'm Not Crazy**

by Jim Samra

**Baker, 978-0-801-01411-6, PB, 204 pages, \$13.99**

When somebody begins a sentence with "God told me ...," the instinctive response is skepticism. Samra tackles this difficult subject and writes about what it means to hear from God. The book thoroughly covers every aspect of God's leading, from how and why God communicates to how we can bet-ter discern His voice. Every point is accompanied with biblical and per-sonal examples, along with warnings

against abuse or misinterpretation.

Those who disagree with Samra's view that God communicates His will explicitly through promptings and callings can still learn important les-sons from this book. Discussion ques-tions at the end of each chapter make it an excellent resource for small groups. SER

## **HONEST TO GOD: Becoming Bru-tally Honest with a Gracious God**

by Josh Weidmann

**Moody, 978-0-8024-0359-4, PB, 164 pages, \$12.99**

Like the shame of Adam and Eve, we may carry burdens that can bar us from a close relationship with God. This book, written in plain terms and straight language, explains how we may be preventing ourselves from be-ing close to God. Barriers can only be removed through integrity and radical honesty.

Weidmann is good at coming up with multiple analogies to make his point. However, the book's power comes from testimonies shared by people who revealed all to God. His own testimony of how his changed life led him to become a pastor is a stirring story. This book would provide great discussion material for Bible-study groups. Its lessons on heartfelt prayer, confession, repentance, and grace can provide a way for achieving more inti-macy with the Lord. JH

## **IDOL LIES: Facing the Truth about Our Deepest Desires**

by Dee Brestin

**Worthy, 978-1-617950-72-8, HB, 252 pages, \$19.99**

What cancerous idol is metastasiz-ing in your life? *Idol Lies* teaches us how to search our hearts to find out. Brestin defines "heart idols" as the dominat-ing things in our lives that barricade us from true intimacy with God. She is transparent by revealing the idols that once controlled her life. She creates a comfortable atmosphere and encour-

# BOOK REVIEWS

ages readers to search for the things that control their lives (e.g., food, sex, money, prestige, drugs, alcohol) and demonstrates how to defeat them.

Brestin does a wonderful job relating to readers, especially women. She illustrates how to seek out one's idols and feel convicted but not judged. As a Bible teacher, speaker, and writer, she uses personal experiences and scriptural examples to aid the reader in better comprehending her points. I recommend this book for women who are searching for a fresh take on true intimacy and happiness. EE

## **A JIGSAW GUIDE TO MAKING SENSE OF THE WORLD**

**by Alex McLellan**

**InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-3781-6, PB, 180 pages, \$15**

The confusion known as life seems to be incidents and episodes thrown about, leaving people wondering which pieces fit and which scraps should be thrown away. McLellan explains how he would put the puzzle of the Christian worldview together and emphasizes how to seek truth while standing firm in belief.

Although some chapters are dry, McLellan provides valid ideas that accurately defend Christianity. His arguments are well written and make sense to the general public because he has experience teaching through a ministry called Reason Why. He focuses on how to determine a personal calling; be involved in a ministry that reflects specific spiritual gifts; and put world events into a biblical frame of reference, so as not to panic or worry. He quotes from the Bible and research and occasionally draws examples from his own life. Although not entertaining reading, this book is content heavy in regard to Christian logic, theology, and worldview. SF

## **LIVE LIFE RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW: Make Every Day Your Best Day**

**by Carole Lewis**

**Regal, 978-0-8307-6364-1, HB, 180 pages, \$18.99**

What is something you've always wanted to do? What if you did it instead of waiting for someday? Lewis reveals, through her personal experiences and stories of her friends, the idea that God wants us to live a full life right now.

Though Lewis is known for her First Place for Health programs and books, this release is more about emotional, spiritual, and mental health. She does a fine job of showing how to press on and live to the fullest, regardless of what the enemy throws our way. She advocates getting out of the comfort zone, meeting new friends, trying new foods, and traveling to new places. She shows a correlation between physical fitness and a positive outlook on life. Although the book could be of value to all adults, it particularly targets women older than 25. FB

## **LOVE STORY**

**by Nichole Nordeman**

**Worthy, 978-1-61795-051-3, HB, 266 pages, \$16.99**

Readers can sense that Nordeman is not a professional writer. Rather, she is a vibrant conversationalist, filling pages with a poignancy that elicits tears and laughter within the same chapter. She begins with the creation story and continues through the Second Coming, discussing such familiar characters as Joshua, David, Peter, and Paul along the way. Dismissing traditional Sunday-school silhouettes of these individuals, Nordeman, instead, focuses on their relatable struggles.

Drawing deeply from her own experiences as a musician and mother, Nordeman speaks of Christianity as a living walk, instead of a stale religion. Although conservative Christians may be a bit startled by Nordeman's un-

flinching honesty and informality, freedom and conviction flow from her words, making *Love Story* a wonderful choice for believers and nonbelievers alike. VT

## **OH, GOD, PLEASE HELP ME WITH MY DOUBT**

**978-1-60587-372-5**

## **OH, GOD, PLEASE TEACH ME TO PRAY**

**978-1-60587-371-8**

**by Leighann McCoy**

**Worthy, PB, 208 pages, \$11.99**

Do you feel like your prayers are hitting the ceiling? In this series, McCoy teaches readers how to pray effectively and combat doubt while waiting for answers. At one point, she shares a vision she had that involved a southern plantation and slaves. Her intent may have been above reproach, but her delivery communicated elements of racism.

The books are easy to read and understand. McCoy uses many personal examples to demonstrate her points. Each chapter ends with study questions, and the backs of the books include informational appendices. As I read, however, I found myself wishing for more significant application from her stories and study questions. Prayer is a topic frequently written about; and, unfortunately, these books don't have an element that makes them unique, although they are functional. Because of the unremarkable content and some insensitivity issues, spend your money on other texts on this topic. KS

## **THE PRAYER OF LOVE**

**by Mark Hanby & Roger Roth, Sr.**

**Howard, 978-1-4516-6907-7, PB, 201 pages, \$15**

Love can be life-changing when experienced daily by following Paul's prayer in Philippians 1:9-11. Through personal experiences, practical advice, and biblical references, the authors show the power of love to mend wounds, find forgiveness, and serve

# BOOK REVIEWS

---

humbly. They share stories of false hope and empty hearts and how, with love, miracles, kindness, and fulfillment were manifested. They break this prayer into seven simple parts and spend a chapter on each.

Hanby, a pastor, and Roth, an inspirational speaker, target readers who are ready to change their lives. Good for young adults and older, this book is easy to read and understand and is applicable to people in almost every stage of life. RS

**PURSUING PEACE: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts**  
by Robert D. Jones  
Crossway, 978-1-4335-3013-5, PB, 178 pages, \$14.99

A life without conflict is impossible. A life without conflict resolution is sinful. *Pursuing Peace* is a three-step guide to achieving relational peace with others. Jones takes readers through the process of recognizing one's place in a conflict; resolving the issue with God; then repenting, forgiving, and making peace with the other party.

Jones, a biblical counseling professor, keeps the writing fresh by mixing contemporary case studies with biblical examples and truths. Scripture is the guiding force behind the book, and it is difficult to find a page that doesn't either refer to a biblical passage or quote one directly. Many of his examples deal with marital and sexual struggles, which may limit the readership. For people willing to set aside their pride in order to resolve conflicts and strengthen relationships, *Pursuing Peace* will show them how to do so with practical, biblical steps. DDM

**REAL: Owing Your Christian Faith**  
by Daniel Darling  
New Hope, 978-1-59669-341-8, PB, 186 pages, \$14.99

Growing up in the church may leave people doubting whether their faith is their own. Darling discusses the difficulty of pursuing a faith in Christ not

based on that of parents or church. He writes about such topics as generational faith, having a spirit of rebellion, and the danger of living safely. He includes interviews with well-known speakers, pastors, and writers, including Tullian Tchividjian, Sean McDowell, and Jerry Jenkins, at the end of each chapter.

The honesty of pastor Darling and his interviewees about wrestling with God and personalizing their faith is encouraging and inspiring. The last few chapters have a strong focus on parenting, which may make it difficult for people without children to understand. This book is for anyone reared in the church who wants to be challenged to live with genuine faith. JP

**REFOCUS: Living a Life That Reflects God's Heart**  
by Jim Daly with Paul Batura  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33176-6, HB, 207 pages, \$19.99

Abortion, homosexuality, promiscuity—these are all becoming more accepted in contemporary culture. Daly, president of Focus on the Family, examines the church's response to the cultural shift away from Christian values. His recommended response to Christians is simple: Refocus your hearts on God and not on surrounding chaos.

Daly uses historical examples and personal experiences to discuss the ways in which Christians should react to cultural tension. He advises Christian motives be godly, not political, and Christian attitudes be loving, not condemning or defeatist. Supporting his advice with biblical references and examples, Daly offers counsel on how to interact lovingly and humbly with culture. In simple language, he challenges Christians to live in such a way as to reveal God's heart to others. This book belongs in church libraries because it focuses on a topic of contemporary importance to Christians of all ages. CP

**WORK MATTERS: Lessons from Scripture**  
by R. Paul Stevens  
Eerdmans, 978-0-8028-6696-7, PB, 176 pages, \$16

In this theology of work, Stevens goes through the Bible, looking at how biblical people dealt with work. He insists there is no such thing as a small or unimportant job. The book is divided into five parts that talk about five different kinds of work. Each part has a few chapters, usually focusing on a biblical case study, such as Ezekiel, Cain, and Ruth.

There's a lot of solid theology and business information in this book, and Stevens has many good things to say. But it is written at an unnecessarily high reading level. It's full of Scripture, along with many other sources, half of which are his own works. He presents Jonah erroneously as a comedy and does not use deity pronouns. All in all, *Work Matters* is a good book; but Stevens is more of an academician than a writer, which makes reading it more difficult than it needs to be. MM

## Church & Ministry

---

**UPSIDE-DOWN LEADERSHIP: Rethinking Influence and Success**  
by Taylor Field  
New Hope, 978-1-59669-342-5, PB, 190 pages, \$14.99

The church seems to have gotten leadership completely wrong. The gospel of Christ is a message of revolutionary, counterintuitive ideas: gaining life by losing it, leadership through service, boasting in one's weaknesses. Yet the church has lost its grip on these principles. How can we Christians fix this? Pastor Field suggests we turn our concept of leadership on its head.

# BOOK REVIEWS

Well-written and offbeat, this book systematically compares the way our modern world views leadership to how Christ viewed it 2,000 years ago, using examples of “unleaders” to display the power of unconventional leadership. With strong ideas, bite-sized chapters, and poignant examples, Field guides readers through an unorthodox rethinking of Christian leadership—a journey that could redefine the way Christians evaluate success. CJB

## Evangelism

### **THE ART OF NEIGHBORING: Building Genuine Relationships Right Outside Your Door**

by Jay Pathak & Dave Runyon

Baker, 978-0-8010-1459-8, PB, 204, \$14.99

The authors take Jesus’ command to love our neighbors as ourselves and ask, “What if Jesus meant us to love our literal neighbors?” They show ways this application has worked in the nationwide movement of “loving our neighbors” and how it can be applied to the average American lifestyle.

Although this book is well written, the first few chapters are dry, as the authors explain the drawn-out, detailed origins of the neighboring movement. The practical applications do not come until the fifth chapter, where they explain what it means to be a loving neighbor. Most of the latter part of the book offers specific tips on how to be the best neighbor by Jesus’ standards, including numerous stories of how specific situations have worked for Christian families who have engaged in the act of neighboring. I recommend this book especially to middle-class homeowners and possibly discussion groups. KC

### **STRANGERS NEXT DOOR: Immigration, Migration, and Mission**

by J. D. Payne

InterVarsity, 978-0-8308-5758-6, PB, 192 pages, \$15

The phrase *unreached people group* used to mean a tribe hidden in a jungle, reachable only by certain Christians who had a special “call” to missions. Now, according to pastor Payne, those “unreached people groups” may live next door—and every Christian is called to partner with them in the work of the Great Commission.

Payne’s work is informative and compelling, presenting fascinating data and inspiring anecdotes. Furthermore, it offers practical strategies for local churches seeking to reach the “stranger next door.” Refreshingly, Payne never limits his focus to the Western world, using non-American missionaries as prime examples of effective cross-cultural missions. This book is not something to take casually. Although Payne explains technical terms thoroughly, the amount of information can be overwhelming. However, it is well worth the time and is a valuable resource for laypeople and pastors alike. PW

### **WORD VERSUS DEED: Resetting the Scales to a Biblical Balance**

by Duane Litfin

Crossway, 978-1-4335-3112-5, PB, 224 pages, \$15.99

“Preach the gospel at all times. Use words if necessary.” This venerated quote, often ascribed to St. Francis of Assisi, comes under Litfin’s scrutiny. He attempts to reset the proper biblical balance between preaching the gospel and living it.

Dr. Litfin, president emeritus of Wheaton College and a former pastor, quotes the Bible extensively as he forcefully reestablishes the primacy of verbal witness of the gospel. Not neglecting the importance of good works, he concludes with a practical discussion of prioritizing one’s “word versus

deed” responsibilities on a planet of seemingly limitless need. In a world where many people claim truth is relative and being a “good person” is all that matters, this volume should encourage teachers and church leaders to remind all who desire to serve Christ that “the message of the cross ... is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18, NIV). TWM

## Family

### Family

### **WORDS MATTER: What We Say, Pray, and Write Can Change Our Families!**

by Janet Lynn Mitchell

Evergreen, 978-1-58169421-5, PB, 179 pages, \$13.99

Too often our words hurt someone we care about, especially family members. Mitchell, a speaker and mother, has written a wonderful guidebook for the use of words in families. This resource is a powerful testament to the value of using words to build up, encourage, motivate, and so much more, instead of damaging the spirits of our children or others.

This book is more of a reference book than a light read. Packed full of rich Scripture, parents will want to choose chapters for specific needs or ages of their children. For example, the chapter “Words We Speak” has sections on blaming others, nagging, swearing, lying, plus the positive characteristics of honesty, responsibility, and more—all using appropriate words and Scripture. Other chapters cover prayer, written words, safety, difficult subjects to discuss, and secrets. The only downside to this comprehensive work is the lack of an index for quick reference. Highly recommended. JA

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Marriage

### **DATING AFTER DIVORCE: Preparing for a New Relationship**

by David & Lisa Frisbie

Beacon Hill, 978-0-8341-2882-8, PB, 188 pages, \$14.99

How would one start dating in the aftermath of divorce? After 20 years of studying the post-divorce family, the Frisbies have created a guide to help divorced people know if and when they might be ready to start new relationships. They discuss five areas of preparedness: financial, emotional, spiritual, physical, and family. The final chapter is a conversation roundtable with several divorced men and women offering insights into various stages of readiness.

The Frisbies have written 15 books on marriage and family life and are the coordinators of the Nazarene Marriage and Family Ministries. Highly recommended if you have room. JA

### **THE MARRIAGE OF YOUR DREAMS: A Woman's Guide to Understanding Her Man**

by Rick Johnson

Revell, 978-0-8007-2031-5, PB, 218 pages, \$12.99

In this lively, anecdotal book, Johnson explains basic male needs that must be met for a successful marriage. He offers the usual fare of respect, sexuality, work, communication style, and a typical man's discomfort in expressing emotions. Then he adds the grid of understanding a husband through his relationship with his mother.

### SEQUEL

to *Sacred Marriage*

by Gary Thomas

Cook, 978-1-434704894, \$14.99

*The Sacred Search*

While this book covers the same basic material of better-known marriage books like *His Needs, Her Needs*, Johnson's candor and storytelling make this a readable and applicable book. He is a marriage and parenting conference speaker. If your library's marriage shelves need brightening, then buy this book. JZ

## Parenting

### **BE THE MOM: Overcome Attitude Traps and Enjoy Your Kids**

by Tracey Lanter Eyster

Tyndale, 978-1-58997-684-9, PB, 158 pages, \$12.99

For moms worn out by the daily grind of motherhood, Eyster understands and offers help to keep them passionate about being a mother and enjoying their children. As a mother of teens, she's been through all the earlier seasons of child rearing and shares knowledge she's gained. Plus she's the creator and editor of MomLifeToday.com.

The book is divided into seven "mom traps" that Eyster and other moms have fallen into, and she shares ideas to help moms either avoid or recover from these problems. She uses many personal anecdotes to get her points across and is transparent in sharing her own mothering issues. *Be the Mom* is a fun read that will help mothers regain the enjoyment of parenting while avoiding the "mom traps." Highly recommended. JA

### **HOT BUTTONS Dating Edition**

978-0-8254-4240-7

### **HOT BUTTONS Internet Edition**

978-0-8254-4239-1

Hot Buttons series

by Nicole O'Dell

Kregel, PB, 168 pages, \$9.99

Often parents are uncomfortable talking with their teens about touchy subjects like dating and the Internet. O'Dell has written a series of booklets

to help them deal with these important cultural issues. She believes in proactive, rather than reactive parenting and starting when kids are young. Each book begins with the whys, whens, and hows of addressing this topic and why it is important.

In the *Internet Edition*, she discusses Internet usage, social-networking sites like Facebook and MySpace, the importance of not sharing files (aka stealing), and the two scariest topics of cyber porn and predators. She details how best to set rules and limits for Internet use. The *Dating Edition* deals with appropriate dating-age practices, physical attraction, date violence, and abuse.

"Strategic Scenarios" sections provide exercises designed for parents and teens to complete together. O'Dell presents typical situations that teens might encounter, along with outcome options for them to choose from. These exercises facilitate dialogue and discussion. Each book is reinforced with prayers, Scripture, and startling statistics. O'Dell is the mother of six children and host of *Teen Talk* and *Parent Talk* radio programs. Recommended for church libraries and parents of teens. AKD

### IDEAS FOR PARENTS

by Mark Matlock & Christopher Lyon  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-67767-3, PB, 364 pages, \$12.99

This exciting parenting resource is a compilation of ideas; fun-togetherness activities; questions to generate conversations with children about specific biblical issues; and counsel from youth experts, well-known people, and experienced parents. Topics include family relationships, adoption and identity, anger, fear, stress, sex, media choices, money, success, and school. Plus a section on spiritual shepherding discusses wisdom, missions, evangelism, service, discipleship of children, prayer, and foundational truths.

Each of the 15 sections starts with a one-page overview and list of contents

# BOOK REVIEWS

for ease of use. Practical advice on deepening the family connection and developing a spiritual appetite in children abounds. Discussion chapters about specific Scripture passages can be adapted for family Bible studies. Matlock is director of Youth Specialties, and Lyon is an editor and pastor. Recommended for your parenting section. LGM

## **PARENTING WITH SCRIPTURE: A Topical Guide for Teachable Moments**

by Kara Durbin

Moody, 978-0-8024-0849-5, PB, 256 pages, \$14.99

From her background as a teacher and mother, Durbin wrote an immensely practical book for parents on how to incorporate Scripture into “teachable moments” with their children. An introduction outlines where and how these opportunities can be found. Topics from anger to worry are arranged alphabetically and listed in an index. Each topic includes a definition, at least five appropriate biblical references, discussion tips, and action steps.

Well-written and user-friendly, this book gives parents a good resource for raising the next generation of believers. Recommended for the parenting section of any church library. JAW

## **TOGETHER: Growing Appetites for God**

by Carrie Ward

Moody, 978-0-8024-0448-0, PB, 182 pages, \$9.99

Yes, it’s possible to read the Bible through with small children and have them understand it and grow in the nurture of God. Here is a guide written by an ordinary mom who shows step-by-often funny step how she started and consistently read the Bible five days a week with her four children. She saw them delight in God’s Word and God Himself.

Topics include how God helps our

desire to follow Him, how to get through hard passages, memorizing the Word, God’s perfect timing, finishing the Bible, and reading the Bible again. The book also includes an appendix of getting-started tips, resource list, small-group questions, different translations of 2 Timothy 3:16, and a dad’s guide.

Written with a conversational style, this great mom resource can be read in a short amount of time. Ward’s insightful, funny, and profound journey through the Bible with her children is inspirational and illustrated with whimsical drawings. Recommended for all moms. LGM

## Fiction

### **THE 13: FALL**

The 13 #1

by Robbie Chevront & Erik Reed  
Barbour, 978-1-61626-769-8, 313 pages,  
\$12.99

America is on the edge of disaster. Only one man, The Prophet, knows the details; but he’s not talking. President Grant puts together a special team to find this Prophet before the unknown tragedy strikes their beloved country.

Chevront and Reed deliver an engaging thriller. The plot is unique, with enough depth to keep the reader turning pages. Most of the characters are standard as far as action-thrillers are concerned; but they have their own charms, making them endearing as the book continues. The main fault of this story is how illogical the politics seem. One cartoonishly evil woman runs all of the nation’s security, and somehow the Chinese amass an army of thousands on both borders without anyone knowing it’s happening. Still, the plot is fun to follow; and the chapters are short enough to keep pulling readers to the end. Recommended. TN

### **BE STILL MY SOUL**

The Cadence of Grace #1

by Joanne Bischof

Multnomah, 978-1-60142-421-1, PB,  
337 pages, \$14.99

Similar to Janette Oke’s *Love Comes Softly*, this book tells the story of a young man and woman who, through a series of unfortunate events, are forced into marriage and must learn to love each other. Through trials of a father who doesn’t have the capacity to love, an entitled hick who is good with his fists, and a boy who keeps repeating the same mistakes, the couple struggles during the first few months of marriage, surviving only because of the constantly outstretched arms of God.

Bischof does a wonderful job of portraying a couple’s journey to love with a strong narrative, vivid scenes, and natural dialogue. Recommended, as it involves forgiveness, love, perseverance, and patience, along with constant reliance on God, that are necessary for any relationship to survive. HS

### **BEAUTY TO DIE FOR**

A Spa Mystery #1

by Kim Alexis & Mindy Starns Clark  
B&H, 978-1-4336-7293-4, PB, 340  
pages, \$14.99

When Juliet’s former supermodel rival is discovered dead, she fears her life might be at risk. As she tries to find the killer, Marcus, the man she fell in love with 25 years ago, shows up. They want to renew their relationship, but someone might still be trying to kill Juliet. The threat works to bind them.

This novel immediately draws readers into Juliet’s emotions and struggles. The plot is engaging and the characters easy to identify with. On the other hand, the dialogue is a bit stilted; and the book is longer than it should have been, moving slowly in places. Whereas its religious content is minor—almost an afterthought—you still might want to purchase this book for women patrons who like mysteries. It is entertaining, light reading that re-

# BOOK REVIEWS

minds women their true worth is in God's eyes. EJS

## BEYOND THE STORM

### Quilts of Love

by Carolyn Zane

Abingdon, 978-1-4267-4597-3, PB, 269 pages, \$12.99

A tornado levels the small Midwestern town of Rawston, leaving grief in its wake. With her livelihood destroyed and the death of Danny, a godly friend, Abigail Durham questions God's goodness and love. To commemorate Danny's life, she and loved ones piece together a quilt made from scraps of his possessions. Through this process, she also pieces together why God allowed the devastation: so He can be found to be greater than the storm.

This novel masterfully crafts a memorable story from everyday people, places, and circumstances. Zane's characters exist as average Americans, making them believable and real. A straightforward plot full of original descriptions engages the reader. Dialogue is tailored to read as real conversations, including shortcuts used in everyday communication. This novel would be a worthwhile addition to any church library as a story about common people who serve an incredible God. EEC

## COTTAGE BY THE SEA

by Robin Jones Gunn

Howard, 978-1-4165-8345-5, PB, 261 pages, \$14.99

Erin Bryce, a woman starting a wedding-planning company with her friend, cannot be more excited for this new period of her life. However, her excitement is soon dampened by the news that her father in Oregon has fallen ill. She journeys to his coastal cottage, where she faces the necessity of caring for a sick parent. Erin shows great faith in the crisis she faces, although she grieves over her lost business venture, move, and loneliness.

Erin's story is told in fluffy dialogue

with an idealistic plotline. Nevertheless, beneath that is a story of discipline, loyalty, and Christian submission. The book's core lesson is finding God in a dark situation. Recommended for women in similar circumstances with aging parents, who may find much in common with Erin. CR

## DIGITAL WINTER

by Mark Hitchcock & Alton Gansky

Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4912-5, PB, 641 pages, \$14.99

When power goes out across the world, chaos ensues. And it isn't only an act of terrorism. Something more is at work. Hitchcock and Gansky incorporate biblical prophecy and digital technology into a new interpretation of the end times.

The story is told from the perspectives of a wide range of characters who provide greater insights but also become confusing at times. Likewise, there wasn't much room for individual character development. Also a great many technical terms can be daunting but generally proved easy to follow. Obviously, plenty of research went into this book. Most of the characters are non-Christians, so readers will not be overwhelmed with theology. However, readers well-versed in the Bible will be able to draw clear connections to Scripture, particularly Daniel, Isaiah, and Revelation.

I recommend this book to people who enjoy speculative fiction and are well-founded in their faith, as some spiritual elements may be troubling. Violent weather, end-times bloodbaths, and global chaos are predicted in Revelation; and this book offers some graphic aspects of these predictions. KS

## FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

A Woman of Hope #1

by Ginny Aiken

FaithWords, 978-0-89296-848-0, PB, 372 pages, \$13.99

When droughts strike her farming

community, Olivia Moore tries to ease her parents' burden. She takes a job under Eli Whitman, the bank president, as a nanny for his two motherless children. Then the town starts to talk about her position. To protect Olivia's reputation, Eli proposes marriage under a business arrangement: Olivia is never to involve herself in bank affairs. However, when her father receives a letter about their farm's overdue mortgage payment, Olivia is forced to choose between her two families.

Using the biblical saga of Esther as a framework, this is a story of challenged allegiances, tested faith, and individual bravery. Aiken does a great job of developing the characters through lively and pertinent dialogue, making the plight of this young woman something female readers will identify with. It teaches women to be dependent on God before anyone else. ALG

## GIDEON'S CALL

by Peter Leavell

Worthy, 978-1-61795-117-6, PB, 368 pages, \$14.99

Tad, a former slave turned farmer, and Edward Pierce, a Boston lawyer who risks everything to help Tad and his friends, fight against prejudice and stereotypes of the Civil War era. They find love, hope, and heartache in Port Royal, S.C.

The plot moves slowly until midway through the book, and the title name doesn't come into play until chapter 15. It is doctrinally and theologically sound with a little profanity. The dialogue is mostly believable, but the character development is limited and not consequential. The plot, once it gets started, is interesting but predictable in places. Overall, this book is an intriguing picture of the Civil War from an African-American viewpoint. Although I recommend it, be aware of some language issues and endorsements of civil disobedience. KSH

# BOOK REVIEWS

## SEQUELS

to *Kiss of Night*  
by Debbie Viguié  
FaithWords, 978-0-446-57084-8,  
\$14.99  
*Kiss of Death*

to *The Bride Wore Blue*  
by Mona Hodgson  
WaterBrook, 978-0-307-73032-9,  
\$13.99  
*Twice a Bride*

to *Cuts Like a Knife*  
by M. K. Gilroy  
Worthy, 978-1-61795-068-1, \$14.99  
*Every Breath You Take*

## SERIES UPDATES

*Avenue of Dreams*  
by Olivia Newport  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2039-1, \$14.99  
#2 *The Dilemma of Charlotte Farrow*

*The Bliss Creek Amish*  
by Kelly Irvin  
Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4383-3,  
\$13.99  
#3 *A Heart Made New*

*The Blue Willow Brides*  
by Maggie Brendan  
Revell, 978-0-8007-3463-3, \$14.99  
#2 *Twice Promised*

*Butternut Creek*  
by Jane Myers Perrine  
FaithWords, 978-0-89296-895-4,  
\$14.99  
#2 *The Matchmakers of Butternut Creek*

*The Daughters of Bainbridge House*  
by Laurie Alice Eakes  
Revell, 978-0-8007-3467-1, \$14.99  
#2 *A Flight of Fancy*

*Deadly Reunions*  
by Lynette Eason  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2008-7, \$14.99  
#2 *When a Heart Stops*

*Deep Haven*  
by Susan May Warren  
Tyndale, 978-1-4143-3484-4, \$13.99  
#6 *You Don't Know Me*

*Home at Cedar Creek*  
by Naomi King  
New American Library, 978-0-451-  
23797-2, \$14  
#2 *Rosemary Opens Her Heart*

*The Midwives*  
by Laurie Alice Eakes  
Revell, 978-0-8007-1966-9, \$14.99  
#3 *Choices of the Heart*

*Pacific Rim Series*  
by Don Brown  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33015-8,  
\$14.99  
#2 *Fire of the Raging Dragon*

*Place of Refuge*  
by Amy Wallace  
Harvest House, 978-0-7369-4733-6,  
\$13.99  
#2 *Nowhere to Run*

*Protection for Hire*  
by Camy Tang  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-32034-0,  
\$12.99  
#2 *A Dangerous Stage*

*Quilts of Love*  
Abingdon, \$12.99  
*Path of Freedom*  
by Jennifer Hudson Taylor  
978-1-4267-5249-0  
*A Wild Goose Chase Christmas*  
by Jennifer ALee  
978-1-4267-5283-6

*The Reluctant Prophet*  
by Nancy Rue  
Cook, 978-1-4347-6490-4, \$14.99  
#3 *Too Far to Say Far Enough*

*Seasons of Sugarcreek*  
by Shelley Shepard Gray  
Avon, 978-0-06-219640-8, \$12.99  
#4 *Christmas in Sugarcreek*

*Tales of Goldstone Wood*  
by Anne Elisabeth Stengl  
Bethany, 978-0-7642-1026-6, \$14.99  
#4 *Starflower*

*Where the Heart Lives*  
by Robin Lee Hatcher  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-25809-4,  
\$14.99  
#2 *Betrayal*

*Winds of Change*  
by Julie Lessman  
Revell, 978-0-8007-3717-6, \$14.99  
#3 *A Love Surrendered*

# BOOK REVIEWS

## THE GIRL IN THE GLASS

by Susan Meissner

WaterBrook, 978-0-307-73042-8, PB, 334 pages, \$14.99

For Meg Pomeroy, a trip to Florence has been an unfulfilled dream. When her father finally provides the way, she is ecstatic, only to discover the trip has some challenges. She meets aspiring memoir writer Sophia Borelli, a friend of Meg's author client Lorenzo, whom she also has a growing affection for. While enjoying the sights of Florence, Meg works to authenticate Sophia's claim to Medici heritage, causing Lorenzo to be eased into the background. Unfortunately, digging into Sophia's heritage reveals information that can do more damage than good. Here a decision regarding ethics, morals, and friendship leads to some serious soul searching.

For the reader who has an interest in Italian culture, this is a book worth picking up. Marvelous descriptions of landscapes, classic works of art, and gourmet food are infused into the plot. But the budding suspense, tension, and romance get lost among the daily visual tours of Florence. The characters are well established, and readers can certainly feel Meg's appreciation of Florence. Sidekick Nora, who serves as comic relief by going on short adventures throughout the book, actually throws off the flow and doesn't help tie anything together. This novel is more a travelogue than a mystery. BKB

## MORTAL FIRE

The Secret of the Journal #1

by C. F. Dunn

Monarch, 978-0-85721-202-3, PB, \$14.99

Emma D'Eresby discovers that history can come back to haunt you when she accepts a teaching position at an exclusive university in exchange for allowing her into the school's archives to find an elusive 17th-century journal. However, she soon discovers that within the pages of the journal she

seeks, there are secrets and terrifying truths that can be revealed in such a way as to ruin her life. Is historical research worth scandal and exposure?

With descriptive prose and fast-paced plotting, Dunn spins a tale of lore and mystery, each page spellbinding with suspense and tension. The characters develop at a natural pace, and each one is believable. The dialogue comes off as stilted at first, but remembering that this book follows a character with a high academic background and a foreign accent, it becomes easier to accept. Without a heavy Christian message, the novel, nevertheless, is moralistic and appropriate for those of high school age and beyond. DR

## PROOF

Bloodline Trilogy #1

by Jordyn Redwood

Kregel, 978-0-8254-4238-4, PB, 307 pages, \$14.99

Things are not always what they seem. Dr. Lilly Reeves discovers this fact after a serial rapist commits a grievous crime against her. Lilly's journey through anguish is met with the care of her Christian friends and the detective solving the case. As an atheist, she encounters God's messengers who set her on the path to Him. In the end, it is her commitment to the case and journey to faith that bring about justice.

Redwood does an excellent job of leading the reader through each character's journey. Every person is realistic and relatable, despite the seemingly bizarre circumstances they are put in. The reader is rarely confused by the medical aspect, as Redwood uses her extensive medical experience. The book contains violence and blood but few graphic details about either. It remains unpredictable until the final chapter and is a wonderful suspense novel. KB

## THE SONS OF JUDE

The Sons of Jude #1

by Brandt Dodson

Monarch, 978-0-857-21205-4, PB, 319 pages, \$14.99

Chicago detective Frank Campello has seen the dark side of the city, and his life isn't much brighter. After losing his partner in a shooting, Campello is paired with Andy Polanski, who is seen as a traitor for reporting two seemingly reputable cops. As evidence surrounding a murder points to shady political powerhouses, these cops find themselves in the thick of a life-changing case. With the help of reporter Christy Lee, they must fight together to restore truth and justice.

Like popular detective shows, the intense crime-chasing plot is accented with realistic characters and fast-paced dialogue. Ethical issues are also presented in a Christian light as Polanski stands for the truth despite opposition and openly shares his faith. Be aware: This book includes scenes with alcohol, smoking, violence, bars and clubs, and the mention of drugs and prostitution. But the action-packed novel will be an appealing addition to your fiction section. BW

## SOUL'S GATE

by James L. Rubart

Nelson, 978-1-4016-8605-5, PB, 400 pages, \$15.99

Where does pain reside? Where does healing begin? Within the soul. In *Soul's Gate*, the soul becomes the battlefield when four people from varying lives are brought together by a prophecy. They learn how to enter people's souls to fight for spiritual freedom and renewal. In the process, they also learn how to heal themselves.

Rubart does something few religious authors do: He brings ancient, forgotten happenings in the Bible into the contemporary scene. With careful use of Scripture, he reminds the reader that God and the Holy Spirit are not bound by distance and time. He por-

# BOOK REVIEWS

trays miracles and the power of prayer through the actions of average characters in an enlightening fashion. This book is provocative in its material. It forces the reader to consider components of God's nature not normally focused on. It's a quality novel for young or older Christians of any theological background. MP

## Finances

**ENOUGH: Finding More by Living with Less**  
by Will Davis Jr.  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2002-5, PB, 232 pages, \$13.99

Being rich toward God mandates discarding the American dream of more and more, according to pastor Davis. He preaches contentment with what we have and compassion for those who don't have enough.

Filled with stories of people who pared down or made radical all-for-Jesus lifestyle decisions, this book asks hard questions about how much is enough and why people (and churches) think they need to build "bigger barns." Chapter 5 shares a thought-provoking vision Davis had during a mission trip in Nicaragua in which he saw the United States choking in a dense cloud, which he interpreted as materialism. In our current recession, this is a timely book. Recommended. JZ

**RAISING FINANCIALLY CONFIDENT KIDS**  
by Mary Hunt  
Revell, 978-0-8007-2141-1, PB, 212 pages, \$12.99

Too many children today grow up without knowing how to manage their finances. Many foolishly incur debt at a young age. What's a parent to do? Hunt, publisher of the website Debt-Proof Living and author of the newspaper column "Everyday Cheap-

skate," wrote this book based on her personal experiences with the devastating results of consumer debt. Early in her marriage and parenthood, she and her husband lived far beyond their means and were inadvertently raising their sons with a dangerous attitude of entitlement. Once they recognized their mistake, they devised a plan to get themselves out of debt and ensure their sons learned financial responsibility.

This book spells out the details of their plan and explains why raising financially confident kids is so important in this era where advertising bombards children and adults alike to buy more than they need or can afford. Hunt includes an index for easy referencing. Highly recommended for parents. AKD

## Science

**MADE IN HEAVEN: Man's Indiscriminate Stealing of God's Amazing Design**  
by Ray Comfort & Jeffrey Seto  
Master, 978-0-89051-669-0, HB, 79 pages, \$15.99

Fish scales, spider webs, mussels, wasps' nests, and lotus leaves—all of these are part of God's designs that man has attempted to copy. This book has 32 examples of places where scientific laboratories have innovations stolen from God's creation.

Seto, an experimental aerospace engineer, and Comfort, author of more than 70 books and cohost of the award-winning program *The Way of the Master*, teamed up to write this well-researched and engaging scientific book. It's good for all ages of children and adults. Older readers will be interested in the easy-to-understand science, and children will be entertained by the graphic designs. The beautiful, glossy pages are filled with colorful photographs, diagrams, and attention-catch-

ing information. An excellent addition to any library. KSI

## Teens

**DEAD MAN'S HAND**  
**The Caden Chronicles #1**  
by Eddie Jones  
Zonderkidz, 978-0-310-72344-8, PB, 214 pages, \$7.99

Hauntings and homicide intersect in this novel. Nick Caden's parents have dragged him along on one of their dreaded family vacations, this time to Deadwood Canyon Ghost Town. He resigns himself to a week of people in chaps, talking down to him about the glories of being a cowboy. However, things heat up when Nick discovers the body of a Billy the Kid reenactor in a barn. Suddenly Nick is thrust into a maze of tension and intrigue. With help from Annie Oakley herself, Nick cuts through the fog of mystery that surrounds Ghost Town and discovers the identity of the murderer.

Jones weaves a decent mystery with an original setting. The Caden family is convincingly unlikeable at the beginning of the novel, with full complement of snarky son, annoying sister, overbearing mother, and exasperated father. He handles the pacing well, with each suspect investigated in a way that

### SERIES UPDATES

**Halflings**  
by Heather Burch  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-72821-4,  
\$14.99  
#2 *Guardian*

**The Solitary Tales**  
by Travis Thrasher  
Cook, 978-1-4347-6416-4, \$9.99  
#4 *Hurt*

# BOOK REVIEWS

keeps the story moving. Whereas Jones attempted to integrate a spiritual narrative into a larger story, it feels tacked on at most points. As a young-adult mystery, the book functions well. As far as imparting Christian values, however, it is merely passable. EPN

**REPLICATION: The Jason Experiment**  
by Jill Williamson  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-72758-3, HB, 304 pages, \$15.99

Williamson explores what defines humanity in this science-fiction novel. Seventeen-year-old J:3:3, nicknamed Martyr, is one of many identical boys living like prisoners in a bunker. Told they're helping humanity, they sacrifice their lives on their 18th birthdays. Meanwhile, Abby Goyer hates her new home in Alaska and the school heartthrob, JD Kane. When Martyr and Abby cross paths, secrets are revealed and lives are changed.

*Replication* takes a few chapters to provide backstory, so with the heavy flow of information, the first section moves slowly. But once Martyr and Abby commit to their convictions, the action becomes gripping and nonstop. Williamson superbly captures themes of individuality, purpose, value of life, and true meaning of love. Because of a few mature scenes, I suggest parents preview it for younger kids. Otherwise, I highly recommend this book for guys and girls who enjoy science fiction or romance. ARM

**A wonderful thing about a book, in contrast to a computer screen, is that you can take it to bed with you.**

—Daniel J. Boorstein

## Women

**MARVELOUSLY MADE: Unveil Your True Identity and Purpose as a Woman**  
by Monica Rose Brennan  
Regal, 978-0-8307-6415-0, PB, 218 pages, \$14.99

A. W. Tozer wrote, "Self is the opaque veil that hides the Face of God from us. It can be removed only in spiritual experience." Brennan dissects Tozer's thought and removes the veil by taking a deeper look at reality, idols, and how women are meant to reflect God's image.

As a professor of women's ministries and evangelism, she is able to reach out to women, using many personal stories to illustrate the struggles with identity they may deal with (e.g., weight, beauty, intelligence, poise, careers), as well as ways they can unveil their own identities.

Brennan incorporates many Scripture passages, allowing readers to discover for themselves what Brennan believes is God's purpose for females. This well-written book is a good resource in a church library for women searching for purpose and identity as daughters of Christ. AG

**UNGLUED: Making Wise Choices in the Midst of Raw Emotions**  
by Lysa TerKeurst  
Zondervan, 978-0-310-33279-4, PB, 199 pages, \$14.99

TerKeurst uses the word *unglued* to demonstrate how women feel when life doesn't go as planned. She explains how to be free from the imprisonment of emotions by making wise decisions in times of anger and struggle. She endorses the proactive choice to change our perspective and see purpose in these situations, despite condescending voices in our heads. She examines female reactions and explains how to change them in order to please God

and those around us.

TerKeurst has a strong message that reaches out to the hearts of women who have identity issues. Even though written in simple language, her book provides insights that can be understood and applied daily. She teaches by offering present-day metaphors and stories to portray her lessons. *Unglued* is an important book for any woman, but particularly those who are wrestling with matters related to careers, families, and Christian walks. CT

**A WOMAN'S WISDOM: How the Book of Proverbs Speaks to Everything**  
by Lydia Brownback  
Crossway, 978-1-4335-2827-9, PB, 223 pages, \$14.99

In Proverbs, godly wisdom is personified as a woman. It is only fitting that Brownback, a God-loving woman, should write this devotional guide to wisdom for women seeking to know God's heart. Drawing heavily on references in Proverbs and the New Testament parables, as well as personal stories and examples of women who have been her role models, Brownback presents concise lessons in uncomplicated language.

If anything, the simplicity of the writing may lull the reader into sustained eye cadence; but the message of knowing the Bible is always evident. Brownback makes no apology for her vehemence about devotion to prayer and scriptural mandates.

This book is a teaching tool complete with index and study guide. Although it is targeted at all women, it contains a great deal of material about how to be a godly wife and mother, thus skewing it toward married females. However, if used as a mentoring guide or for a women's retreat, it could be good preparatory material for teens and single women. AB

# BOOK REVIEWS

## Reviewers

Julie Agen, church librarian  
Kate Berkey, writer  
Chandler J. Birch, writer  
Felicity Boepple, writer  
Alecia Bonson, writer  
Joy Bowman, writer  
Bethany K. Brown, writer  
Sarah C. Cespedes, writer  
Kaitie Christenberry, writer  
Noah Clayton, writer  
Erin E. Curtis, writer  
Angie Kay Dilmore, church librarian, writer  
Erin Erickson, writer  
Will G. Fairfax, writer  
Becky Farb, writer  
Sydney Fordyce, writer  
Amy Gaasrud, writer  
Lyndsey Gammage, writer  
Tara Gnagy, writer  
Gina Graham, writer  
Andi L. Gregory, writer  
Jared Hammond, writer  
Kelly S. Helton, writer  
Dr. Dennis E. Hensley, writer  
David Hestand III, writer  
Katelyn S. Irons, writer  
Mackenzie Jager, writer  
Dr. Leslie Robert Keylock, retired Bible & theology professor  
Mackenzi Klemann, writer  
Emily E. Love, writer  
Matt Maine, writer

Dr. Terry W. Marsh, writer  
Lynda G. McCracken, church librarian  
Alexandra R. Mellen, writer  
Chelsea A. Molin, writer  
Daniel D. Morrill, writer  
Todd Naevestad, writer  
E. Patrick Neer, writer  
Jeremy Paul, writer  
Charnell Peters, writer  
Michael Prihoda, writer  
Demelza Ramirez, writer  
Suzanne E. Rhee, writer  
Caroline Riofredo, writer  
Andrea Sanders, writer  
Kristin Schwartz, writer  
Rebecca Sexton, writer  
Emily Simmons, writer  
Kate Sozansky, writer  
Heather Stevens, writer  
Elizabeth J. Syson, writer  
Corrie Thompson, writer  
Veronica Toth, writer  
Matthew A. L. Tran, writer  
Kari Travis, writer  
Nick VanHeest, writer  
Judy A. Waggoner, church librarian  
Paula Weinman, writer  
Estee B. Wells, writer  
Helen Wilbers, writer  
Brianna Wyatt, writer  
Weston Young, writer  
Jeanne Zornes, writer

## Training

*continued from page 7*

together during a church meal, or giving certificates of appreciation to all volunteers for their unique contributions to the library's usefulness.

### Training by Communicating

Inform all staff members about circulation and acquisition statistics, so they can understand that their work creates

a positive support ministry for general church members, as well as teachers and other leaders.

Encourage volunteers to share special moments with one another when a particularly cute event or special blessing occurs during their library work. Set a good example for staff members in courteous dealings with one another, and encourage creativity by inviting them to think of better methods for accomplishing tasks.

In both training and supervising

new volunteers, the five most important words are: "You did a good job."

Questions are great teachable moments. Greet each one with a smile and positive affirmation, "I'm glad you asked. I've been meaning to go over that with you, so this is a good time."

After you explain a process, showing each step along the way and watching for looks of understanding, undo the work you just did and suggest the new volunteer try it herself. Then reassure the trainee that it took you a few tries to remember everything, too, and suggest she continue asking questions.

### Training by Supervising

Always keep foremost in your mind that being the leader of a church library means leading, not doing everything yourself. Train volunteers, progressively delegate tasks to new volunteers, and gradually decrease supervision to simply being available nearby in case a new worker has a question.

To improve your training efficiency, watch for ways to use these supervisory techniques:

- Paint an exciting vision for people to work toward.
- Give experienced workers more freedom.
- Give each staff member at least one satisfying, fulfilling task.
- Welcome suggestions with an open mind.
- When referring to tasks-in-progress, liberally use phrases like "Thank you for your dedicated efforts," "Thank you for doing such excellent work," or "Thank you for caring enough to give good attention to detail."

Train workers and then allow them to try new tasks. Develop a staff of library workers who are cross-trained, and your church may discover ways the library can open new ministry areas and enrich existing ones.

---

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

## Biography

**DR. DAVID LIVINGSTONE: Missionary Explorer to Africa**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01458-6, 60 minutes, \$19.99**

Biography lovers especially will enjoy this informative look at one of Europe's most famous explorers. Motivated by spreading the gospel, Livingstone first became a doctor, then a missionary who was drawn from Scotland to Africa in the 1800s. Narrated by several historians, this documentary follows Livingstone's expeditions and his search for the source of the Nile River. Finally overcome by malaria and complications from dysentery, Livingstone is still remembered as an outspoken opponent of slavery.

An excellent addition to your DVD collection for family viewing. JAW

**LETTERS TO AN UNKNOWN DAUGHTER**

**with Anita Keagy**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01482-1, 40 minutes, \$14.99**

At 17, Anita Keagy gave up her daughter for adoption. After years of praying for a reunion, she finally met her daughter. Keagy is a transparent and humble speaker. Recalling her family's support, she reminds listeners of the importance of loving during trials. She shares how God taught her to trust Him and obey His plans. Her story is not only about redemption. After meeting her daughter, God explained how He could relate to her excitement. As He longs for His children to learn more about Him, she longed to learn more about her daughter.

Keagy's story speaks to men and women, teenagers and adults. It is a story about choices, consequences, and God's continued faithfulness and teaching ways. Special features include information about JoyShop Ministries, pregnancy centers, adoption agencies,

and Keagy's book and DVD teaching series. Recommended for church and school libraries. SCC

**MARIA PREAN: Life Gets Better and Better**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01480-7, 55 minutes, \$19.99**

At the age of 60, instead of retiring to a cozy life in her home in Austria, Maria Prean moved to Uganda as a caregiver missionary. Now 70, she shares her story of heeding God's call to care for children in this impoverished country. The team she went with, supported by the Anglican church in Europe, has impacted the area greatly by building orphanages, schools, and churches, with plans to build boarding schools, an agricultural complex for vocational studies, and a conference center. Anyone can learn from Maria's youthful spirit, servant's heart, and love for all those around her.

Overall, this documentary is well produced. The dialogue is mainly in German with English subtitles. This DVD would be a great addition to church and Christian school libraries as proof that it's never too soon or too late to serve the Lord at home or abroad. KSI

**SUE THOMAS: Nothing but the Truth**

**with Sue Thomas**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01452-4, 55 minutes, \$19.99**

Your patrons may remember the TV show *Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye*. The real Sue Thomas, a deaf FBI agent, shares her life story, telling the truth of her life before and after salvation. A compelling speaker, Thomas captivates an audience as she presents her testimony with grace and humor.

Extra features give insight into Sue Thomas Ministries. Thomas talks about the retreat center, service-dog kennels, Christmas ministry, and more. She also shares on a personal level about her love of music, new affliction of mul-

tle sclerosis, and dogs. Robert McQuilkin, former head of Columbia Bible College, comments on Thomas and her life's work. Highly recommended. JA

## Children

**PROJECT DINOSAUR**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01427-2, 65 minutes, \$19.99**

Designed for children ages 7 and up, this award-winning DVD weaves the popular theme of exploration and discovery with the difficult debate of evolution versus creation. Mikey and his friends discover a dinosaur bone, and he decides to use it for a science-fair project that hopefully will win the grand prize. In researching his project, Mikey must reconcile his Christian beliefs with commonly held scientific theory.

Produced by a film company associated with Bob Jones University, the production is professional. Also included in the DVD is a devotional guide suitable for family or classroom discussion. Recommended for church libraries and homeschoolers. JAW

## Documentary

**IN THE STEPS OF MOSES: Exploring the Exodus**

**with David Nunn**  
**Vision Video, 7-27985-01461-6, 48 minutes, \$19.99**

Traveling to Egypt and Israel might not be affordable for most people, but this DVD gives a great armchair tour of the route Moses traveled. David Nunn uses Scripture to guide viewers on the path of the Exodus as he hosts this DVD.

The excellent photography shows mountains, rocks, valleys, and more

# DVD REVIEWS

that grace the area. Nunn carefully points out specific places where scriptural events took place. We see the wilderness where the Israelites wandered for 40 years and the mount from which God let Moses see the Promised Land. Nunn's narration is clear and helpful on this tour. One negative to this video is the filming of tourists walking along a few of the paths, but this is a minor issue. Recommended. JA

**MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD**  
presented by Christopher Hawes  
Vision Video, 7-27985-01463-0, 25 minutes, \$14.99

How did God's Word become what it is today? Answering that question, this DVD provides an overview of the history of the Bible, mainly its translation into the English language. Utilizing mostly narration, it shows a chronology of development and showcases

how the Bible has affected people throughout the centuries.

The documentary is divided into two parts: history and impact. The first half gives data about the beginnings of the Bible's translation into the English language, including profiles of translators and printers. This section is done entirely through narration over artwork or acted scenes depicting relevant events. The second half is more interview based, featuring theologians and scholars who document changes the Bible has made to cultures, societies, institutions, and schools.

Overall, this brief film is a concise and accurate introduction for people who are fairly new to the Bible. Thus, it is appropriate for church and school libraries. DHIII

## Narrative

**JOSEPH**  
Sight & Sound Theatres, 0-85286-200401-2, 130 minutes, \$25

Sight & Sound Theatres have 2,000-seat arenas in Lancaster County, Pa., and Branson, Mo., where Christian Broadway musical-style productions are performed. The familiar story of Joseph is portrayed amid lavish sets, delightful music, live animals, flying performers, and often funny dialogue before a live audience. Viewers can enjoy two hours of family-friendly entertainment.

*Joseph's* script is predictable and somewhat amateurish, but that criticism is overshadowed by the splendor of the stagecraft. Extras include behind-the-scenes set changes. Recommended for church libraries. JAW

# MUSIC REVIEWS

## Contemporary

**LIGHT FOR THE LOST BOY**  
by Andrew Peterson  
Centricity, 0-829-619-11822-3, \$13.99

Peterson's artistic mind and heart for the Lord truly come together beautifully in this album. His catchy songs are peppered with layers of meaning for the Christian indie/pop/folk scene. "Come Back Soon" draws in listeners with its heartbeat-like rhythm and vulnerable words. "The Cornerstone" features edgier electric sounds, and down-home folk tunes are showcased in "Day By Day" and "The Ballad of Jody Baxter."

Songs focus on personal experiences, such as fatherhood, friendship, love, devotion, and ways to share the gospel message with a lost world. "Rest Easy" is written as if from the Lord to His child: "You don't have to hide your heart/I already love you/I hold it in mine/you can rest easy." Recommended for patrons who enjoy artists like Big Daddy Weave and want a fresh twist. LG

**RESUSCITATE**  
by Remedy Drive  
Centricity, 0-829-619-11832-2, \$9.99

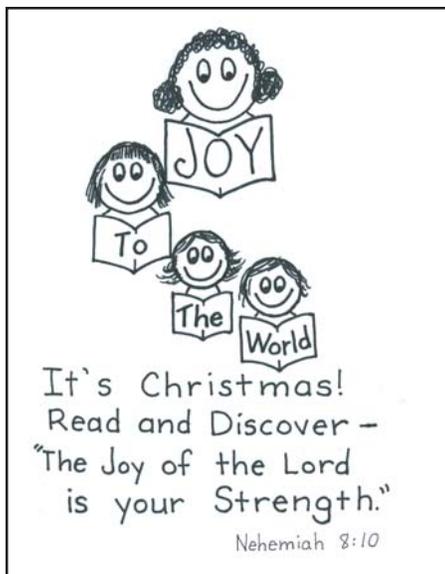
*Resuscitate* is a sharply penned, well-tuned tribute to God's mercy and grace. The 10 tracks feature stirring tunes with beautiful guitar and piano

overtones that serve as a backdrop for uplifting lyrics. Lead singer and songwriter David Zach pours his heart into the album's title track, crying out to God in an honest confession about his brokenness and faults. In "What Are We Waiting For?" Zach encourages listeners to move past mistakes and embrace God's higher calling. Other lyrics focus on forgiveness, joy of life, and meditation.

This CD is a beautifully crafted ode to life and the God who carries us through life's great struggles. I highly recommend it to busy Christians looking for an inspirational soundtrack to play during long workdays. The pulsating beat and inspired lyrics motivate. KT

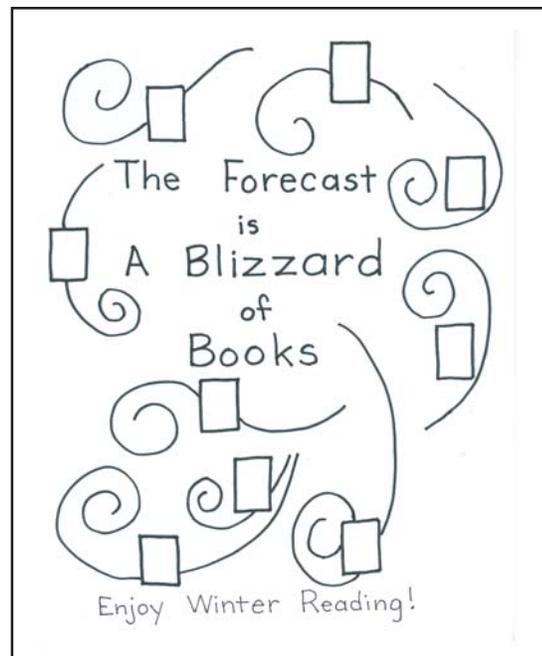
# POSTER/BULLETIN BOARDS

by Arlene Walker



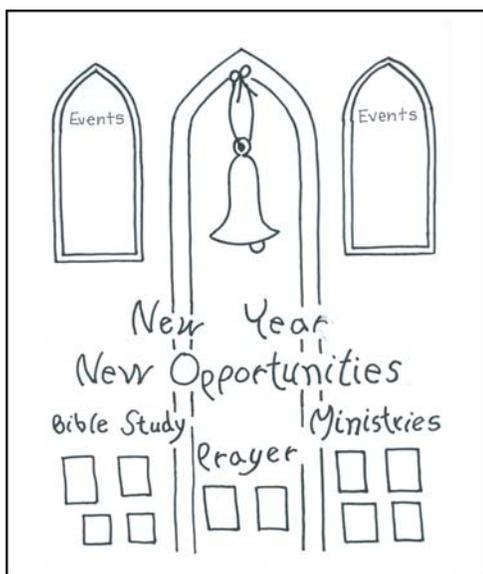
## Poster

Use a piece of florescent green poster board for the background. Draw faces on tan paper, and use markers in appropriate colors to draw facial features. Draw and cut book shapes from red paper. Cut letters for the caption from white paper and glue in place as shown. Use dark green paper to cut letters for the message and Scripture verse. Arrange all figures and letters as shown, and glue in place.



## Bulletin Board

Cover a bulletin board with light blue paper. Cut letters for the caption from dark blue paper and mount in place. Draw pencil lines for the blizzard markings, and trace them with a dark blue marker. Optional: Embellish the lines with silver glitter. Mount copies of book jackets from books for all ages.



## Bulletin Board

Cover a bulletin board with lavender paper. Cut one large and two small panels in Gothic design as shown, so all three will fill most of the space on the background. Fasten a gold bell on a cord to the top of the middle panel. On the smaller panels, display announcements of activities and events planned for upcoming months. Use black paper to cut letters for the captions, and mount them. Arrange copies of book jackets or materials your church has planned for Bible study, prayer, and ministries under each title.

*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.

- 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*. E-mail them as attachments to [linjohnson@eclalibraries.org](mailto:linjohnson@eclalibraries.org). Include the following information in the message:

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

## BULLETIN BOARD



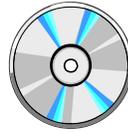
There is snow better place to be,  
than at our church library!

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

# Helps for Your Library

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

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

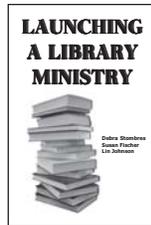


## **CDs**

See order form on inside back cover.

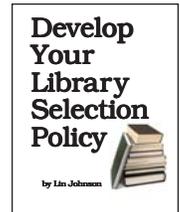
## **Launching a Library Ministry by Debra Stombres, Susan Fischer, & Lin Johnson—\$7**

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.  
E-mail [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 \_\_\_\_\_

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