

congregational libraries *today*



SERVING CONGREGATIONAL LIBRARIES OF ALL FAITHS SINCE 1967

CSLAINFO.ORG | FIRST ISSUE 2015

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Overcoming *library* LIMITATIONS

Valley Church transforms space into both a Library and a Welcome Center

BY PATTY GRIMM, LIBRARIAN
VALLEY CHURCH

Valley Church's Library, located in Cupertino, California, recently underwent a transformation to become both the church's Welcome Center and its Library. The purpose? To provide a space where newcomers and "old-timers" alike can visit with each other in a welcoming, relaxing indoor place.

When congregants meet new visitors to the church, they can invite them to the Welcome Center for a coffee, get to know them, and answer their questions about the church. Prior to creating this space, people had no indoor place to "hang out," as all rooms on campus on Sundays are used for classes.

By combining the Welcome Center with the Library, congregants see the Library as an inviting, integral part of their church life.

The transformation began in February 2013. The collection was shifted to shelves on wheels and placed in a temporary location. Then the former library space was gutted and shelving, furniture and carpeting were removed. A new stained concrete floor was installed and an



Café tables contribute to a bistro atmosphere enjoyed by the Silicon Valley residents. Note the stained concrete floor—a popular choice in recent years that combines style with practicality.

espresso coffee bar, a counter with barstools, and café tables were added. A new glass double door facing the sanctuary was also installed, making this space easy to visually locate.

In August 2013 the library shelving and circulation desk were put up on one side of the room where those who come in to enjoy coffee or tea can also browse the collection of books and DVDs.

September 8, 2013, marked the grand opening of the Welcome Center and Library. Trained volunteer baristas from our congregation take shifts serving up lattes and espressos

>> article continues on page 3



WISH LIST— goals for me, my library and CSLA

CHERYL CUTCHIN
PRESIDENT, CSLA

At this point in my life I don't call anything a resolution, but a wish list of things I would like to see done.

This is the time I always think about weeding the library, catching up on cataloging, setting goals for the year, and cleaning out the clutter in my house and closets. At this point in my life I don't call anything a resolution, but a wish list of things I would like to see done. The library wish list, CSLA wish list and my home wish list are all separate, but probably should be one list since I'm the one who wants everything on my lists completed.

There are three goals for my library this year. The first is weeding the collection for my congregation's library. Weeding the library is not something I can do all at one time. This year I am planning to weed one section a month and breaking that down into numbers of shelves a week for the large sections such as fiction. As I think about weeding I conclude there are definite advantages to having a small library.

The second goal is to clean out the storage closet, and that affects my third goal of catching up on cataloging. You see, the storage closet has a stack of donated books that either should be cataloged or discarded, and I suspect some of them have been in that closet long enough that discarding would make more sense. However, I think most librarians have a problem getting rid of a perfectly good book. I think you probably share my dilemma. Ask me in July at the CSLA Conference in Denton, Texas, how many books are still in that closet.

As a nonprofit organization, CSLA provides unending support for congregational librarians, regardless of faith, through the website, CSLA published guides and journals, mentors and by attending the wonderful workshops at the annual summer conference.

My goals for CSLA are, first, to increase membership in the organization, thus making CSLA resources available to more librarians.

The second goal is to increase revenue through Friends of CSLA donations. Even though we are a nonprofit organization, funds are necessary to pay for the daily operations of the CSLA office and producing the wonderful publication, *Congregational Libraries Today*. The quarterly journal is like attending a workshop every few months. When I read *CLT*, there always is new information to think about. Without additional funding our organization cannot continue at its present level of service.

My third goal is to have record attendance at the CSLA Forty-eighth Annual Conference in Denton. Ralph Hartsock, chairman, has planned wonderful speakers and workshops. This is the conference to attend if you have a limited budget as campus housing at the University of North Texas is available at nominal fees. Look for the conference registration materials soon for more information.

Finally I would like to see more librarians involved in CSLA committees and the Board. Committee involvement generally only takes a few hours a >> *article continues on page 5*



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Shelving helps to define the functional spaces without restricting movement. Good lighting invites browsing.



Cart dispenses "fixings" during gathering times. Coffee bar with movable cart "parked" when not in use.



Patty Grimm, Librarian

QUICK FACTS

- Librarian: Patricia Grimm, San Jose Bay Area Chapter Member
- Congregation: Valley Church
- Nondenominational Christian
- Founded 1958
- Location: Cupertino, CA ("Silicon valley")
- Average weekly attendance - 550
- Collection: 5,437 items, 5% AV (DVD & CD)
- Catalog: Dewey classification; Concourse OPAC by Booksystems; Print catalog also maintained
- Staffing: Volunteer (library volunteers and Welcome Center volunteer baristas are separate)
- Hours: Staffed Sunday & Wednesday mornings

Overcoming library LIMITATIONS

is a new series that highlights libraries that have overcome limitations of space, layout, or location in creative ways. We hope that by sharing these stories, you will be inspired to tackle your own library's challenges. If you know of a library that fits into this category, please pass the information on to Susan Sponaas, Publications Chair, susansponaas7@gmail.com. That library may be featured in an upcoming issue.

Valley Church's Library and Welcome Center—

>> *article continued from page 1*

to all visitors. Donations are welcomed to defray the costs of supplies, but no charge is made for these coffees.

The Library remains a part of this new Welcome Center space to enrich and encourage new and longtime attendees with Christian materials they might not find in their public libraries.

The Library has been a valued part of Valley Church almost since its inception. Consisting originally of books from the pastor's collection in 1960, the Library has moved and expanded several times as the

church has grown over the years.

In its current form as part of the Welcome Center, the main collection contains all of the fiction and nonfiction books from 230 through the 900s, the children's books, and all DVDs and CDs. The Library has an annex that houses all of the Bible resources.

We are pleased to say that this room is indeed being used as a welcoming place. It is often buzzing with conversations and the heady smell of strong coffee after services.

CongreGate:

A Union Catalog of faith-based Libraries

Those of us familiar with OCLC's worldwide library database have often longed for a faith-based version where a single search would let us know what titles other libraries similar to ours are adding to their collections, help identify an elusive title or provide cataloging information. As of October 2014, a first step was made toward that goal. Twelve CSLA member libraries, including two denominational resource centers, from seven states and representing four denominations contributed their records to a single database called **CongreGate**. (<http://cgate.epimetheus.scoolaid.net>)

While the possibility of a union catalog was discussed as long ago as the 2010 conference in Houston, the concept did not really take off until the 2014 conference in Portland, Oregon. During his workshop on the OPALS library automation software, Media Flex president Harry Chan offered to host a combined catalog for CSLA members, using the OPALS Union Catalog program which is currently in operation within numerous school districts across the Northeast. While the Union Catalog program is separate from local catalogs and can accommodate records from numerous automation systems, there is a more seamless interface between the two OPALS programs.

The initial CongreGate project began with libraries already using OPALS for their local online catalogs. OPALS sites in church and synagogue libraries with current CSLA memberships, either library or individual, were identified. Several others with lapsed memberships were ready to rejoin in order to participate.

Some librarians were immediately enthusiastic; others were willing to participate but didn't see any immediate need within their own libraries. Project names were discussed, and a decision was needed regarding the hierarchy to use for limiting searches to fewer than "all" libraries. Should the hierarchy be geographic or denominational? While limiting will seldom be needed with only 12 participants, what would work best as the number grows? In line with CSLA's interfaith focus, the final decision was to provide for geographic limitation by state.

With individual library collection sizes ranging from 400 to 5600 titles each, CongreGate currently has 34,300 bibliographic records. An algorithm compares incoming records with those already in the database and merges holdings where appropriate. Significant cataloging differences from one library to the next have resulted in far more records for the same titles than we had anticipated. While content may appear identical in the public displays, it's not uncommon to find that the MARC or RDA coding is quite different, resulting in separate records. Records may be downloaded using z39.50.

Participants are still in learning mode after just a few weeks' availability, but the database is already proving useful. Searching CongreGate is a first step for several libraries when cataloging newly published curriculum, since the first readily available RDA or MARC records are appearing there. With seven United Methodist participants, Cheryl Cutchin at Winder United Methodist Church is looking forward to locating—and also con-



LIBRARIES CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN CONGREGATE INCLUDE:

Berwyn United Methodist Church
(Berwyn, Pennsylvania)
Duluth First United Methodist Church
(Duluth, Georgia)
North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church Media Center
(Garner, North Carolina)
Northern Colorado Faith Library
(Fort Collins, Colorado)
Foothills Presbytery Resource Center
(Simpsonville, South Carolina)
Franconia Mennonite Church
(Telford, Pennsylvania)
Mauldin United Methodist Church
(Mauldin, South Carolina)
Perkasie Mennonite Church
(Perkasie, Pennsylvania)
Virginia Beach United Methodist Church
(Virginia Beach, Virginia)
Westminster Presbyterian Church
(Greenville, South Carolina)
Winder First United Methodist Church
(Winder, Georgia)
Zion Lutheran Church
(Fort Meyers, Florida)

tributing—catalog records for titles in the UMW Reading Program.

As Northern Colorado Faith Library librarian David Reid commented, "We've already found many uses for CongreGate Union. For example, I've researched specific authors—both living and dead—to see what holdings others may have. It doesn't take long to identify gaps in our own collection."

Beginning in 2015 we are ready to expand CongreGate to include libraries using other automation systems. If your library has bibliographic records which can benefit the larger community of congregational libraries, or if you know of a CSLA member library which you would like to see included in this cooperative database, contact Pat Shufeldt (pshufeldt@gmail.com) at Westminster Presbyterian Church Library, Greenville, South Carolina, for further information.



DOING DEWEY

CLASSIFICATION NUMBERS FOR RECREATION AND THE PERFORMING ARTS

BY SUSAN SYNDER
ssnyder44147@gmail.com

Many congregations use puppets, present pageants, hold indoor game nights, or have their own local sports teams. Consequently congregational libraries may have materials dealing with any of these activities.

All are classified in the 790s. These numbers have changed little between the 13th abridged edition (1997) and the 15th abridged edition (2012, based on the 23rd unabridged edition).

Hobbies, leisure, activities for families, activities for specific age groups, and activities for people with disabilities are classified in 790.1. Books about motion pictures are

assigned 791.43, books about radio programs appear in 791.44 and books about television programs in 791.45. (Audiovisual materials themselves are usually grouped together and arranged alphabetically if they are fiction, and classified with the subject that they are about if nonfiction.)

Puppetry and toy theaters are classified in 791.5, and pageants and parades in 791.6.

Stage presentations, including costumes, are classified in 792. (Texts of plays are treated as literature and assigned to 812 and 822.)

Religious drama productions are classified with productions of other

serious drama in 792.1.

Indoor games and amusements, including parties and social and folk dancing, belong in 793. Indoor games of skill, ranging from chess and checkers to bowling, are classified in 794. Video games are classified as 794.8, while games of chance are 795.

Athletic and outdoor sports and games are classified in 796. More specific numbers assigned to individual sports include 796.323 (basketball), 796.332 (American football), 796.334 (soccer) and 796.357 (baseball and softball).

Outdoor life, including camping and hiking, is assigned to 796.5.



Motion pictures: 791.43



Stage Presentations: 792



Outdoor Sports: 796

President's Message— >> *article continued from page 2*

month depending upon the committee. At this time the Conference committee could use help completing conference details and activities. CSLA will need to fill several Board positions this year including some committee chairs and officer positions. Remember that these positions are not something requiring your time all day every day, but do require planning, communication and follow through. Fortunately almost everything can be done via email or

a phone call. The rewards are great when you get involved and we all work together to continue the CSLA tradition and spirit. Contact the CSLA office if you might be interested.

Now that last thing I think about in January, cleaning out closets and clutter in my house, perhaps just needs to wait until spring or summer. No, I'll be at the CSLA Summer Conference in July — so maybe fall or winter would be a better time to think about cleaning and clutter!



Beyond the Book: Enhancing Your Congregational Library with Audio-Visual Resources.

Rusty Tryon. To assist congregational librarians in making audio-visual resources an integral part of their library collections. Sale: \$6 + postage until March 31.

CSLA GUIDE



LIBRARY LIMELIGHTS

keeping yours in the center

BY DOTTIE LEWIS, deglewis@gmail.com

Winter is a great time to encourage reading during those short days when it is hard to get out. “If the weather outside is frightful...” or “Reading is cool” – take a note from Upstart® (<http://upstartpromotions.com/upstart/>) and see how many ideas they have for winter reading. If the weather we have had so far is any indication, winter may go on for a while. And see the previous issue of *CLT* at this column’s page for more winter ideas.

Found a new observance for March – **National Craft Month**. Crafts are VERY in vogue these days. We seem to be returning to our family traditions and customs. More people are knitting, crocheting, weaving, and scrapbooking. I hope you have helpful media for these pursuits. It seems there are not a lot of people around to teach the knitting and crocheting stitches, so we need media to illustrate the creation. There are now quite a few books to help out with this endeavor.

MARCH

A most neglected of biblical figures is Joseph, Jesus’ earthly father. March 19 is **St. Joseph Day**. If you have anything about Joseph, now would be a good time to make an effort to honor this biblical character. Do you have a copy of Joseph’s carol for a backdrop? March 20 is the first day of **spring**. We can only hope it will be close to feeling like it! March 29 is **Palm Sunday**. I hope you are keeping all accoutrements used in previous displays to use again as the days come and go. My library staff saves just about everything. We add as we see bargains while shopping. We use things over and over but never repeat an exact display. It all gets to be a kind of adventure!



April is **Garden Month**. My own library has not had nearly enough books on this subject in the non-fiction section. So we have been working on this omission for several years. We try to use as much memorial money as appropriate for this specific collection. Fortunately, gardening is a fond avocation for both men and women. “How Does Your Garden Grow?” is a most popular topic!

APRIL

April will offer us a great many ideas for promotion: **Maundy Thursday** (April 2) **Good Friday** (April 3) and **Easter** (April 5). I feel sure we all have ample materials to cover these blessed events. **Passover** begins April 4 and continues through April 11. It is well to prepare for these times by promoting the media you have explaining the import of these celebrations, their significance for today, and any devotional materials that help with this understanding.

April is **School Library Month** and **National Library Week** is April 12-18. ALA, Upstart, Scholastic, Demco, Children’s Book Council are a few of the resources available to all libraries for the celebration of our passion – books and libraries. **Holocaust Remembrance** is April 19.



Old suitcases make great display units, don’t they?

MAY

May seems a long way off right now, but let us think positively. It will come. On May 1 we have **Mother Goose Day** and **May Day**. Every children’s library should have a goose to cuddle.

Maybe you can revive the old-fashioned May Day by getting children to do May baskets for grandparents, parents, teachers.



Brother and Sister Day is May 2. Just think of all the media one has dealing with siblings—fiction and nonfiction. Have you a set of *Raggedy Ann and Andy*? Dig them out!

May 24 is **Pentecost** and the beginning of **Shavuot**.

More ideas

Check out these websites for other ideas that may suit your collection: <http://judaism.about.com/od/holidays> <http://www.emotionscards.com/locations.html> www.daysoftheyear.com/days/craft-month/

CHAPTER Chatter



Marcia Trauernicht,
Chapters Coordinator

INDIANA CHAPTER

The 35th Anniversary of the Indiana Chapter was celebrated on October 18, 2014, at the Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis. The theme was “Celebrating the Past – Embracing the Future.” Time was spent in remembering and honoring the Chapter’s long history and those who served in it, followed by a workshop on using Pinterest in your library. Mechelle Sweeting, the presenter, is the Library Chair, Media Specialist at Memorial United Methodist Church in Terre Haute, Indiana. To find out more about Pinterest, go to <http://www.pinterest.com/>. From its website: “Pinterest is a visual discovery tool that you can use to find ideas for all your projects and interests.”

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The local Logos Bookstore (Snider Plaza) was the location of the November 9, 2014, meeting of the North Texas Chapter. Owner/manager Rick Lewis provided an overview of new publications appropriate for congregational libraries. For a preview of its spring meeting, check out this chapter’s planned Day of Workshops: “Are you willing to go the distance?” on March 7, 2015, at <http://northtexascsla.blogspot.com/>. If you’re in the area, plan to attend!

SAN JOSE BAY CHAPTER

At their November 17, 2014, meeting held at the Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church, San Jose Bay Chapter members shared their favorite books and media for the upcoming holidays: Thanksgiving, Advent, St. Nicholas, Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa. Under the leadership of Carol Campbell, the members will be recommending children’s books for an upcoming new edition of the CSLA Bibliography *Classic Religious Books for Children*. The goal is to have this edition completed by early summer of 2015.

WESTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER

The fall meeting of the Western New York Chapter was held at Saint Paul’s Lutheran Church in Hilton, New York on October 11, 2014. Attending members celebrated the chapter’s 25th anniversary by reviewing its history and looking over the various scrapbooks of events created through the years. A special report on the library redecoration and upcoming dedication in memory of a former Houghton Wesleyan Church Library committee member was presented by Donnie Stockin. Bruce and Cindy Anderson, owners of the local Logos

Bookstores in the Rochester area, provided an informative and entertaining review of new books and media for the congregational library.

VIRTUAL CHAPTER

Two fall meeting sessions were held for the Virtual Chapter as a trial, to see if more members would be able to participate. Though the sessions were very good, fewer people attended than expected. Topics discussed:

- Ideas for articles and columns for Congregational Libraries Today—suggestions were passed along to Susan Sponaas, editor.
- Resources for identifying classification numbers besides the Library of Congress website: some suggestions were OhioLink <http://olc1.ohiolink.edu/> and MaineCat <http://www.maineinfonet.org/mainecat/about/>
- Obtaining volunteers (and keeping them):
 - Time and talent cards used to identify potential volunteers.
 - Word of mouth.
 - Recommendation by congregational staff.
 - Hosting special lunches for volunteer staff.
 - Tailoring responsibilities to talents of volunteers.
 - Not all tasks require “library” skills.
 - Not all tasks require a weekly or long-term commitment.
 - Making it easy for volunteers to do their work.
 - If possible, involve all age groups in library work.

This past summer, Media Flex has been working with twelve congregations to form a union catalog of CSLA member libraries, named CongreGate. Members will be able to search all catalogs or just their own, and records may be downloaded from the system. [\(See article on page 4 of this issue for details.\)](#)→



Browsing the book display



Glenda Childs, vendor



Daniel Sean Kay, speaker

DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER

The fall meeting of the Delaware Valley Chapter was held at Hopewell United Methodist Church near Downingtown, Pennsylvania, Oct. 18, 2014. Teddi Wright and Mary Baringer, hostesses for the day, provided information about the church's stained glass windows, the outdoor labyrinth, and library. Cindy Longacre conducted the business meeting during which time Dawn Domans shared a report on the CSLA conference held this summer in Oregon.

Glenda Childs, book vendor for the day and owner of the Doylestown Book Shop, presented a workshop titled "Holiday Resources through the Year."

The workshop "Why the Y Matters: Strategies and Solutions for Your Congregational Library" was conducted by Katherine Webb. Useful ideas were given for reaching the younger age group (the millennials) in the congregation.

Daniel Sean Kay, columnist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and several magazines, was the luncheon speaker. He spoke on the topic "The Joy of Telling Stories: Connecting to All Ages Though Words and Pictures." His book *Never Underestimate a Hermit Crab* was available for purchase and signing. —Naomi Kauffman

CSLA Conference 2015 line-up of speakers, housing options set

BY RALPH HARSTOCK, CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR

You are invited to join us at the next CSLA national conference on July 29-31, in Denton, Texas. We still need committee chairs for this event, and I hope some of you can volunteer to assist us. A Call for Workshops will appear soon on Facebook and Twitter.

Conference meetings will take place at the University of North Texas Libraries Willis Library, which is conveniently located near the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport. Public transportation is available from there (<http://www.dart.org/riding/dfwairport.asp>). All university facilities have Wi-Fi, and each room in the Library is equipped for presentations.

The opening luncheon will feature two authors from Pearls of Promise (a ministry for women enduring extreme stress), Lisa Burkhardt Worley and Catherine Weiskopf.

At a pre-dinner program, selections from an Episcopalian composer and

a Jewish composer will constitute a brief service in music. Adam LaSpata, a doctoral candidate in musicology who is also studying for his MLS, will lead a lecture about this service music and its ties to UNT.

The theme at the dinner Wednesday night will be "Libraries and Literacy around the World." Rabbi Geoffrey Dennis of Congregation Kol Ami, Flower Mound, Texas, will present his observations of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Rev. William (Bill) Laucher, Vicar of St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas, and a former missionary to Central America, will join us as well.

Our speaker for Thursday's lunch is Rick Lewis, owner of Logos Books in Dallas, who will update us on news of religious publishing. He has been a regular presenter at the North Texas Chapter meetings for several years.

Lodging for those who wish to stay nearby will be at Honors Hall (<http://>

untsystem.edu/adminservices/projects/recently-completed/project_honors-hall.htm), a dorm facility. Commercial restaurants are very near this, and a nearby campus cafeteria, Bruce Hall, will be serving meals each day.

There are also hotels within a few miles, with at least one (Courtyard by Marriott) offering free shuttle service to the university.

For those who wish to venture into Dallas, there are public transportation options that make the ride much easier and less stressful than using your own vehicle in an unfamiliar city (<https://www.dcta.net/>; <http://www.dart.org/>).

And believe it or not, planning for the 2016 conference should begin very soon. We need a chapter to step forward with a proposal for a location of the meeting. The longer we have for planning these conferences, the better prepared we will be.

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

Go to cslainfo.org for a nomination form and description of each of these award categories:

Deadline for submission is
March 31, 2015.

Outstanding Congregational Library

Outstanding Congregational Librarian

Outstanding Contribution to Congregational Libraries

Helen Keating Ott Award for Outstanding Contribution to Children's Literature

Pat Tabler Memorial Scholarship Award



Will you join us?

Your membership renewal and donations help us provide the latest information to assist you in your Library Ministry. *Congregational Libraries Today* is the best quarterly journal to help YOU as a congregational librarian with informative articles, media reviews, information about publishers, software, our excellent guides and bibliographies, as well as our annual conference. We have several of our guides and bibliographies in process of revision to make sure that you will have the latest and best information available.

CHURCH AND SYNAGOGUE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

501(c) (3) Tax Deductible Organization

Membership Renewal Form for January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Please send CSLA mail to: ___ Home ___ Congregation ___ Resource Center

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Congregation/Resource Ctr. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____

Phone: _____

Home

Congregational/Resource Ctr

Fax _____

E-mail _____

Students: Name of School _____

Graduation Date _____

Credit Card # _____ CSV# _____

Expiration date _____

We accept Visa / MasterCard

3 digit # on back of card

*Duplicate form to add as many individuals to your Congregational or Affiliate membership as desired. Congregational/Resource Center & Affiliate memberships now cover unlimited number of individuals as approved by your committee or group.

We now have a Virtual Chapter of CSLA for our members! All you have to do is contact Marcia Trauernicht, Chapters Coordinator at marciatmail@gmail.com or the office at csla@worldaccessnet.com We will be sure that you are added to the Virtual Chapter members list.

CIRCLE ONE

Individual - \$50

Individual Canadian - \$55usd

*Congregational/Resource Ctr - \$70

*Canadian/Int'l/Resource Ctr - \$75usd

Student - \$20

*Affiliate - \$100

FRIENDS OF CSLA \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

\$15 charge for returned checks

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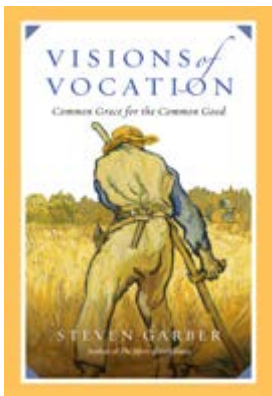
new media for your library



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LIVING IN FAITH



Visions of Vocation: Common Grace for the Common Good

Steven Garber. InterVarsity, 2014. 255p. \$16.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8308-3666-6. Available as an ebook. www.ivpress.com 248.8'8 Vocation—Christianity.

Vocation is “that to which I am called as a human being, living . . . before the face of God.” In *Visions of Vocation*, many insights challenge the mind, while the basic questions challenge the heart: “Can we know the world

and still love it?” and “What will you do with what you know?”

In eight chapters, Steven Garber directs readers to see, to know, and to respond. Each chapter opens with a quote, and Garber draws insights and illustrations from scripture, history, plays, movies, books and personal experience. The broader the reader’s fund of knowledge, the greater will be his or her appreciation for Garber’s.

In the chapter “Come and See,” readers walk through John’s gospel, linking “Word became flesh” to our responsibility for bringing life to ideas. Garber reminds readers that when evil seems overpowering, good is happening to counteract that evil, albeit sometimes quietly. Though *Visions of Vocation* is written from a Christian perspective, people from different faiths and those of no particular faith but with an interest in justice and social action will find examples and encouragement.

“Prayer for Vocations” concludes the book, and an extensive notes section offers material beyond basic references. Recommended for anyone interested in promoting “grace for the common good.” —*Carolyn Egolf*



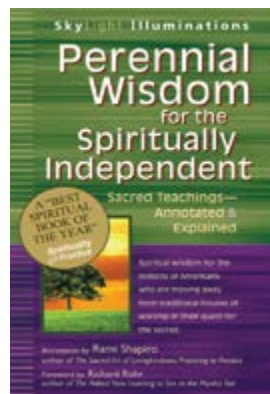
Simplify: Ten Practices to Unclutter Your Soul

Bill Hybels. Tyndale, 2014. 309p. \$22.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-4143-9122-9. Available in paperback and as an ebook. www.tyndale.com 248.4 Simplicity—Religious aspects—Christianity. Spiritual life—Christianity. Christian life.

Bill Hybels is a bestselling author and the founding pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois. Based on his personal

experiences and perspective on life, *Simplify* offers in ten chapters the author’s recommendations for organizing important aspects of life. Topics include energy, scheduling, finances, work life, forgiveness, fear, relationships, God’s call, change and legacy.

While the concepts of simplification and life organization are not new, Hybels provides a fresh look, with many examples and suggestions. Simplified living, Hybels writes, is about becoming “who God called us to be, with a wholehearted, single-minded focus.” Hybels includes action steps at the end of each chapter. This book is appropriate for clergy and for congregational libraries and will fit well in self-help, Christian growth, or spiritual life collections. —*Sharon T. Hinton*



Perennial Wisdom for the Spiritually Independent: Sacred Teachings—Annotated & Explained

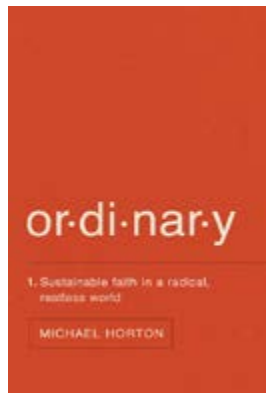
Rami Shapiro, ed. SkyLight Paths, 2013. 313p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-59473-515-8. Available as an ebook. www.skylightpaths.com 204 Religions.

A large number of Americans are now religiously unaffiliated, which is not the same as disinter-

ested. Rabbi Rami Shapiro offers an engaging text that presents spiritual teachings for people who are exploring the breadth of the world's wisdom. He uses a philosophical framework, gathering a wealth of spiritual texts that address five existential questions: Who am I?; Where did I come from?; Where am I going?; How shall I live?; and Why? Shapiro's sources span the globe and the centuries.

Perennial philosophy views each of the world's religious traditions as sharing a single, universal truth on which the foundation of all religious knowledge and doctrine has grown. As one reads the many sources, representing every major religion, Greek and modern philosophy, and more, the core teachings become clear. The overlap—indeed, the outright agreement—between traditions is striking. The commentary provided by Shapiro underscores the ways in which diverse traditions can point to a common wisdom.

Shapiro addresses each of his five questions in turn. An opening essay sets out possible approaches to understanding and serves as a lens through which one might understand the texts that follow. This is a great study volume for individuals or for group discussion. Recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World

Michael Horton. Zondervan, 2014. 221p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-310-51737-5. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.zondervan.com 248.4 Christian life.

Many of us associate the term “ordinary” with boring, plain, uninteresting and not worth much. However, Michael Horton challenges Christians to look at the meaning of this word in a

different light. He suggests new ways to sustain a deep faith instead of treating it as a radical but temporary experience. This in-depth study looks at how we have viewed faith and practiced religion through the past and in recent history.

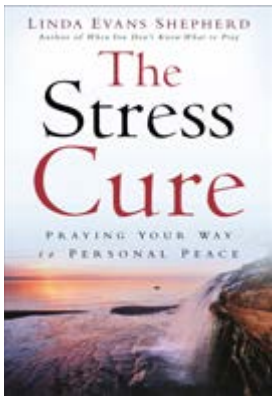
Horton, a professor of systematic theology and apologetics at Westminster Seminary California, provides research and examples that clearly support his main themes. He writes of the need not to be a super-apostle or super-hero but a disciplined one. Whether it is work-

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ing for God's ecosystem or loving our neighbor, it is through ordinary actions faithfully performed that we grow in faith.

The accompanying study guide for groups is extremely useful. It may enhance clarity for participants if they read each chapter of the study guide before and after reading each chapter of the book. Recommended. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



The Stress Cure: Praying Your Way to Personal Peace

Linda Evans Shepherd. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 198p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2213-8. Available as an ebook. www.revellbooks.com 248.32 Prayer.

For individuals who are frustrated, anxious, depressed or overwhelmed by any of a myriad of concerns, Linda Evans Shepherd has written *The Stress Cure: Praying Your Way to Personal*

Peace. In each chapter, she recounts one or more situations in which she or someone else has experienced such a problem. She then lists two or three things the reader should do to correct or at least ameliorate the condition. For example, in the chapter dealing with negativism, she suggests: "Learn to be content," "keep your heart open to the love of God," and "take better care of yourself." She briefly discusses each suggestion and gives prayers that can be offered or that serve as excellent models for one's own prayers. Another important part of each chapter is her retelling in contemporary style a biblical story dealing with the characteristic that is the chapter's topic. As the conclusion to each chapter, Shepherd guides the readers in prayers to be said as they turn problems over to God.

People who suffer from stress of any kind will find *The Stress Cure* helpful. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Hope for the Caregiver: Encouraging Words to Strengthen Your Spirit

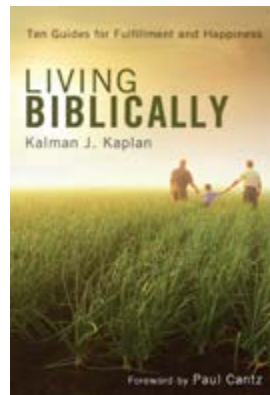
Peter Rosenberger. Worthy, 2014. 221p. \$12.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-61795-382-8. Available as an ebook. www.worthypublishing.com 362 Caregivers. Home nursing.

Peter Rosenberger has been his wife's caregiver for nearly thirty years. Severely injured in a car accident at age seventeen, Gracie Rosenberger is a double

amputee. She has had more than seventy-five surgeries, and the medical expenses total close to nine million dollars. Her husband recounts their experiences in *Hope for the Caregiver*.

Small in size, this book is filled with thought-provoking, helpful insights and advice in forty concise chapters that make it easy to read a bit at a time. Throughout, Peter Rosenberger includes verses from scripture and many other quotations applicable to each chapter.

Hope for the Caregiver emphasizes the importance of taking care of oneself, physically and emotionally, not only for the caregiver's benefit but also for the benefit of the patient. At age twenty-two, Rosenberger had to begin learning—the hard way, from his mistakes—how to care for a disabled person. He urges caregivers to face reality but not abandon hope. "Facing reality means accepting the world as it is. As we do so, it's important to remember that as we face the caregiver's reality, we can accept that world while also working to make it a little better for at least two people: ourselves and our loved ones." —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Living Biblically: Ten Guides for Fulfillment and Happiness

Kalman J. Kaplan. Wipf and Stock, 2013. 152p. \$20.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-62032-175-1. Available as an ebook. www.wipfandstock.com 150 Psychology. Ethics. Mythology. Bible—Stories.

The patterns by which we understand the human psyche, Kalman J. Kaplan maintains, derive from Greek thought and find expression in Greek myths.

Kaplan believes, however, that this heritage negatively impacts our understanding of and work with human relationships. He writes that the Greek narratives "make abundantly clear that it is impossible to escape one's fate, no matter how hard one tries," and this creates psychological traps that hinder our growth and healing. In response, he proposes an approach to psychology based on understandings in the Hebrew Bible. He suggests that these understandings can help individuals lead happier, more fulfilled lives.

Kaplan, a professor and specialist in psychology and Judaism, contrasts the Greek and biblical narratives with regard to ten key relationships, including those with the environment, with oneself, with authority, and with family members. Using well-known stories from Greek mythology and from the Bible, he illustrates the difference in outlook and underscores the central elements of each tradition's approach to the particular relationship. He then presents contemporary cases and suggests how these differing approaches might lead to differing resolutions.

Kaplan's book is part of an argument advocating the emerging field of biblical psychology. It is worthy of consideration. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*

MARRIAGE & FAMILY

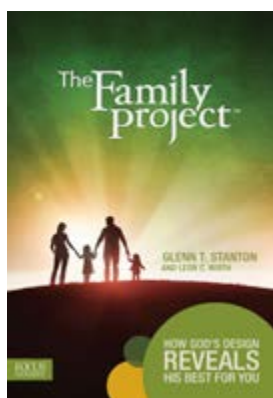


Have a Happy Family by Friday: How to Improve Communication, Respect & Teamwork in 5 Days

Kevin Leman. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 291p. \$17.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8007-1913-5. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.revellbooks.com 306.85 Families—Psychological aspects. Families—Religious aspects—Christianity. Interpersonal relations.

Parents everywhere dream of having a family that never quarrels, always shares the household chores, and encourages its members in all their pursuits. Now let us get back to the real world. Families consist of members who have different personalities and birth order positions. What can parents do to keep peace in the family?

Kevin Leman, a psychologist who specializes in parenting skills, mixes common sense techniques with humor to help families open the lines of communication and develop clear strategies for accomplishing realistic objectives. He discusses five basic areas: communicating effectively without attacking; establishing priorities for time, work, activities and finances; surviving difficult behaviors and effectively disciplining children of different ages; clarifying parental roles; and working as a team to bring out the best in each family member. In each chapter, Leman highlights examples of real situations and emphasizes important quotes from the text. He adds a Q-and-A section based on the topics of the first five chapters. Highly recommended for parents. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



The Family Project: How God's Design Reveals His Best for You

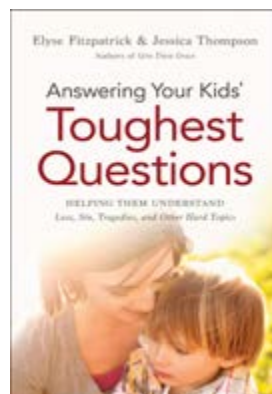
Glenn T. Stanton and Leon C. Wirth. Tyndale House, 2014. 326p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58997-788-4. Available as an ebook. www.tyndale.com 233.5 Families—Christianity. Marriage—Christianity.

Families can take different forms, and Glenn T. Stanton and Leon C. Wirth emphasize to readers of *The Family Project* that God

has a design for families and the way they live together. For Christians, the emphasis is on the relationship with Jesus Christ. Stanton and Wirth explore the importance of our shared relationship with "God and His character, nature, and essence, as well as His desire and purpose for us." They write in this Focus on the Family book that these are revealed "in remarkably glorious and mysterious ways through family."

In twelve chapters, the authors examine a number of topics, including various family relationships in the Bible and how modern men, women and children interact and are image-bearers to one another. Stanton and Wirth support their main points with boxed inserts that define terms and highlight the role of art and family relations throughout the ages. The related DVD, which was not available for review, supports a twelve-session study for Christian couples or small groups.

This book is highly recommended for discussion groups and for fans of Focus on the Family. Visit www.familyproject.com for more information.—*Mary Lou Henneman*



Answering Your Kids' Toughest Questions: Helping Them Understand Loss, Sin, Tragedies, and Other Hard Topics

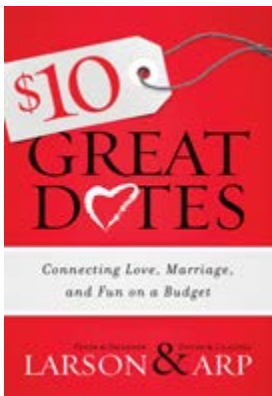
Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 173p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1187-4. Available as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 230 Parenting—Religious aspects—Christianity. Child rearing—Religious aspects—Christianity. Christian education of children—Miscellanea. Theology, Doctrinal—Miscellanea.

Young Christians sometimes ask questions that are uncomfortable ones for their elders to answer. This book by the mother-daughter team of counselor Elyse Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson, a frequent speaker at homeschooling and women's conferences, helps parents answer some of the tough questions. Sin, death, Satan, hell, divorce and natural disasters are a few of the topics covered. The authors open each chapter with an explanation of their views on the topic being discussed. They support their views with examples and scripture.

Fitzpatrick and Thompson explain that children mature spiritually and emotionally at different rates. It is vital, they write, for adults to answer youngsters' questions and to realize they need not be theologians to do so. The authors discuss questions that may be asked by preschoolers, by older children, and by preteens and teenagers.

It is important to note that even though all Christians believe in Christ's redeeming grace, their beliefs vary on some issues, such as homosexuality and divorce. Readers can use basic suggestions from this book even if they do not always agree with the authors. Parents and teachers can convey to young people that no matter what happens and what questions they have, God loves them, and they can always look to Christian adults for guidance. —

Mary Lou Henneman



\$10 Great Dates: Connecting Love, Marriage, and Fun on a Budget

Peter Larson, Heather Larson, David Arp, and Claudia Arp. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 190p. \$9.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1135-5. Available as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 306.872 Marriage. Love. Dating—Social customs. Marital dating.

Whether couples are newly married or have been together for years, outings together on a budget can be a challenge. Peter and Heather Larson (he a licensed clinical psychologist, she a Christian relations coach) and David and Claudia Arp, (founders of Marriage Alive) have teamed to offer fifty-two ideas for bringing fun and excitement back into a relationship with dates costing ten dollars or less. The authors suggest that instead of dinner and a movie, couples can rent a DVD that has special meaning for both partners. Other ideas include hiking in a favorite park, visiting a free museum, walking in the moonlight, volunteering together, and playing on a playground. Each of the suggestions comes with tips for preparing for the date, talking points for conversation while on the date, and ideas to take away when the date is over.

For couples with children there is a short section on inexpensive childcare.

Have this book available in your church library. Your patrons can read it for free and use the money they save on their next date. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

Getting Ready for Marriage: A Practical Road Map for Your Journey Together

Jim Burns and Doug Fields. David C. Cook, 2014. 218p. \$15.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4347-0811-3. Available as an ebook. www.davidc-cook.com 248.4 Marriage. Love. Engagements—Christianity.

When a couple is engaged to be married, what aspect of the approaching marriage should be their focus? The wedding ceremony? The bride's dress? The honeymoon location? Or should they be thinking of something more important? In *Getting Ready for Marriage*, Jim Burns and Doug Fields provide guidance for engaged Christian couples. This book will help them focus on what matters, learn more about one another, and make their marriage a lasting one.



Ordering from Amazon?
Use CSLAINFO.ORG to enter the Amazon.com website and part of the profit goes to CSLA.

Burns and Fields are seasoned counselors who use personal stories as they address how to effectively communicate and manage conflict, in-laws, finances, sexuality, spiritual intimacy, and remarriage issues. The chapter on planning the wedding ceremony is practical and emphasizes the couple, rather than materialism.

Getting Ready for Marriage is a perfect gift for newly engaged Christian couples and will be an excellent addition to church libraries. It makes a great resource for couples to read and discuss together.

A related workbook is also available from the publisher, David C. Cook. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Every Bitter Thing Is Sweet: Tasting the Goodness of God in All Things

Sara Hagerty. Zondervan, 2014. 202p. \$16.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-310-33995-3. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.zondervan.com 248.4 Spirituality—Christianity. Spiritual life—Christianity. Expectation (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. Loss (Psychology)—Religious aspects—Christianity. Christian women—Religious life. Infertility—Religious aspects—Christianity. Adoption—Religious aspects—Christianity. Intercountry adoption.

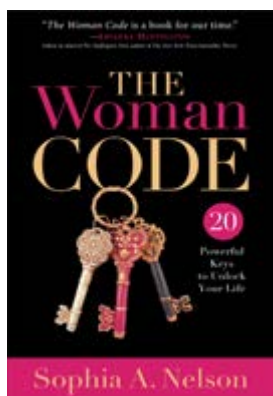
In her early twenties, Sara Hagerty experienced a spiritual crisis, feeling unsure about her recent marriage and questioning her relationship with God. She longed to have a child but was unable to conceive. *Every Bitter Thing Is Sweet* is Hagerty's intimate memoir of hunger—for earthly family and for God. Hagerty and her husband, both active in youth ministry, eventually adopted four African children.

Hagerty writes of the pain of infertility, the turmoil and joy of adopting orphans from far away, her father's death, and financial insecurity. Hagerty and her husband, both active in youth ministry, struggled to truly know one another and to love one another's dark sides.

Hagerty's writing reveals a deeply spiritual nature; she does not shy away from laying her emotions bare. The book will appeal to readers who appreciate such introspection and to those who face their own infertility, adoption concerns, or yearning to feel closer to God. Selected scripture passages are cited at the end of each chapter.

Hagerty learns that God brings glory out of barrenness. "Our greatest testimony," she writes, "isn't found in those moments of victory over weakness or even in the moments of hope fulfilled. It is found in waiting, wanting, adoring. It is found in hunger." —*Monica Tenney*

ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN



The Woman Code: 20 Powerful Keys to Unlock Your Life

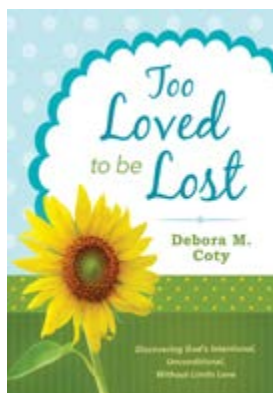
Sophia A. Nelson. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 267p. \$19.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8007-2388-0. Available as an ebook or audiobook. www.revellbooks.com 155.3'339 Women—Conduct of life. Conduct of life. Spiritual life. Self-realization in women. Success.

Women sometimes struggle with self-image in their various roles and endeavors. Journalist Sophia A. Nelson, author of *The*

Woman Code, believes it is important for every woman to examine her life and to set goals. The main categories of codes she discusses are personal, emotional, spiritual, professional and relational.

Each chapter is filled with wisdom and with telling examples from Nelson's personal and professional life. She writes, "Love yourself enough to teach people how to treat you." The sections on how to follow this advice will motivate women to take steps to make their lives more meaningful. Recommended for women's study groups.

—Mary Lou Henneman



Too Loved to Be Lost: Discovering God's Intentional, Unconditional, Without-Limits Love

Debora M. Coty. Shiloh Run (an imprint of Barbour), 2014. 219p. \$9.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-62836-969-4. Available as an ebook. www.shilohrunpress.com 248.843 Christian life. Christian women.

Sometimes you pick up a book and feel the author knows exactly what you are going

through. This is the book! Get ready to share the ups and downs of daily life through tears and laughter with a new Christian sister. Debora M. Coty really "gets it." She knows how to look at life honestly and put problems in proper perspective.

In the four sections of *Too Loved to Be Lost* are chapters covering such topics as "Singed by the Dragon (Overcoming Burnout)," "He Loves Me, He Loves Me More (Learning to Feel Cherished)," "Breakdown in the Fast Lane (Depression)," and "The Future Begins Today (Hope)." The book is filled with wonderful stories, scripture verses, and quotations, and at the end of each chapter a GPS ("God-powered satellite") set of questions. *Too Loved to Be Lost* provides Christian women with a powerful tool for devotions. —Mary Lou Henneman



Be Rebellious: Fight Back Against a Culture That Doesn't Care About You

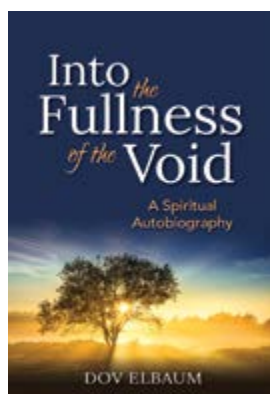
Megan Clinton with Laura Captari. Worthy, 2014. 200p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-61795-108-4. Available as an ebook. www.worthypublishing.com 248.843 Christian life. Christian women.

Some women seem to think that wearing perfect clothes, hanging out with the right crowd, dining in expensive

restaurants or looking like a Barbie doll will make them happy. There is much more to happiness, however, than outward appearances. Living as a good Christian woman begins with your relationship to Christ. Megan Clinton, who recently graduated from Liberty University in Virginia and is now studying to become a physician's assistant, shows how we can dare to be rebellious and develop our spiritual gifts as Christians instead of following shallow social media images.

Some of Clinton's topics include no longer being a victim, communicating face to face instead of on Facebook, finding true friendship, having the courage to respect yourself, and living by your faith. Clinton uses a variety of examples from her personal life, from women she has met, and from Bible stories of strong women. She writes, "This book is the battle cry of one woman who is tired of namby-pamby Christianity." She provides positive advice about how to grow in faith in the company of Christian sisters. Recommended for teen and young adult women's discussion groups. —Mary Lou Henneman

JUDAICA



Into the Fullness of the Void: A Spiritual Autobiography

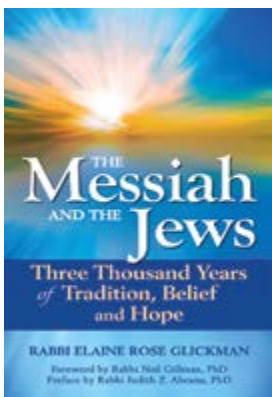
Dov Elbaum. Translated by Azzan Yadin. Jewish Lights, 2013. 281p. \$18.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58023-715-4. Available as an ebook. www.jewishlights.com 892.4'36 Elbaum, Dov, 1970-. Authors, Israeli—Biography. Orthodox Judaism—Relations—Nontraditional Jews. Jews—Israel—Identity. Secularism—Israel. Faith (Judaism). Series: New Spiritual Voices from Israel.

Dov Elbaum's memoir cannot be easily categorized. His spiritual journey lies at the heart of the book, but there is much more. *Into the Fullness of the Void* uses the limbs of the Kabbalistic tree, the *sefirot* of Jewish mysticism, to guide readers. His narrative runs deeper as he uses biblical and rabbinic stories to illustrate the properties of the *sefirot*. This is a complex book that pays great dividends.

Kabbalah portrays the inner being of the Divine

through the image of a tree containing ten *sefirot*, or centers of energy. While some authors suggest that these centers are static attributes—kindness, strength, beauty, and so forth—Elbaum presents a deeper, more dynamic portrait. Traditionally, each *sefirah* is associated with biblical or rabbinic characters, and Elbaum uses these to illustrate their complexity. By pairing this dynamic portrait of the *sefirot* with his personal journey, Elbaum demonstrates how these mythic forces interact with our own lives.

If Elbaum taught us only this multi-dimensional portrait of the *sefirot*, it would be enough. If he shared only his insights into key biblical stories, we would be satisfied. When he uses these to guide us through his own life, we learn much more about him and about ourselves. — *Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



The Messiah and the Jews: Three Thousand Years of Tradition, Belief and Hope

Elaine Rose Glickman. Jewish Lights, 2013. 151p. \$16.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-58023-690-4. Available as an ebook. www.jewishlights.com 296.3'36 Messiah—Judaism. Messianic era (Judaism).

For Jews, the Messiah has yet to come. Rabbi Elaine Rose Glickman explores rabbinic and scholarly writings that contem-

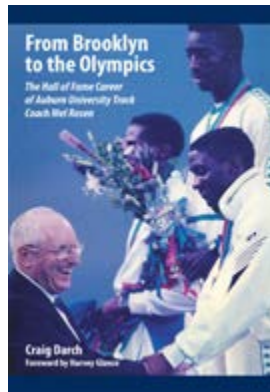
plate when the Messiah will come, how the Messiah will look, and what the world will be like before and after the Messiah arrives. Some texts have the Messiah, part of Creation, at God's side waiting to appear when humanity is no longer cruel, and justice and righteousness reign.

According to tradition, the Messiah will come after a time of great sadness and violence. Thus there arose a concept of two Messiahs: a warrior (Messiah ben Joseph) and a person of justice and peace (Messiah ben David).

Jewish folklore and mysticism are rife with tales, often contradictory, about the coming of the Messiah. For

example, redemption will perfect the world and, in order to do so, it will destroy the world we know. There even is a belief that when the Messiah comes, the only holiday needed will be Purim, when Jews read the Book of Esther and rejoice. Glickman describes mystical, Hasidic and Reform ideas about the Messiah. She ends by quoting from *Sefer Zerubbabel*: "May God grant that we merit to behold . . . our righteous Messiah speedily in our days."

Glickman writes in a style understandable for the layperson. Notes, suggestions for further reading, and an index will help individuals and study groups. Recommended. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



From Brooklyn to the Olympics: The Hall of Fame Career of Auburn University Track Coach Mel Rosen

Craig Darch. New South, 2014. 191p. \$25.95, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-58838-305-1. Available as an ebook. www.new-southbooks.com 796.42092 Rosen, Mel, 1928-. Track and field coaches—United States—Biography. Auburn University—Track and field—History.

The name Mel Rosen is likely familiar only to sports fans, and

perhaps mostly to track and field aficionados. Rosen served as head coach at Auburn University in Alabama for twenty-eight years, creating a powerhouse of a program that attracted some of the best athletes in the country. He served as head coach at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, where his team won a record-breaking twenty medals. Numerous athletic halls of fame have honored him.

Why review this book in a publication aimed at churches and synagogues? Rosen was a Jewish American—from Brooklyn—who succeeded in the heart of the South. He moved to Alabama in 1955, a time when northerners were not always welcomed into the community. Rosen was not a religious man, but he held his Judaism proudly. This book tells the story of his particular Jewish journey.

Rosen recognized the importance of including African American athletes in sports programs. He recruited the first black runners for his team, and his advocacy helped make their tenure at Auburn successful.

Books of theology or history tell the overarching story of a religion or a people, but individual stories demonstrate how ordinary people create their particular identity in daily living. For sports fans, this book is well recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



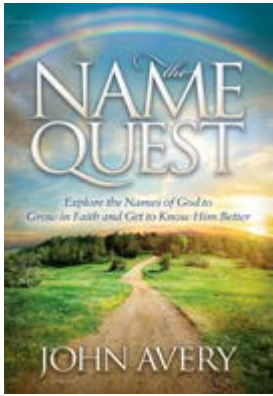
Developing an Effective Library: Ways to Promote Your Congregational Library.

Lois H. Ward. 2004. 48p. All aspects of promoting the congregational library and publicity ideas for inside and outside your congregation. Planning and budgeting,

creating ownership, programs that will get your members in the door, and how to use all the publicity tools available to you. \$9/\$11 + postage.

CSLA GUIDE

DRAWING NEARER TO GOD



The Name Quest: Explore the Names of God to Grow in Faith and Get to Know Him Better

John Avery. Morgan James, 2015. 379p. \$24.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-63047-159-0. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.morganjamespublishing.com 231 God (Christianity). God—Name.

John Avery is a pastor, Bible teacher, and missionary. In *The Name Quest*, he offers a comprehensive survey of the names of God. Working from most of the

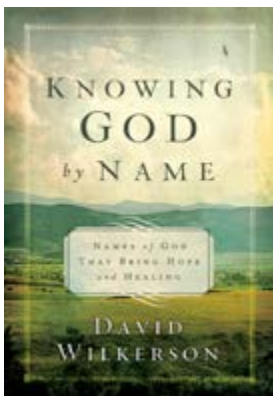
commonly used Bible versions, Avery presents an astonishing array of names, titles, and metaphors that reveal various aspects of God's character. He likens his examination of God's name to looking into a kaleidoscope—each turn reveals a fresh view of God's attributes. Avery includes names and descriptors of Jesus in his study.

The book's twenty-three chapters are organized around themes central to God's character: glory, holiness, salvation, supremacy and more. Names discussed are in bold text; sidebars cite the term's occurrence in scripture and present terms in the original Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic.

The British Avery has traveled widely and lived in Israel, Africa, and the Caribbean. His anecdotes from personal adventures, his boyhood and his marriage are welcome additions to his enlightening discussion of biblical events and the ways they reveal God's character. He includes extensive notes and an index.

It is evident that Avery is a man of deep and confident faith. Readers who take up *The Name Quest* will find along the way a heightened sense of reverence for their God.

See Avery's online resource, www.NamesForGod.net. —
Monica Tenney



Knowing God by Name: Names of God That Bring Hope and Healing

David Wilkerson. Chosen (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 220p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-9575-7. Available as an ebook. www.chosenbooks.com 231 God (Christianity). God—Name.

Previously published in 2001 as *Hallowed Be Thy Names*, this 2014 edition repackages a 2012 version of the study by the late evangelist David Wilkerson.

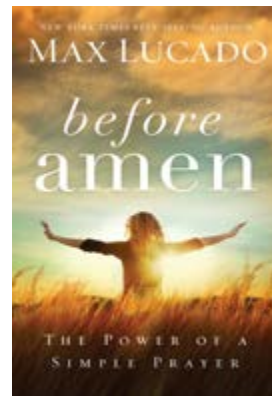
Narrower in scope than the volume reviewed above, *Knowing God by Name* focuses on eleven names for God and devotes a full chapter to each, examining scripture and its lessons for modern Christians. Scriptural quotations are from the King James Version.

Wilkerson's views are conservative: he directs much

of his attention to the "secret sins" of Christians, with frequent discussion of pornography and other evils. He views homosexuality as a sin, with repentance needed and recovery possible. He refers to abortion as the killing of innocent children.

Wilkerson's chapters at times read like fiery sermons, often in the language of warfare. Satan is a real and active presence, out to destroy "God's seed—the Church of Jesus Christ." Still, Wilkerson's aim in this easy-to-read book is to remind Christians that God is there for them when they are hurting.

Wilkerson is best remembered for his 1962 book *The Cross and the Switchblade*, in which he told of his ministry among young gang members and drug addicts. —
Monica Tenney



Before Amen: The Power of a Simple Prayer

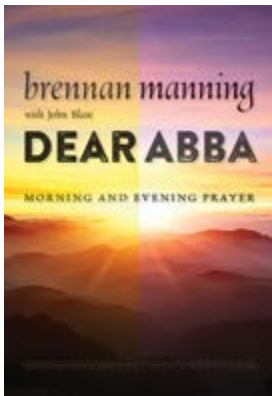
Max Lucado. Thomas Nelson, 2014. 163p. \$19.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8499-4848-0. Available in paperback and as an ebook. www.thomasnelson.com 248.3'2 Prayer—Christianity.

Is Max Lucado one of your favorite inspirational authors? At times do you have difficulty praying? If you answered one or both questions affirmatively, then Lucado's latest book, *Before*

Amen: The Power of a Simple Prayer, is for you.

Many readers will find comfort in Lucado's first paragraph, with these two final sentences: "When I pray, I think of a thousand things I need to do. I forget the one thing I set out to do: pray." For himself and for others who can echo his statements, he has created what, because of its brevity, he calls the "Pocket Prayer." "Father, you are good. I need help. They need help. Thank you. In Jesus' name, amen." In the subsequent eight chapters, Lucado discusses in his inimitable style each line of the prayer.

In the chapter, "I Need Help," Lucado tells about the wedding feast in Cana when Jesus turned the water into wine. He wonders, "How many disasters would be averted if we'd go first, in faith, to Jesus?" Two chapters later, in "They Need Help," he says that we are most like Jesus when we are praying for others, including our hurting world and people we do not love. These two references give a glimpse of how Lucado explains the Pocket Prayer. *Before Amen* concludes with an excellent study guide prepared by the author's daughter, Jenna Lucado Bishop. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Dear Abba: Morning and Evening Prayer

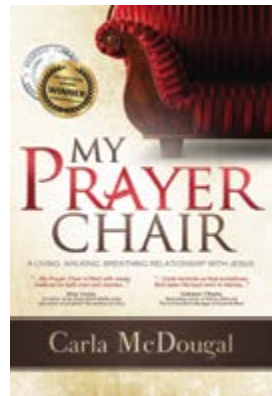
Brennan Manning with John Blasé. Eerdmans, 2014. 128p. \$10.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7199-2. Available as an ebook. www.eerdmans.com 242.2 Prayers. Manning, Brennan, 1934-2013.

Dear Abba is inspiring, encouraging, thought provoking, and life affirming. Brennan Manning, Roman Catholic priest and author of *The Ragamuffin*

Gospel and other inspirational titles, wrote this collection of thirty devotions shortly before his death in 2013. He based the format of the book on the "classic morning and evening approach used in the Book of Common Prayer." Each short devotional exercise includes scripture, an excerpt from one of Manning's earlier books, and a closing prayer.

As I read through these devotions, I found reassurance and compassion. Often, the prayers voiced for me what I was unable to say for myself.

Dear Abba is appropriate for clergy and for congregational libraries; it should be included in all devotional collections. It would make an excellent choice for individuals seeking to enrich their prayer life and for those in need of spiritual encouragement. —Sharon T. Hinton



My Prayer Chair: A Living, Walking, Breathing Relationship with Jesus

Carla McDougal. RLM (an imprint of Reflective Life Ministries), 2014. 160p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-936417-31-5. Available as an ebook. www.reflectivelifeministries.org 248.32 Prayer. Devotional literature.

Carla McDougal, author of *My Prayer Chair*, is the founder of Reflective Life Ministries in Magnolia, Texas. Memories of her

grandmother sitting in an old rocking chair, saying "This is my prayer chair," served as her inspiration. McDougal's purpose is to urge her readers "to engage in an ongoing conversation with God seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day." With an abundance of enthusiasm, she describes in detail how God has spoken to her and answered her prayers on many occasions. Throughout her book McDougal quotes scripture and her own writings. An appropriate passage of scripture prefaces each chapter, and a prayer challenge concludes it. Each chapter also includes space for journaling. —Beverly M. Bixler

CSLA Promotional Kit [for public libraries].

A collection of guides, bibliographies, and current publications in handsome bookshelf holder to place in local public libraries. Includes: Cataloging and Classification, Fundamentals of Financing, Organizing a Library or Resource Center, Planning a Congregational Archives Center, Promotion Planning All Year 'Round, and Subject Headings. \$65 + postage.

CSLA GUIDE

THIS ISSUE'S REVIEWERS

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Ashland, Ohio

CAROLYN EGOLF

Lincolnshire Church of the Brethren
Fort Wayne, Indiana

MARY LOU HENNEMAN

Boardman United Methodist Church
Boardman, Ohio

SHARON T. HINTON

Resource Health Ministry Outreach
Floydada, Texas

EVELYN POCKRASS

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation
Indianapolis, Indiana

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LOOKING FOR UNIQUE GIFTS?



Women's Bean Project has gift baskets, handmade jewelry, and, of course, BEANS. Our soup mix packages make great stocking stuffers.

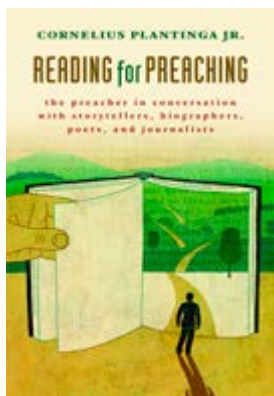
WBP is dedicated to teaching women the skills needed to find employment and break the cycle of poverty.

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<http://www.womensbeanproject.com>

MINISTRY



Reading for Preaching: The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists

Cornelius Plantinga Jr. Eerdmans, 2013. 133p. \$14.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-7077-3. Available as an ebook. www.eerdmans.com 251 Preaching. Books and reading—Religious aspects—Christianity. Christianity and literature.

“After all, it is audacious to speak for God.” Cornelius Plantinga’s assertion is underscored by his heart for preachers—the challenges of weekly sermons, answering hard questions, and meeting needs. Plantinga urges preachers to read broadly, bringing themselves into “conversation” not only with scripture but also with storytellers, biographers, poets and journalists. All of these provide rich sermon illustrations. In six chapters, readers find multiple examples.

“Whatever You Get, Get Wisdom” suggests wisdom as a primary quality for preachers and speaks of audience, discernment, and “middle wisdom,” something between the “commonplaces” and “great proverbs.” Life’s uncertainties and ambiguities are addressed in “Wisdom on the Vari-ousness of Life,” and Walter Brueggemann’s statement, “God’s other name is surprise,” applies. The last chapter, “Wisdom on Sin and Grace,” is challenging. It draws from news stories, John Steinbeck, and Flannery O’Connor.

A selected reading list is helpful, as is a brief section on the value of a database. Plantinga’s knowledge is impressive, and combined with practical guidance and humor, provides a text that is a pleasure to read. While preachers are the intended audience, other church leaders, teachers and seminary students will find value. —Carolyn Egolf



Arts Ministry: Nurturing the Creative Life of God's People

Michael J. Bauer. Eerdmans, 2013. 328p. \$29.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8028-6928-9. www.eerdmans.com 700.482 Christianity and the arts. Church work. Series: Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

“To nurture worship practices that are spiritually vital and theologically rooted” is the goal of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Liturgical Studies series,

of which *Arts in Ministry* is a part. As reference, guidebook or resource, this volume provides information, encouragement and inspiration.

In nine chapters, Michael J. Bauer explores arts ministry as it relates to human formation, the world, creativity,

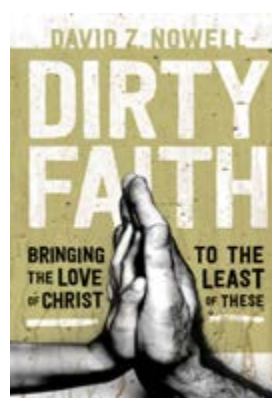
worship and theology. Each chapter features opening quotations, commentary, case studies with photos, and a conclusion.

Footnotes add information, and among suggestions in the appended list of selected resources are arts organizations, museums, and online resources. An arts questionnaire and extensive bibliography underscore the research and thorough study invested in this series.

Since creativity is within every individual, “sanctifying the ordinary” can range from participating in music, art and drama to gardening, quilting and architecture.

Bauer explores such topics as beauty versus prettiness, artistic judgment, and congregational expectations. The section “The Practice of Arts Ministry” provides applicable guidance.

Highly recommended for pastors, worship committees, and Christians in arts ministry. —Carolyn Egolf



Dirty Faith: Bringing the Love of Christ to the Least of These

David Z. Nowell. Bethany House (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 188p. \$13.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-7642-1213-0. Available as an ebook. www.bethanyhouse.com 266 Missions.

For Christians who believe that actions speak louder than words, David Z. Nowell provides helpful information. Nowell, founder and president of Hope Unlimited, an international nonprofit

organization that aids children, encourages Christians to step out of their comfort zone and put their faith into positive action in local communities and beyond. In *Dirty Faith*, he writes from personal experience and especially from this own mission work in Brazil about how mission work means more than simply writing a check. Rather, it means making personal contact with people who are in need.

Nowell challenges Christians to be unafraid of getting their hands dirty in their ministry to others. He notes that we can be the hands and feet of Christ and at the same time see Christ’s face in “the least of these.”

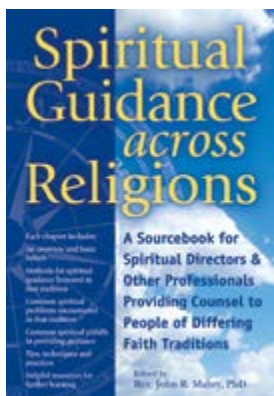
Dirty Faith should be required reading for ministers and other Christians who wish to engage in meaningful mission work. —Mary Lou Henneman



Organizing a Library or Resource Center: Creating a Policy and Procedure Manual.

Revised and compiled from three CSLA publications, A Policy and Procedure Manual for Church and Synagogue

Libraries; Standards for Church and Synagogue Libraries; and Setting Up A Library. This new publication provides a simple method of developing a working manual for organizing and operating a congregational library. \$13/\$14+ postage.



Spiritual Guidance across Religions: A Sourcebook for Spiritual Directors & Other Professionals Providing Counsel to People of Differing Faith Traditions

John R. Mabry, ed. Skylight Paths, 2014. 384p. \$50.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-59473-546-2. Available in large print paperback and as an ebook. www.skylightpaths.com 206'.1 Spirituality. Spiritual direction. Counseling—Religious aspects. Pastoral counseling.

This book addresses a particular concern of spiritual directors: how to offer spiritual guidance to someone from a religious tradition different from your own. There are basic concerns, such as knowing the history and foundational beliefs of the faith. There are more specific concerns, such as identifying resources that those traditions offer to help followers in their spiritual growth. These are the questions addressed by this useful resource.

Spiritual Guidance across Religions presents brief overviews of twenty-four spiritual paths, all currently followed in the United States. They include some of the oldest religious traditions in the world as well as more contemporary approaches. Each chapter, written by a practitioner of the faith, presents a brief historical overview and tenets of the tradition, then suggests some of the spiritual problems a counselor might encounter. Contributors suggest resources that will aid one's spiritual growth and warn of missteps that a counselor should avoid.

This book can be a valuable resource for an active spiritual director. It is also an interesting and accessible introduction that will help readers understand the many religious traditions that flourish in this nation of immigrants. Highly recommended. —*Rabbi Louis A. Rieser*



Unbound: The Transformative Power of Youth Mission Trips

Jann Treadwell. Huff, 2014. 133p. \$20.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-9910600-0-9. www.unboundmissiontrips.com 266 Missions—Christianity. Church work—Missions.

Mission trips are a powerful way to put the teachings of Christ into action. Whether for a few days or many weeks, and whether the work is teaching in schools or repairing homes, it is

important that youth mission trips be spiritually meaningful for both young people and their adult leaders.

Jann Treadwell, a retired certified Christian educator in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A), has compiled essentials both for beginners and for leaders who are looking for ways to enhance mission trips. Treadwell clearly explains

in *Unbound* the theological basis for outreach. She incorporates practical information, such as a basic timeframe, tips on matching skills with tasks, costs for participants and sponsoring churches, supply lists, and delegation of tasks at work sites. She emphasizes the importance of fostering spiritual development in participants during their time together.

Treadwell's resources include materials for worship and Bible study, budget worksheets, a covenant of conduct, sponsor forms, and more. This book is a must for church leaders who wish to start or revitalize mission outreach by youth. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

The Small Library Manager's Handbook

Alice Graves, ed. Rowman & Littlefield, 2014. 299p. \$90.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-4422-3987-6. Available in paperback (\$55.00; 978-1-4422-3013-2) and as an ebook. www.rowman.com 025.1 Libraries—Administration—Handbooks, manuals, etc. Small libraries—Administration—Handbooks, manuals, etc. Series: Medical Library Association Books

In *The Small Library Manager's Handbook*, editor Alice Graves collects essays from professional librarians who have expertise in running small academic and special libraries. Part of the Medical Library Association's series of resources for librarians and other professionals, the volume is intended for librarians in medical facilities, museums, colleges, prisons, corporations, and rural settings. While not aimed at congregational librarians, the guidance offered here is readily transferrable to religious library settings.

In twenty-eight chapters, this book covers such topics as developing staff, planning workflows, creating workable spaces, rejuvenating neglected libraries, fundraising, writing grant proposals, cataloging, and creating a library website. There is practical advice on such essentials as creating a collection development policy (including how to handle donated materials), acquiring materials on a tight budget, weeding, working with a governing body, and advocating for the library within an organization. The editor and most of the contributors acknowledge that many librarians who tend small libraries work solo and are not professional librarians. Each entry is neatly laid out with a beginning overview, sub-headings, conclusion, and bibliography. Several have bullet-pointed tips and tabular material.

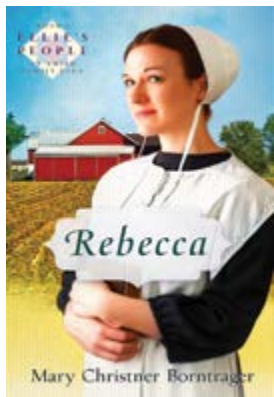
This is a solid resource that can supplement CSLA's guides for congregational librarians. It would make a good addition to a CSLA chapter's library of materials available for loan to members. —*Monica Tenney*

Planning a Congregational Archives Center.

Curtis D. Howard, PhD. 2011. This is a great reference book on processing, preserving, and storing your archives and how to exhibit them. It offers tips on what to include in your archives and discusses their importance to your congregation. \$12/ \$14.00 + postage.

CSLA GUIDE

FICTION



Rebecca

Mary Christner Borntreger. Herald, 2014. 234p. \$7.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8361-3500-8. Available in hardcover. www.heraldpress.com Fiction Amish—Fiction. Mennonites—Fiction. Series: Ellie's People: An Amish Family Saga

Rebecca is the second volume in Mary Christner Borntreger's Ellie's People series, now being reissued by Herald Press. Rebecca, the daughter of Ellie and David Eash, is now twenty-one. Still

single, she is a loving, obedient young woman who is a joy to be around. Becky works as a *maut*, or hired girl, for other Amish families and sometimes for Mennonites and "Englishers." Although the Amish and Mennonites have much in common, the latter are too "worldly" for the plain people because they own cars and have electricity, telephones and other conveniences in their homes.

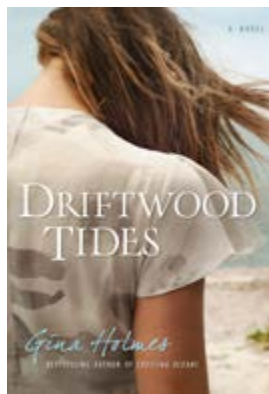
Susan, Rebecca's best friend, is Mennonite. When Susan's brother James takes an interest in Becky and invites her to go with him to his youth group's meeting, her parents are concerned. Becky is attracted to James, too, and as their friendship deepens, the Eashes are not happy with the situation. In spite of the conflict this causes in Rebecca's family and with some of her friends, she accepts James's proposal. They marry and begin a new life. —*Beverly M. Bixler*

For Love of Eli

Loree Lough. Abingdon, 2013. 235p. \$12.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4267-5250-6. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.abingdonpress.com Available as an ebook. Fiction Orphans—Fiction. Quiltmakers—Fiction. Memories—Fiction. Heirlooms—Fiction. Series: Quilts of Love

A memory quilt can have special meaning for a young boy, especially one who tragically lost both his parents. When Taylor, Eli's aunt, is given legal guardianship of the boy, her first priority is to show him how much he is loved. She decides to create a special quilt that pieces together reminders of his parents and all the special people in his life. As she begins her task in secret, stories from the past are revealed. Reece, Eli's maternal uncle, is upset that he did not get custody of his sister's son and blames Eli's father for her death. When Taylor works out a plan for Eli to spend time with his uncle, the two adults grow closer and learn forgiveness through their mutual love of the boy. *For Love of Eli* is a tender story, expertly crafted by Loree Lough, that is perfect for Christian book groups.

Look for other titles by various authors in Abingdon's Quilts of Love series. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



Driftwood Tides: A Novel

Gina Holmes. Tyndale House, 2014. 377p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4143-6642-5. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.tyndale.com Fiction Widowers—Fiction. Illegitimate children—Fiction.

Abandonment and the need for forgiveness are the two threads around which Gina Holmes weaves the plot of *Driftwood Tides*. Libby Slater was adopted as a baby, abandoned, to her way

of thinking, by her birth mother. Her adoptive father left his wife and daughter when the latter was four years old. Libby's adoptive mother abdicated her maternal responsibilities, in a sense. She is a demanding, "I'm-in-charge" person who ignores her daughter's opinions and desires, including those for Libby's upcoming wedding.

When Mrs. Slater gives Libby the adoption records, the young woman becomes obsessed with finding her birth mother or getting information about her. She locates a man named Holton, who was married to her birth mother, but Libby now faces more feelings of abandonment. She learns that her mother died in a car accident and, as a result, Holton withdrew and became an alcoholic. He has lived in seclusion, sculpting figures from driftwood. Holton and Libby together try to learn the identity of Libby's father and make sense of the past.

Holmes has created characters who change in the process of trying to find themselves in the face of life's obstacles. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Rachel: A Novel

Jill Eileen Smith. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 314p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-3431-2. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Rachel (Biblical matriarch)—Fiction. Jacob (Biblical patriarch)—Fiction. Bible. Old Testament—History of biblical events—Fiction. Women in the Bible—Fiction. Series: Wives of the Patriarchs.

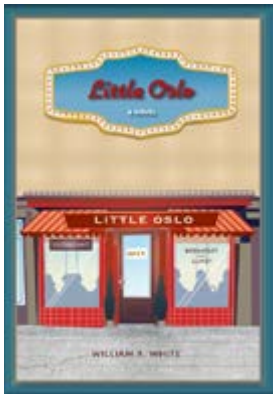
Rachel is Jill Eileen Smith's third novel in the Wives of the Patriarchs series. It is the fictionalized

version of the Old Testament's famous love triangle of Jacob, Rachel and Leah, Rachel's older sister. In conflict with love throughout are deceit, jealousy and anger.

Jacob flees his home because he has deceived and cheated his brother Esau. He goes in search of a wife and arrives at the home of his Uncle Laban, who has two daughters. Jacob falls in love with Rachel, agreeing to work seven years for Laban to win her as his wife. At the end of that time, trickery is visited upon Jacob. It is customary for the elder daughter to marry first, so Laban gives Jacob as his veiled bride Leah, not Rachel. To marry

Rachel, Jacob must work another seven years.

The larger part of the novel consists of accounts of Leah's numerous pregnancies and Rachel's ongoing depression caused by her barrenness. The need is great for reconciliation after such turbulence. Eventually, reconciliation comes. —*Beverly M. Bixler*



Little Oslo: A Novel

William R. White. Huff, 2014. 281p. \$15.00, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-9895277-4-3. Available in hardcover. www.huffpublishing.com Fiction Lutherans—Fiction. Baseball stories. Swedish Americans—Fiction. Wahissa (Wisc.)—Fictional place—Fiction.

It is fun to recall the “good old days,” and William R. White skillfully transports his readers to the summer of 1952 and the fictional town of Wahissa, Wisconsin, to experience life through the eyes of seventeen-year-old Jake Joseph. As Jake is recruited to play baseball with the American Legion team for the summer season, he finds romance. Jake and Candy become sleuths as they attempt to solve the mysterious beatings in their town and nearby. Various storylines come together at Little Oslo, the café at the center of this small town populated by Lutherans of Swedish descent. The town, famous for its Swedish pancakes and lutefisk, is home to an interesting cast of characters. One of the highlights is the baseball game between the Wahissa Jewelers and a Negro Baseball League team. Under the leadership of the Lutheran pastor and others, the community confronts racism.

The combination of Christian values, mystery and great baseball stories makes *Little Oslo* a good book for church libraries. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



At Bluebonnet Lake: A Novel

Amanda Cabot. Revell (an imprint of Baker), 2014. 377p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-0-8007-3434-3. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.revellbooks.com Fiction Texas—Fiction. Series: Texas Crossroads

After a few chapters that do not seem to promise memorable characters or action, author Amanda Cabot hits her stride in *At Bluebonnet Lake*. It soon becomes evident that Kate Sherwood and Greg Vange have problems they are unaware of or are unwilling to face. The two are at Rainbow's End, a resort in the Texas hill country, for different reasons. Kate, climbing the corporate ladder in a New Jersey advertising firm, is taking a reluctant vacation with her grandmother Sally to the resort where Sally and Kate's grandfather spent time fifty years before. Greg's background seems to

be a secret. He is employed as a handyman but appears not to want for money. Even the resort has difficulties. It is run-down, and its owners want to sell it. As one would expect, a romantic attraction develops between Kate and Greg, but obstacles to their relationship also develop. In the end, Greg admits that he must attempt to reconcile with his father, and Sally's heart attack changes Kate's perspective on her career. Both Kate and Greg accept the need to let God lead their lives. *At Bluebonnet Lake* is the first in the Texas Crossroads series. —*Beverly M. Bixler*

be a secret. He is employed as a handyman but appears not to want for money. Even the resort has difficulties. It is run-down, and its owners want to sell it.

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At Bluebonnet Lake is the first in the Texas Crossroads series. —*Beverly M. Bixler*

All My Belongings

Cynthia Ruchti. Abingdon, 2014. 335p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-4267-4972-8. Available in hardcover and as an ebook. www.abingdonpress.com Fiction Fathers and daughters—Fiction.

Jayne Denage's father is locked away in prison, and Jayne's testimony put him there. Her guilt and the shame of her father's crimes prompts the young nursing student to legally change her name and leave Iowa for Southern California, where she takes a job as caregiver to an elderly woman. As Becca Morrow, she begins her new life.

Becca quickly grows to love her frail but spirited charge, Aurelia Hughes. Soon there are romantic sparks between Becca and Isaac Hughes, Aurelia's adopted son, but Becca's hopes for a bright future are dimmed by the dark secrets of her past. A sudden death and the subsequent investigation by police threaten the young couple's relationship but also prompt revelations that free Becca and Isaac to grow as individuals and as a couple.

Cynthia Ruchti provides plenty of adventure, suspense, descriptive detail and touches of light humor. Her story touches on a range of issues, including identity, adoption, euthanasia, forgiveness and reconciliation. For most of Ruchti's characters, faith in God is central, scripture is familiar, and prayer is a habit.

Named the Christian Authors Network Golden Scroll Novel of the Year for 2014, *All My Belongings* will be a popular addition to church library fiction collections. —*Monica Tenney*



Helping Those Who Hurt.

S. Meghan Harper. An annotated bibliography of print, non-print, and online

resources divided into elementary and teen age groups. Designed for those working with children in congregational and pastoral care settings. Carefully selected for the potential of facilitating discussion between and among children and adults. \$12/\$14 + postage.

CSLA BIBLIOGRAPHY



The Covered Deep: A Novel

Brandy Vallance. Worthy, 2014. 403p. \$14.99, paperback. ISBN: 978-1-61795-375-0. Available as an ebook. www.worthypublishing.com Fiction Young women—Appalachian Region—Fiction. Self-actualization (Psychology) in women—Fiction. Americans—England—London—History—19th century—Fiction. Americans—Palestine—History—19th century—Fiction. Christian fiction. Love stories.

The events of *The Covered Deep*, Brandy Vallance's first novel, occur at the beginning of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Bianca Marshall lives in a small southern Ohio town that has a dearth of eligible bachelors. At twenty-five, she is beginning to despair of finding the perfect mate. She wins an essay contest and earns a brief visit to London and a trip with the other winners to the Holy Land. A romantic attraction develops between Bianca and a gentleman in the group, Paul Emerson, but he is troubled by his past, before he became a Christian. Bianca tells Paul that Christ "plunges our sins down into the depths of the sea and then covers them—the covered deep of his perfect forgiveness." Bianca encounters many people and situations, including some unsavory ones, that are completely new to her, but will she find what she is truly searching for? —*Beverly M. Bixler*



When Calls the Heart: Second Chances — (DVD)

Word Entertainment, 2014. 85 minutes. \$13.99, DVD. www.wordfilms.com Fiction Teachers—Canada—Drama. Historical romance. Christian romance. Series: When Calls the Heart

Based on a novel by Janette Oke and part of the Hallmark Channel television series, *When Calls the Heart: Second Chances* continues to follow Elizabeth Thatcher's life in Coal Valley, a small mining town in Canada. This is her first year teaching in a one-room schoolhouse, and she needs to balance her personal life with her new profession. One challenge she faces is helping one of her older students who can make models out of wood but cannot read. Elizabeth has been deceived by a man who she thought loved her, but will she give Jack Thornton, the handsome Mountie, another chance to win her love? Will she and her class be able to put together the Founder's Day pageant in only one week? Will Abigail Stanton have the courage to open her own café in town, and will Adam Miller be able to support his family after a mining accident has caused him to lose his leg?

This latest episode in the series captures the pioneers' spirit of hope that we need to remember today. The sto-

ryline is poignant, and the videography is superb. This is truly an inspirational movie. —*Mary Lou Henneman*



A Long Way Off: The Modern Day Story of the Prodigal Son—(DVD)

Prodigal Film. Word Entertainment, 2013. 105 minutes. \$19.98, DVD. www.wordfilms.com Fiction Bible stories. The Prodigal Son (Parable)—Drama.

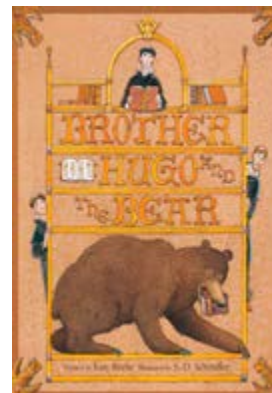
The parable of the prodigal son found in the Gospel of Luke tells of the unconditional love of a father for his son. *A Long Way Off* is a modern-day adaptation focusing on the Abraham family. Son

Jake leaves the family farm to pursue fame and fortune in the big city. He squanders his inheritance and eventually returns home to a joyful welcome from his father.

Mature teens and adults will relate to the highs and lows that Jake experiences. Memorable scenes in the video include over-the-top parties and the attack on Jake after he has lost his money. Jake's relationship with Summer, a girl with strong faith, is not Bible-based, but it emphasizes the message of love and forgiveness. Jake hears snippets of faith messages cleverly inserted throughout the film via the radio, in book titles he sees, and through the words of strangers he meets. The character of Seth, Jake's brother, is handled well, showing his growth from resentment to forgiveness.

A Long Way Off is a good choice for Christian movie night. —*Mary Lou Henneman*

FOR CHILDREN



Brother Hugo and the Bear

Katy Beebe. Illustrated by S. D. Schindler. Eerdmans, 2013. 34p. \$17.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5407-0. www.eerdmans.com [E] Books and reading—Juvenile fiction. Manuscripts—Juvenile fiction. Monks—Juvenile fiction. Bears—Juvenile fiction. Middle Ages—Juvenile fiction.

Brother Hugo borrowed a precious book from the monastery library, but it seems he cannot return it. A bear has eaten it! The abbot orders that Brother Hugo do penance by borrowing another copy of the book from a neighboring monastery and creating a new copy "word for word and line by line." The bear's appetite for

All cover images are used by permission of the publishers for this edition of Congregational Libraries Today.

books prompts Brother Hugo to write quickly, and with the book-eating bear following, he hurries to return the newly handwritten book. The ending will surprise, please or puzzle.

Detailed illustrations in blues, golds and browns, with manuscript lettering, make for an attractive book and provide pleasure and meaning for children, perhaps beyond what adults take time to see.

A glossary and historical note may be read first to aid understanding. Suspense keeps one reading. As a study in friendship and as a step back into the Middle Ages and manuscript writing, *Brother Hugo* gives renewed appreciation for words, writing and reading. Recommended for church libraries. For children aged 5-9. —*Carolyn Egolf*

Lullaby

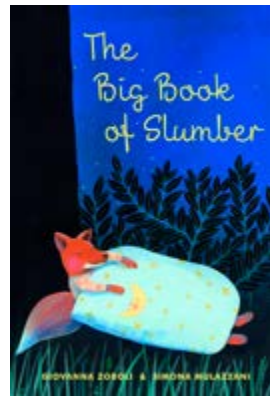
Debbie Friedman. Illustrated by Lorraine Bubar. Jewish Lights, 2014. 32p. \$18.99, hardcover with audio CD. ISBN: 978-1-58023-807-6. Available as an ebook. www.jewishlights.com 782.42 Children's songs—English—United States—Texts. Bedtime—Songs and music. Songs. Lullabies.

Debbie Friedman, a well-known and beloved folk singer and composer, died in 2011. Her concerts, recordings and teachings profoundly affected diverse groups within the American Jewish community. One of her songs, "Lullaby," has been adapted for a young children's book, illustrated in soft watercolor paintings by Lorraine Bubar.

The simple text of *Lullaby* reassures youngsters that they will be safe through the night and that they are

loved. The book comes with a CD of Friedman singing the song. Her expressive rendering highlights the comfort and inner meaning of the wording, reflecting Friedman's concern for humanity.

An engaging introduction to Friedman's multi-faceted talents, this book and CD encourage young children to believe in God and in the sanctity of the world in which they live. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



The Big Book of Slumber

Giovanna Zoboli. Illustrated by Simona Mulazzani. Eerdmans, 2013. 26p. \$16.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5439-1. www.eerdmans.com [E] Bedtime—Juvenile fiction. Animals—Juvenile fiction. Lullabies. Stories in rhyme.

Author Giovanna Zoboli and illustrator Simona Mulazzani, collaborators on *I Wish I Had . . .*, have teamed up again. In *The Big Book of Slumber* they have created for preschoolers a rhyming

story that features a variety of animals, including a tapir, insects, birds and fish galore.

"Hushaby, Hushaby," is a repeated refrain, and at one point continues, "sleep, stretch and yawn / The bunnies are sleeping out on the lawn." Children will see a camel in bed, as well as a goat, bear and lion, among others, all



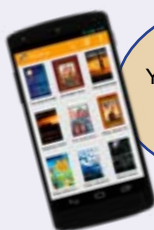
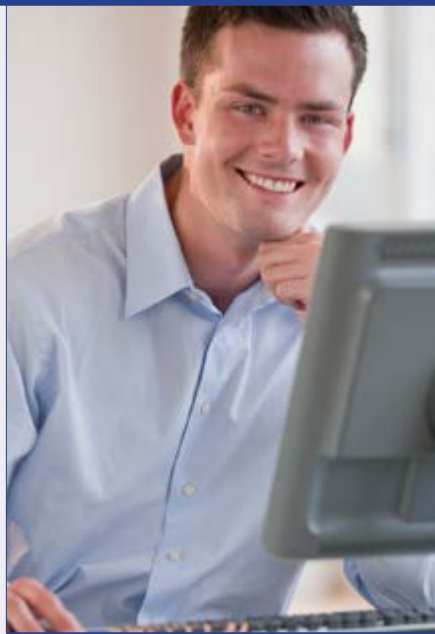
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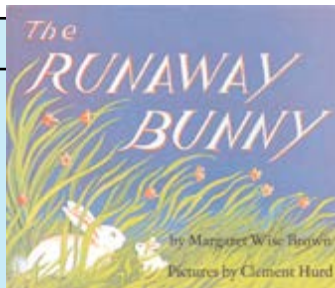
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Classics Corner

The Runaway Bunny

Margaret Wise Brown. Illustrated by Clement Hurd. HarperCollins, 2005. 48p. \$17.99, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-06-077582-7. Available in hardcover library binding, paperback, board book, or in a Spanish language edition. www.harpercollins.com [E] Rabbits—Juvenile fiction. Mother and child—Juvenile fiction.



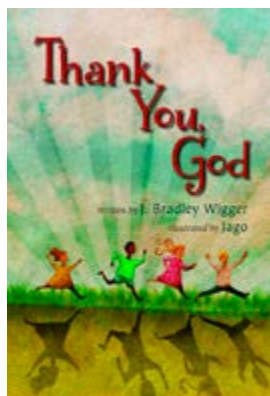
First published in 1942, *The Runaway Bunny* has helped teach generations of children about unconditional, inescapable love. The text by Margaret Wise Brown, author of *Goodnight Moon* and other favorites, has a young bunny telling his mother how he imagines running away from her. He thinks of becoming a fish in a stream, a rock high on a mountain, or a sailboat on the sea. His patient mother replies that she will become a fisherman, or a mountain climber, or the wind that fills his little boat's sails. Whatever way the little bunny thinks of running away, his mother assures him she will follow.

Preschoolers and early elementary-aged children are the target audience, but readers who were children long ago will find comfort in this book. Tender illustrations by Clement Hurd show the loving mother doing whatever she must do to be with her adventurous child. An excellent tool for lessons on enduring love (from a parent or from God), *The Runaway Bunny* also works well for Mother's Day and Easter displays in the library.

The standard hardcover, reinforced library edition, and paperback versions measure 10 x 8 ½ inches; the "lap edition" board book is 11 x 9 ¼ inches. —*Monica Tenney*

neatly tucked in. Doves and an owl are in the trees, giraffes are in sleeping bags, blackbirds are on leaves, and a rooster and hen sleep in a little red barn (but the chicks are still chirping!). The elephant relaxes on a starry pillow. Eventually all creatures, including children, rest quietly during the night.

This attractive, oversized book, translated from the Italian by Anthony Shugaar, has won bookseller and illustrator awards. It is not overtly spiritual but is appropriate for congregational nursery school children, who will adore the imaginative drawings and text. —*Evelyn Pockrass*



Thank You, God

J. Bradley Wigger. Illustrated by Jago. Eerdmans, 2014. 28p. \$16.00, hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-8028-5424-7. www.eerdmans.com [E] Gratitude—Prayers and devotions—Juvenile literature. Christian children—Prayers and devotions.

In *Thank You, God*, J. Bradley Wigger reminds preschoolers and young grade-schoolers of many blessings for which to give thanks. Warm-hued and warm-hearted illustrations by Jago will

draw youngsters in, and Wigger's text provides simple prayers of gratitude for family, friends, home, food, stories, songs, trees, birds, sleep and other good things, ending with "your love holding us together."

Thank You, God will be a welcome addition to any congregational library that serves children. Wigger, a professor of religious education at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, previously authored *Together We Pray: A Prayer Book for Families* (Chalice, 2005). —*Monica Tenney*



By the fall of 2015 there will be a staff opening for **CSLA MEDIA REVIEW EDITOR**

Monica Tenney, our devoted Media Review Editor since the fall of 2003, will retire during 2015. CSLA seeks a book-loving, detail-oriented member to edit reviews for the CSLA quarterly journal, *Congregational Libraries Today*. Annual stipend provided.

Please submit cover letter and resumé by April 1, 2015, to Evelyn Pockrass, CSLA Personnel Chair
3850 Glenview Dr, Indianapolis, IN 46240, or epockrass@iquest.net.

For questions and additional details, contact Evelyn, 317-842-7382, or Personnel Committee members: [Cheryl Cutchin](#), [Susan Sponaas](#), [Marcia Trauernicht](#)

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Obtains appropriate books and other media from publishers and producers.

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Sends copies of published reviews to publishers and producers.

Presents workshops, if requested, at annual conference.

Prepares written reports for CSLA mid-winter and annual Board meetings.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Time to renew memberships—and to think about 2015 conference

BY JUDY JANZEN, *Administrator*

I hope your holiday season was a joyful and blessed time. It is so fun to get together with friends and relatives at this time of the year!

Now that you have had a bit of rest and are back to your regular schedule I do hope that you have renewed your CSLA membership for 2015. If not, please consider doing so now so that you will not be locked out of the members-only section of our website.

Our annual conference will be July 29-31, 2015. Be sure to mark your calendar with those dates, and come enjoy a time of learning, friendship, and networking.

We have several of our guides on sale in this issue! Now would be the time to take advantage of the savings. All three guides (Beyond the Book, Subject Headings, and Fundamentals of Financing) are excellent and would be a great addition to your library for you and your volunteers.



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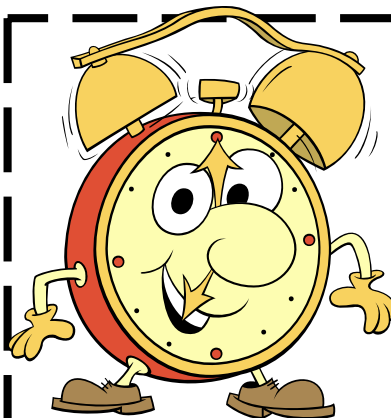
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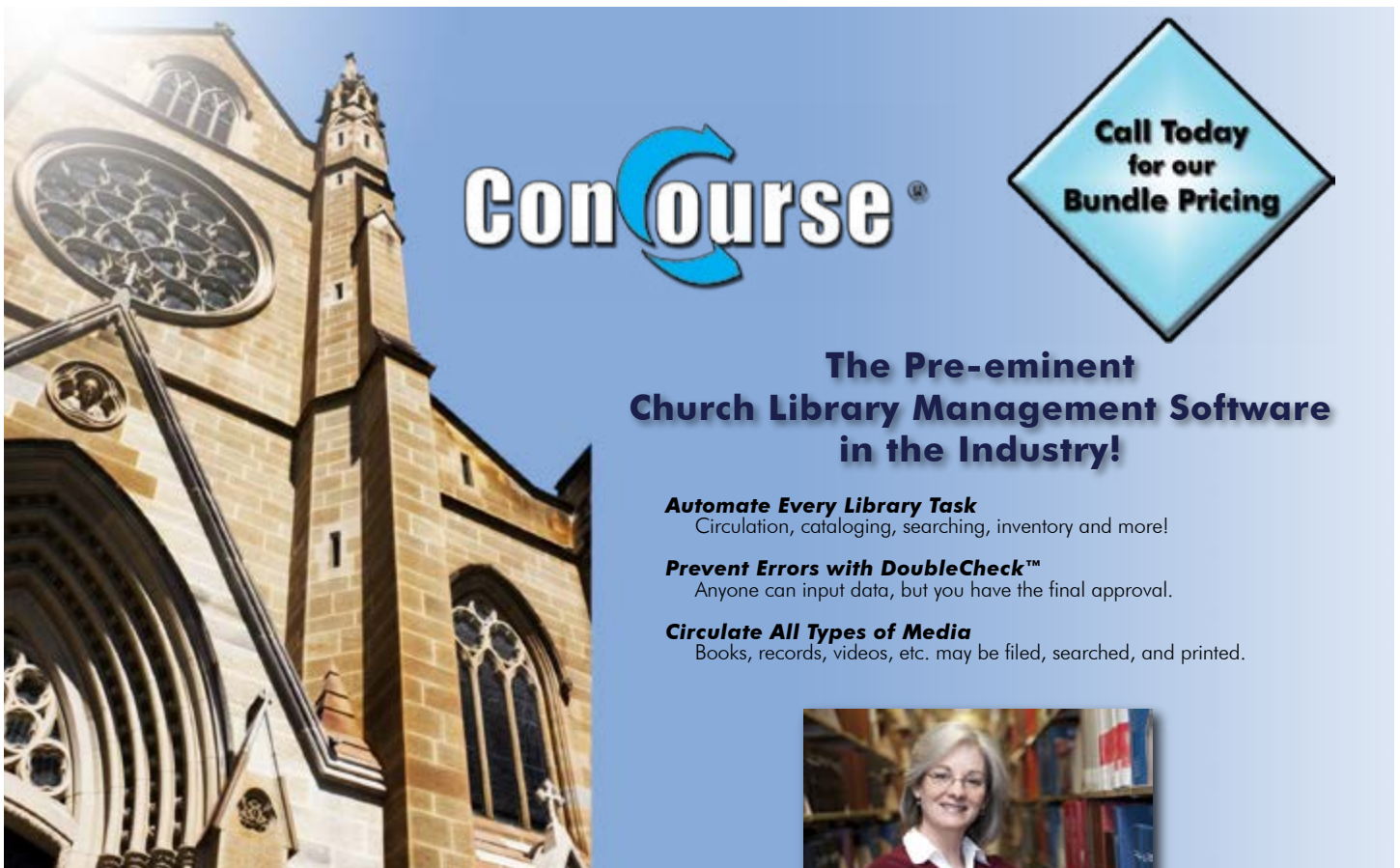
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