

# OFF THE SHELF



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

Winter 2024

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Special Zoom Presentation by Emily Hoch  
February 24 – 10:00 a.m.



## INSTAGRAM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO USE IT IN YOUR LIBRARY



Instagram is a popular photo and video-based social media site heavily used by Millennials and Gen X. In response to the questions Emily received when she made her presentation at the Fall 2023 meeting (see pages 7-8), she has created this special event.

Join us on Zoom to learn more about how to effectively use Instagram to engage with younger audiences. We will learn about different kinds of content, review popular and successful library accounts, and you'll leave with some ideas for posts you can create.

There is no charge to attend this event, but you must register by February 20 to receive the Zoom link. If you received **Off the Shelf** via e-mail, the e-mail included a link to an electronic registration form. If you received a paper copy in the mail or if the link in the e-mail doesn't work for you, you can register by sending an e-mail to Laura Dirks at [otseditor@gmail.com](mailto:otseditor@gmail.com). When the Zoom link is sent to you, you will receive instructions on how you can set up an Instagram account in advance of the event.

### 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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Members: 22 Churches

01/01/2023	\$1,944.95	<b>Beginning Balance</b>
	\$379.00	Membership Renewals
	\$1,956.00	Meeting Registration
	-\$212.37	<i>Off the Shelf</i> Expenses
	-\$1,483.53	Meeting Expenses
	-\$288.00	All Nations Church
	-\$346.00	Jacob Wetterling Resource Ctr. <sup>1</sup>
	-\$60.90	Archives Shipment to ELCA
	-\$33.17	Website
12/31/2023	\$1,855.98	<b>Ending Balance</b>

<sup>1</sup>This was added to the \$654 collected from the attendees on the day of the Fall meeting for a total donation of \$1,000.

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The 2024 membership form is enclosed with this issue. For just \$15.00, any number of people from your church can receive e-mailed copies of *Off the Shelf*. If you would like more than 1 paper copy with your membership, the cost for each additional subscription is \$7.50.

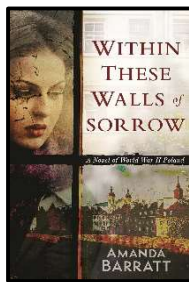
Please complete both sides of the form. It should be mailed, along with your check(s), by no later than March 31. The address is on the form.





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 2023 award winners. For a complete list, including information on all the finalists in each category, go to [www.christyawards.com](http://www.christyawards.com).

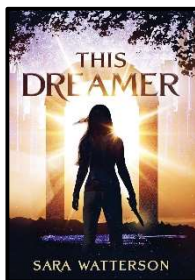
***WITHIN THESE WALLS OF SORROW; A Novel of World War II Poland*** by Amanda Barratt, Kregel Publications, 2023.



Widow Zosia Lewandowska teams with pharmacist Tadeusz Pankiewicz, risking their lives to aid the people crammed inside Krakow's Jewish ghetto. Hania Silverman's carefree girlhood is shattered as her family is forced into the ghetto and struggles to stay alive. Zosia and Hania's lives intertwine as they face the griefs and fears thrust upon them by war, until one day, they are forced to make a desperate choice - one that will inexorably bind them together, even as they are torn apart.

**Winner: Book of the Year and Historical**

***THIS DREAMER*** by Sara Watterson, Inevah Press, 2022.

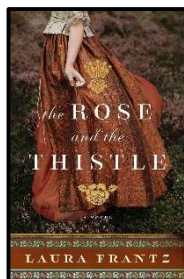


*“An urban fantasy portal adventure inspired by the Old Testament story of Joseph and his dreams.”*

Evie grows restless observing mortals from afar. When a friend offers to smuggle her into the human world, she jumps at the opportunity. Secretly, though, she also hopes to observe Adan, the human Dreamer. But trouble awaits after her captivating adventure and delayed return. Not only did she take an unsanctioned trip to the ground, but now the Dreamer is missing and her director believes she is to blame.

**Winner: Young Adult**

***THE ROSE AND THE THISTLE*** by Laura Frantz, Revell, 2023.



*“A deeply atmospheric story of faith, love, and sacrifice that is as captivating as it is enthralling.”*

In 1715, Lady Blythe Hedley is forced to flee her home in northern England. Secreted to the tower of Wedderburn Castle in Scotland, she quietly awaits the crowning of a new king. No sooner has Everard Hume lost his father than Lady Hedley arrives with her maid in tow. He has his own problems--a volatile brother with dangerous political leanings, an estate to manage, and a very young brother in need of comfort and direction.

**Winner: Historical Romance**

**THE STAR THAT ALWAYS STAYS** by Anna Rose Johnson, Holiday House, 2023.



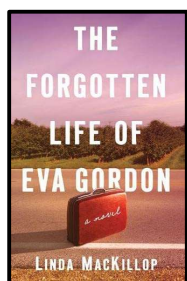
When Norvia moves from the country to the city, she must live by one new rule: Never let anyone know you're Ojibwe. Despite the move, the upheaval, and the looming threat of world war, Norvia and her 5 siblings are determined to make 1914 their best year ever. A tender coming-of-age story about an introspective and brilliant Native American heroine that thoughtfully addresses assimilation, racism, and divorce, as well as every girl problems like first crushes, making friends, and the joys and pains of a blended family. **Winner: The Amplify Award (BIPOC Stories)**

**WHERE THE BLUE SKY BEGINS** by Katie Powner, Bethany House, 2022.



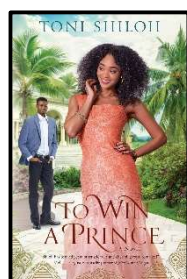
Eric Larson is sent to a rural Montana town to work in the local branch of his uncle's financial company but hopes to be back in Seattle soon. Eunice Parker has come to accept her terminal illness and has given herself one final goal: seek forgiveness from everyone on her bucket list. After an accident pushes them together, the unlikely pair is forced to spend more time with each other than either would like, which challenges their deepest prejudices and beliefs. *What matters most when the end is near?* **Winner: General**

**THE FORGOTTEN LIFE OF EVA GORDON** by Linda MacKillop, Kregel Publications, 2022.



Failing memory has forced Eva Gordon to move in with her granddaughter, Breezy. But Eva hates the bustle of Boston. Then Breezy announces she's getting married, and they'll be moving to her new husband's rundown family farm where he lives with an elderly uncle. They'll be one big family. It's all too much for Eva. *"A big-hearted family saga, suffused with grace and kindness, featuring a cast of appealing characters who would be right at home in Jon Hassler's **Staggerford** or Richard Russo's **Empire Falls**."*—Adrienne Harun. **Winner: First Novel**

**TO WIN A PRINCE** by Toni Shiloh, Bethany House, 2022.

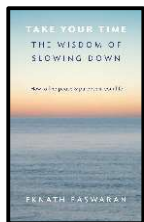


As a fashion aficionado and best friend of the queen of the African island country Qlqro Ilé, Iris Blakely dreams of using her talent to start a sustainable clothing line to help citizens in impoverished areas and honor the country's resources. But when she discovers that Ekon Diallo, the man who betrayed her best friend, will be her business consultant, the battle between her desires and reality begins. *"A charming Bible-inflicted modern fairy tale"* per **Publishers Weekly**. **Winner: Contemporary Romance**

## EKNATH EASWARAN

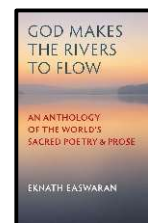
I have recently rediscovered author Eknath Easwaran (1910-1999). He is respected around the world as an authentic guide to timeless wisdom and as the originator of Passage Meditation. He originated in India and lived for many years in the West. He taught meditation and spiritual living for over 40 years. In 1961, he founded the Blue Mountain Center of Meditation in Tomales, CA. You may be familiar with his book, ***GANDHI THE MAN; The Story of His Transformation***.

I recommend these books which I just read.



***TAKE YOUR TIME; The Wisdom of Slowing Down*** - This book addresses the spiritual benefits of the unhurried mind and a more intentional life. The author emphasizes Passage Meditation, an eight-point program of universal spiritual practices and ideas and suggestions for implementing them after each chapter.

***GOD MAKES THE RIVERS TO FLOW: An Anthology of The World's Sacred Poetry & Prose*** - With a deep love for the great saints, sages, and scriptures of the world, Easwaran selects extracts from the Christian, Hindu, Sufi, Jewish, Native American, Buddhist, and Taoist traditions. The book includes 149 selections that are his choice of life-affirming and lyrical writings from the great river of wisdom that flowed down through the centuries and throughout the world.



*Janet Howard, President*

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The Spring meeting will be on Saturday, April 27, at Richfield United Methodist Church, the church home of our Secretary, Wayne Albertson.



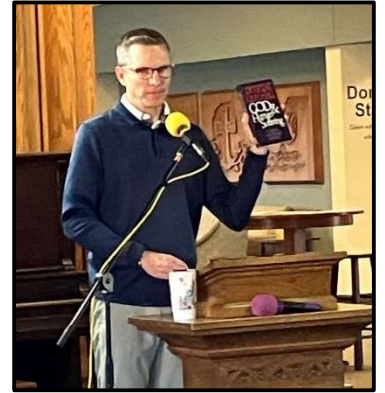
Per Wayne: "The Richfield UMC is happy to welcome TCACLA to its worship, meeting, library, and social activity space for its Spring 2024 meeting. At the end of each worship service, the people of RUMC together speak the line that we "are committed to live in faith, justice, and joy." An important part of our identity is to be a Reconciling Congregation within our Methodist heritage. Our music program has also been an important part of who we are. Our most recent ministry commitment is to join local social agencies to support homeless persons through the conversion of a neighboring motel to a needed shelter. 2024 is RUMC's 170th year of existence, beginning on the farmlands of Richfield. (Hence its name!) As many square miles of Richfield were annexed over time, the church's location is now 5835 Lyndale Avenue South in Minneapolis. The Rev. Nate Melcher is the minister. Welcome!"

## OCTOBER 21 MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



Ann Steen welcomed everyone to Glen Cary Lutheran Church and provided a brief history of the church.

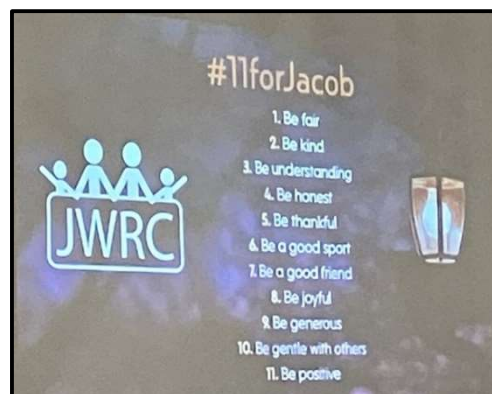
Pastor Jim Page led us in devotions, reading from a Greek New Testament, a Hebrew Old Testament, and ***GOD AND HUMAN SUFFERING; an Exercise in the Theology of the Cross*** by Douglas John Hall, a book that was pivotal for him.



During a brief business meeting, Emily Hoch and Roberta Shaw were unanimously re-elected to 2<sup>nd</sup> terms as our Vice President and Treasurer.

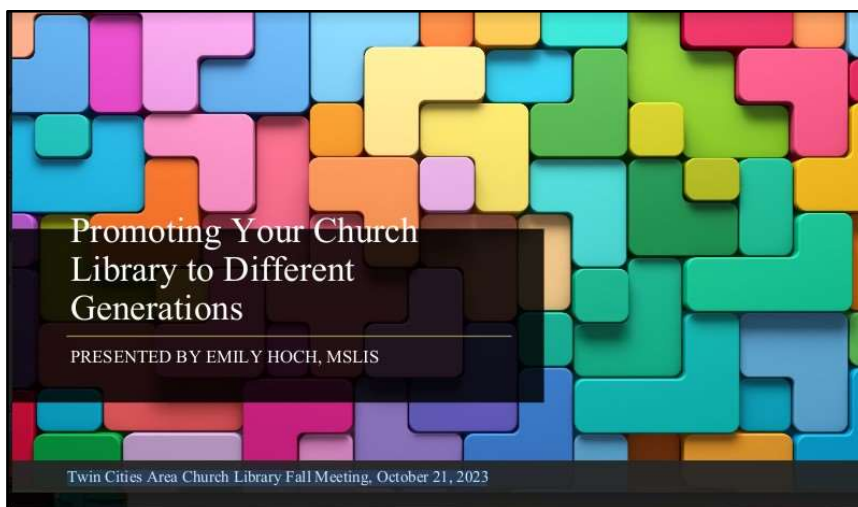
They then facilitate a workshop on Promoting Your Church Library. See the next page for more details on that.

During a short break, we were joined by many guests, including Joy Baker's proud mother who lives near Ham Lake. Joy and Patty Wetterling shared their emotional story about the events surrounding Jacob Wetterling's kidnapping, how Joy and Patty connected, and how the case was ultimately solved. Many attendees walked out with autographed copies of their book, which had just been officially released 3 days earlier.



[www.zeroabuseproject.org/victim-assistance/jwrc](http://www.zeroabuseproject.org/victim-assistance/jwrc)





## What age is your audience?

How we find and consume information has change radically over the past 30 years. Centering your audience's age range will help you determine the most effective library promotion strategy.

- Who comes to church on Sundays?
  - Are most church attendees 60+?
  - Have you noticed many middle-aged people?
  - Are there lots of young families?
  - Or do you have a mix off everyone?

## Church library promotions for all age groups

- Signs, signs, signs! – Have signage inside and outside your library
- Displays and face outs – Show off your collection
- Shelf triggers – Questions on the shelves that help readers consider that section
- Book review cards – Help others find great books
- Adopt a logo to accompany all signs, flyers, newsletters, and emails



## Promoting your church library to all age groups

Some promotion tactics work for all age groups. These are especially the ones that are in or near your library. These tactics...

- Help make your library more usable by making collection materials or the library itself findable.
- Create opportunities to encourage curiosity as people browse the collection.
- The library is an extension of your church. Tie your library's collection back to your church's mission and sermon themes.

## Promoting to different age groups

Baby Boomers and older 60+ years	Gen X 40-59 years	Millennials and Gen Z 15-39 years	Children (14 and younger)
❖ Physical newsletters and flyers	❖ Physical newsletters and flyers	❖ Millennials: Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok	❖ Events
❖ Emailed newsletters	❖ Emailed newsletters	❖ Gen Z: TikTok and YouTube	❖ Games / anything novel
❖ Facebook	❖ Facebook and Instagram	❖ Do not email	❖ Physical activities
❖ Phone calls	❖ Phone calls	❖ Send a text or leave a voicemail	❖ Social activities

## Promotional materials for Gen X and older (40+)

- Flyers or advertisements in the Sunday bulletin
- Curating a section for the library in the church's newsletter
- Library-specific email ideas:
  - Book of the month for adults and/or parents of teens or children
  - Book reviews
  - New books in the library
- Book clubs (works best for folks who are retired or stay-at-home parents)

## Library promotion techniques for Millennials and Gen Z

- Social media – Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube.
- Go to where the people already are – Use your church's social media accounts.
- Focus on pictures and video content, include faces when possible.
- Be concise – Social media is for little bites of information. Use 100 words or fewer in your captions. Spotlight one item or person at a time.
- Be consistent – Think about what content you will post to the social media site and how frequently.

## Social media content ideas

- Work in series to make it easier to think of content (book of the month, meet your librarian, new books, 'what I love about my church library').
- Book Talks (videos) – Introduce yourself, your title, the name of the library, the title and author of the book, what it's about, what you like about it, where they can find it (section and repeat library name). Keep it about 1 minute long.
- What's happening in the library? New book reviews, triggers or displays, introduce the library team members one by one, general announcements. Always include either a picture, meme or a video.

## Ideas for engaging children (14 and under)

- Story time with kids or teens in the library, or if your library doesn't have a space, bring a cart of books to the kids.
- Treasure hunts in the library and church
- Book or programming bingo
- Coloring sheets with themes relevant to the sermon topics

## Church library promotion for children (14 and under)

- Kids are digital natives and may also use social media, but you can still engage this group offline.
- Focus on active and passive (self-directed) activities that happen in the library.
- Connect with your youth pastors and Sunday school teachers to plan a lesson together
- Focus on fun or educational. Don't ask teens to do work.

## Tips and tricks

- Consistency is key! Never do something just once. Always try the same thing 3-5 times and then evaluate.
- Marketing takes practice. Try things out and see what works.
- Perfectionism squashes creativity. Don't forget to play and have fun!
- Involve your church leaders.
- Develop a plan that incorporates strategies for different types of audiences. The same piece of content can be shared different ways to reach a wider audience.

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