

OFF THE SHELF



Mission Statement: To energize church library ministry through education, resource sharing, spiritual encouragement, and fellowship.

Winter 2021

A Letter from Our Co-Presidents

Dear Fellow Members of TCACLA,

Although we hoped last fall that our spring 2021 TCACLA meeting could be in-person, it is now clear that would be premature. However, we did have a very good virtual meeting in October with more than 20 participants, including some from outstate who probably wouldn't have made it to an in-person meeting in the Twin Cities (one of the silver linings of the pandemic!).

Our fall Zoom meeting included a very animated discussion of how churches and their libraries were responding to what, as it turns out, were still early days of the pandemic. There was a lot of floundering with technology but also some creative experiments on how to maintain a sense of community virtually. It seemed everyone participating picked up some new ideas.

Now, after another four months, no doubt your church's outreach and congregants' participation have evolved in new and perhaps unexpected ways. We invite you to meet again for our spring Zoom meeting on **Saturday, April 17 at 9am** for fellowship and sharing of ideas on congregational life and the role of books and church libraries in the pandemic era and beyond. As you can see from this month's newsletter, there's definitely active reading going on, and what better time to hunker down with a good book than a pandemic!

Here are just some possible ideas for discussion in April:

- How can the church keep children engaged during the pandemic? What role can books play?
- What books (or films) are your congregation reading and discussing? How has the pandemic affected this? Are you exploring issues of the day or perhaps looking for escape from them?
- How can church libraries be promoted and safely used during the pandemic?
- What long-term or lasting changes do you see resulting from the pandemic, both in congregational life generally and for church libraries?
- How is your church preparing for return to in-person worship? Will it ever be the same as pre-pandemic?

The next TCACLA newsletter at the end of March will have specific registration instructions in order to get the Zoom invitation in April (including assistance if you have not participated in a Zoom meeting before).

And we still have a fantastic speaker on hold for what we hope will be an in-person post-pandemic fall meeting.

In the meantime, stay safe and well—and keep on reading!

Sincerely,

Grace Kurtz and Jeanne Schleh
Co-Presidents

General Information

The Twin Cities Area Church Library Association (TCACLA) is a non-profit support organization serving church librarians. Membership is open to individuals and churches of all denominations that desire to network with others on church library development and enrichment.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Members: 23 churches, 2 individuals

01/01/2020	\$3,240.38	Beginning Balance
	\$310.00	Membership Dues
	-\$400.00	Fall 19 Meeting Expenses
	-\$23.95	New Checks
	-\$158.76	<i>Off the Shelf</i> Printing & Postage
	<u>-\$31.17</u>	Website Expenses
12/31/2020	\$2,936.50	Ending Balance

From Awesome Librarian

BOOK READER **Nutrition Facts**

Serving Size:	1 Bookworm
Servings Per Shelf:	As Many As Possible
<hr/>	
Would Rather Read Than Party	250%
Falls In Love With Characters	380%
Becomes The People In The Book	290%
Hates Turning The Last Page	320%
Likes Books More Than People	200%
Lives In Crazy Fantasy World	360%
But Reads To Retain Sanity	460%
Book, Tea and Chill	yes%

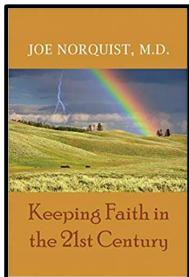
*Percent Daily Values may vary based on ability
to ignore annoying real world obligations.

WHAT CHURCHES ARE READING

The books in this section were recommended by participants in the Zoom gathering in October.

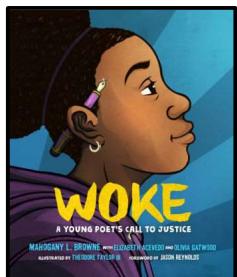
"What a miracle it is that out of these small, flat, rigid squares of paper unfolds world after world, worlds that sing to you, comfort and quiet or excite you. Books help us understand who we are and how we are to behave. They show us what community and friendship mean; they show us how to live and die." — Anne Lamott

KEEPING FAITH IN THE 21st CENTURY by Joe Norquist M.D., Dorrance Publishing, 2020.



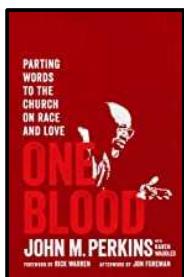
Ancient people knew nothing of physics, biology, chemistry, or astronomy when they authored the Bible. Today, there are passages of Scripture that may not fit our modern knowledge. Dr. Norquist seeks to foster discussion and dialogue among Christians with questions or doubts about the Bible's relation to this modern knowledge. This work is inspired by the author's personal experience and questions in hopes to promote respectful conversation instead of "I'm right, you're wrong" accusations.

WOKE: A Young Poet's Call to Justice by Mahogany Browne and others, Roaring Brook Press, 2020.



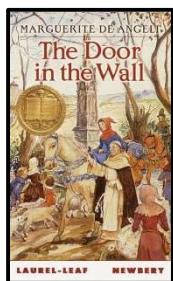
A collection of poems by women that reflects the joy and passion in the fight for social justice, tackling topics from discrimination to empathy, and acceptance to speaking out. Each poem's intended value appears next to its page number (e.g., individuality, "Teeth Dance With Silver," body positivity, "The Good Body"). The text is matched with bright, emotional art. The goal is to inspire kids to create their own art and poems to express how they see justice and injustice. Ages 8-12.

ONE BLOOD: Parting Words to the Church on Race and Love by John Perkins, Moody Publishers, 2018.



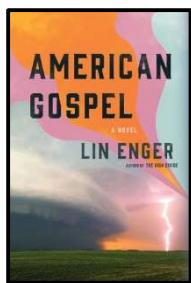
Dr. Perkins, a leading civil rights activist, offers a call to repentance to both the white church and the black church. He explains how the band-aid approaches of the past won't do. And while applauding these starter efforts, he holds that true reconciliation won't happen until we get more intentional and relational. True friendships must happen, and on every level. This will take the whole church, not just the pastors and staff. The gospel and all that it encompasses has always traveled best relationally. We have much to learn from each other.

THE DOOR IN THE WALL by Marguerite de Angeli, Random House, 1998.



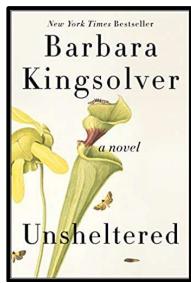
Robin has always been told what is expected of him as the son of a nobleman. But his destiny is changed suddenly when he falls ill and loses the use of his legs. Fearing a plague, his servants abandon him and Robin is left alone. Ultimately, with the guidance of monk Brother Luke, Robin discovers that there is more than one way to serve his king when the great castle of Lindsay is in danger. Newbery Award winner, set in the 14th century and written in old English. Ages 9-12.

AMERICAN GOSPEL: A Novel by Lin Enger, University of MN Press, 2020.



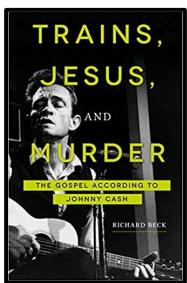
On a small farm beside a lake in Minnesota's north woods, an old man is waiting for the Rapture, which God has told him will happen in two weeks, on August 19, 1974. When word gets out, Last Days Ranch becomes ground zero for The End, drawing zealots, curiosity seekers, and reporters—among them the prophet's son, a skeptical New York writer suddenly caught between his overbearing father and the news story of a lifetime. Meanwhile, Nixon's resignation has transfixed the nation.

UNSHELTERED: A Novel by Barbara Kingsolver, HarperCollins, 2018.



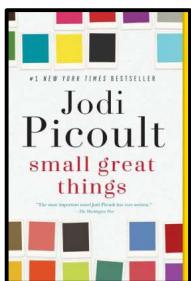
A story of two families, in two centuries, who live at the corner of Sixth and Plum in Vineland, NJ, navigating what seems to be the end of the world as they know it. Willa Knox and her husband followed all the rules as responsible parents and professionals but have nothing to show for it but debts and an inherited house that is falling apart. In another time, Thatcher Greenwood, a science teacher with a passion for honest investigation, finds himself under siege. His employer forbids him to speak of the exciting work just published by Charles Darwin.

TRAINS, JESUS, AND MURDER: The Gospel According to Johnny Cash by Richard Beck, Fortress Press, 2019.



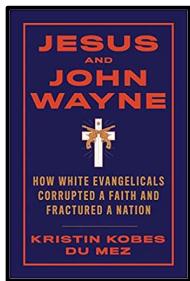
Johnny Cash sang about and for people on the margins. He famously played concerts in prisons, where he sang both murder ballads and gospel tunes in the same set. It's this juxtaposition between light and dark, writes Beck, that makes Cash one of the most authentic theologians in memory. Here he explores the theology of Cash by investigating a dozen of Cash's songs. In reflecting on Cash's lyrics, and the passion with which he sang them, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the enduring faith of the "Man in Black."

SMALL GREAT THINGS: A Novel by Jodi Picoult, Random House, 2018.



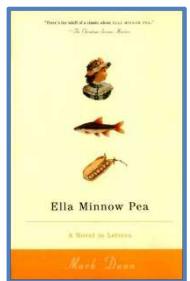
Picoult tackles race, privilege, prejudice, justice, and compassion—and doesn't offer easy answers. Ruth is a Black nurse with more than 20 years' experience. During her shift, she begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she's been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don't want Ruth to touch their child. The hospital complies, but the next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery.

JESUS AND JOHN WAYNE: How White Evangelicals Corrupted a Faith and Fractured a Nation by Kristin Du Mez, Liveright, 2020.



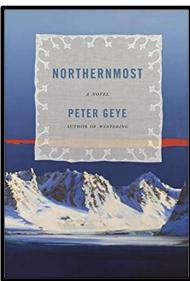
Du Mez, an acclaimed Christian historian, analyzes the role that white evangelicals played in bringing the US to its current fractured political moment. Challenging the commonly held assumption that the "moral majority" backed Donald Trump for purely pragmatic reasons, she believes that Trump in fact represents the fulfillment, rather than the betrayal, of white evangelicals' most deeply held values. They have worked for decades to replace the Jesus of the Gospels with an idol of rugged masculinity and Christian nationalism.

ELLA MINNOW PEA: A Novel in Letters by Mark Dunn, Anchor, 2002.

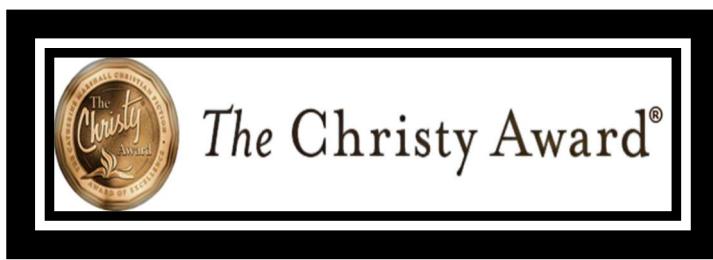


Ella is living happily on the fictional island of Nollop, which was named after the author of the immortal phrase containing all the letters of the alphabet, "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog." When the island's council begins banning the use of certain letters of the alphabet, Ella finds herself acting to save the citizens from the encroaching totalitarianism. The result is a hilarious and moving story of one girl's fight for freedom of expression, as well as a linguistic tour de force. Ages 14-18.

NORTHERNMOST; A Novel by Peter Geye, Knopf, 2020.

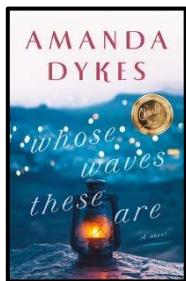


The third volume in this Minnesota author's series about the Eide family. In 1895, Thea leaves her small Norwegian hometown and travels to America. More than a century later, Minnesotan Thea travels to the town where her great-great-grandmother was born--and for some reason never returned to. Braiding together two stories of love and survival, *Northernmost* wades into the darkest recesses of the human heart and celebrates the remarkable ability of humans to endure nearly unimaginable trials.



The Christy Award™ was established in 1999 to acknowledge the value and impact of the novel of faith in contemporary culture. The awards honor and promote the best accomplishments of writers who write from a perspective of faith and who create stories with matters of belief at their core. The following books are some of the 2020 award winners. For a complete list, including information on all the finalists in each category, go to www.christyawards.com.

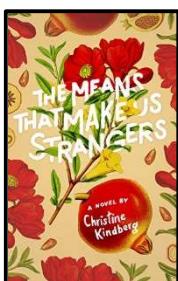
WHOSE WAVES THESE ARE by Amanda Dykes, Bethany House, 2019.



THE MEDALLION by Cathy Gohlke, Tyndale House, 2019.



THE MEANS THAT MAKE US STRANGERS by Christine Kindberg, Bellflower Press, 2019.

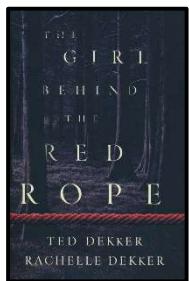


In the wake of World War II, a grieving fisherman submits a poem to a local newspaper: a rallying cry for hope, purpose, and rocks. Decades later, Annie Bliss is summoned back to Ansel-by-the-Sea when she learns her Great-Uncle Robert, the man who became her refuge during the hardest summer of her youth, is now the one in need of help. Long-ago memories of stone ruins on a nearby island trigger her curiosity, igniting a fire in her anthropologist soul to uncover answers. **Winner: Book of the Year and General Fiction**

Seemingly overnight, the German blitzkrieg of Warsaw in 1939 turns its streets into a war zone and shatters the life of each citizen—Polish, Jewish, or otherwise. This illuminating novel about two couples during World War II is inspired by true events of Poland's darkest days and brightest heroes. It paints a stunning portrait of war and its aftermath, daring us to believe that when all seems lost, God can make a way forward. **Winner: Historical**

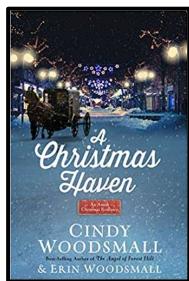
A coming of age story. Adelaide, the daughter of a white anthropologist, has lived her whole life in rural Ethiopia. Then, in 1964, her family moves to South Carolina. Adelaide vows to find her way back to Ethiopia, marry Maicaah, and become part of the village where she grew up. But until she turns 18, she must adjust to this strange place that everyone tells her is home. Ultimately, she must choose where she belongs: the Ethiopian village to which she promised to return? Or this place where she's become part of something bigger than herself? **Winner: Young Adult**

THE GIRL BEHIND THE RED ROPE by Ted and Rachelle Decker, Revell, 2019.



When evil in its purest form is unleashed on the world, Grace and others from her religious community are already hidden deep in the hills of Tennessee, abiding by every rule that will keep them safe, pure and alive - as long as they stay there, behind the red perimeter. Her older brother's questions and the arrival of the first outsiders Grace has seen in a decade set in motion events that will question everything she has built her life on. Enemies rise on all sides--but who is the real enemy? **Winner: Mystery/Suspense/Thriller**

A CHRISTMAS HAVEN; An Amish Christmas Romance by Cindy and Erin Woodsma, WaterBrook, 2019.



Old Order Amish Ivy Zook is wrestling with her need to shed her community's ways so she can grow the business of her dreams: planning parties. As long as she's stuck living without modernization, she can barely get her business on its feet. Swartzentruber Arlan is a member of an ultra-conservative Amish sect. They are on different tracks, one wanting to leave her community and the other wanting to return to his. Both young people are trying to discover what God has in store for their futures and what miracles might lie around the corner this Christmas season. **Winner: Short Form**

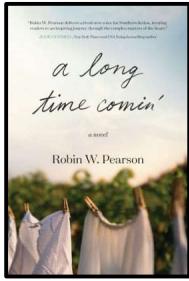
NOW AND THEN AND ALWAYS by Melissa Tagg, Larkspur Press, 2019.



Romance and mystery collide in this first installment of Tagg's new series. After being forced from her job as a nanny, Mara finally found a place to belong—the winsome Everwood Bed & Breakfast at the edge of Maple Valley, Iowa. Between his divorce, debilitating migraines, and a dependence on medication, Marshall's life is falling apart. Together, they set out to save the Everwood. But its secrets run deeper than they could've imagined.

Winner: Contemporary Romance

A LONG TIME COMIN' by Robin Pearson, Tyndale, 2020.



Beatrice has no regrets about the choices she made when her children's father abandoned the family. Granddaughter Evelyn is burdened with her own secret baggage. Determined to help her Granny B mend fences with her far-flung brood, Evelyn turns her grandmother's heart and home inside out. Evelyn's meddling uncovers a tucked-away box of old letters, forcing the two women to wrestle with their past and present pain. **Winner: First Novel**



TCACLA Spring Meeting April 17, 2021

One of the missions of TCACLA is to provide a forum for church librarians to exchange information with each other. In addition to our meetings and our newsletter, we do this via our Facebook page, Twin Cities Area Church Library Association, and our website at www.tcacla.com.



Dulcie Campana is our social media administrator. She is always looking for input from you. If you have an upcoming book event at your church, have had a special promotion for your library, want to recommend a new book, or have any other news that would interest our members, please send the information to her at livingoutfaith@hotmail.com.

