



CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

Otira Theological Book Club 2019

**“Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be
chewed and digested.”**

Francis Bacon (1561-1626)

For more information:

29 College Cres, Parkville VIC 3052 Ph: 03 9340 8800 Email: info@ctm.uca.edu.au

Website: <https://victas.uca.org.au/community-learning/leadership/lay-resources/>

Lay Education at the Centre for Theology & Ministry (CTM) offers a fantastic resource for the congregations and presbyteries who love to read and digest books.

We have available for loan a wide range of book sets (up to 20 copies per title) which have been chosen to:

- create fascinating discussions,
- offer an alternate perspective,
- enable an opportunity for adult Christian education,
- provide an excuse to get together a group of people and share in community.

We have over 200 titles to choose from, so you're bound to find at least one title to suit your group.

We also have available study guides and questions for some of the titles to help start your conversations.

So how does the borrowing system work??

One person acts as contact person and accepts the responsibility to:

- invite a group of people to the club
- secure their commitment
- select a title and borrow books (one title at a time or reserve titles for a years' worth of meetings)
- distribute books, set up meeting date
- lead discussion meetings (or delegate this job to another group member)
- return books by the due date

Does it cost anything to borrow the books??

It does not cost your group anything except for the postage to return the books back to the CTM. Donations are certainly welcome to enable us to continue supplying new titles regularly.

How long do we have the books for??

Normal borrowing time is about 6-8 weeks.

How do we get the books??

Either via mail (Australia Post) or by personal pick up at the CTM. Normally the books will be available to be handed out at the previous meeting, to be read, then discussed & collected at the next meeting.

My group is interested how do I get more information??

- Keep reading for a comprehensive list of the titles that are available
- Fill in the form at the end of the book
- Contact us on 03 9340 8800 or info@ctm.uca.edu.au

Things to note:

- New books are the ones indicated by ****NEW****
- The book group comments have been provided by you. It is important to note that these are a particular group's experience of the book and may not necessarily reflect your group's experience of the same book. They have been included for you as an additional reference when choosing your books. If you have a comment on a book, please feel free to include it when returning the books.
- Every effort will be made to supply you with the books requested for the time indicated. If the book has been reserved by another group, the book will be made available to you at the next possible time.

Albom, Mitch

18 copies

Tuesdays With Morrie

192 pp

1998

"The last class of my old professor's life took place once a week in his house, by a window in the study on Tuesdays. The subject was The Meaning of Life. It was taught from experience" 'A beautifully written book of great clarity and wisdom that lovingly captures the simplicity beyond life's complexities'.

Book Group Comments

- *We have enjoyed studying this book and reading it produced some interesting and valuable discussions. It was also easy to read and read by a wide group of people with pleasure*
- *You have to read this book. Morrie was a wise wonderful man, full of love and warmth – a true story*

Anderson, Bernhard.

18 copies

The Living Word Of The Bible

109 pp

1979

The Bible is approached by way of four perspectives: imagination, narration, liberation and obligation. The implications of biblical criticism for the life and worship of the church are discussed and clearly and simply provides a survey of more recent developments in biblical study, being particularly concerned to show their positive value rather than the negative effect.

Anderson, Robert, Harry Wardlaw, Nigel Watson.

13 copies

The Way We See Things Now

54 pp

1993

Three eminent professors comment on significant changes that have occurred during their time as members of staff at the UC's Theological Hall and UFT in Melbourne.

Ariarajah, Wesley.	<i>The Bible And People Of Other Faiths</i>	
16 copies	71 pp	1985
Most Christians in the modern world live in situations of religious pluralism. They are constantly challenged at many levels, to relate to people of other living faiths. But is the Bible supportive of a life in dialogue? That is the question the author seeks to answer.		
Ariarajah, Wesley.	<i>Not Without My Neighbour</i>	
17 copies	130 pp	1999
Although interfaith dialogue has established itself as a key concern for churches and the ecumenical movement, it continues to raise spiritual, social, political, practical and theological concerns. An excellent discussion book.		
Bailey, Ivor.	<i>The Ten Commandments</i>	
20 copies	80 pp	1992
Jesus' advice to the rich young man is meant for everyone who tries to live the way God wants. But what have these commandments to say about life today?		
Bandy, Thomas.	<i>Kicking Habits</i>	
17 copies	261 pp	2001
<i>Upgrade Edition.</i> This ground-breaking book on systemic change that has literally birthed new congregations, rejuvenated tired leaders, and transformed declining churches. It provides the big picture of thriving church life in the postmodern world.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This book created a lot of discussion. Thanks</i> 		
Barber, Bruce.	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	
19 copies	57 pp	1993
An exposition of the prayer of the Christian church. Each phrase is introduced by a biblical text and taken in association with those readings. By the <i>Forum on Faith and Society</i> .		
Barraclough, Ray	<i>Why?</i>	
20 copies	326 pp	2010
This book seeks to take readers on a journey through history. It is not a detailed journey. Rather it gathers examples of explanations that have been advanced down the ages to the present time for various tragedies in people's experience of life. It does this through a basic but distinctive grid. It examines explanations into two simple categories – who and what explanations. To put it simply, such explanations reflect the pre-modern and modern terms of reference by which we seek to understand why events have occurred.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fascinating treatment of the theme in desperate need of a good editor</i> • <i>An interesting read. In this age and time it was useful to look at how differently natural disasters were viewed in days of yore</i> • <i>This book is useful in part – but there's a lot I read but can't remember</i> • <i>The problem of suffering is and will always be an enormous one to challenge our faith</i> • <i>I expected to find this book more interesting and useful than it was. I am not sure it was worth reading</i> • <i>Too many words, far too many examples</i> • <i>This book was like diving into melted chocolate - It tasted great at first, and then became very difficult to wade through</i> 		
Barr, Liz And Andrew.	<i>Jobs For The Boys</i>	
17 copies	249 pp	1998
In 1992 women won the right to be ordained as priests in the Church of England after a long struggle against what had sometimes seemed to be overwhelming opposition. This book is not about the struggle to be ordained but the story of changes these exceptional women are making, often against all the odds.		

Bass, Dorothy	<i>Practising Our Faith</i>	
18 copies	231 pp	1997
The gap between theory and practice in religion is one of growing consternation for people. Aside from going to church on Sunday, how does a Christian manifest the power of this religion in his or her own life? Instead of just <i>being</i> a Christian, how can one bring the meaningfulness of Christianity into one's life? Dorothy C. Bass and 12 other Christian leaders offer concrete practices such as hospitality, simplicity, and community gathering that serve to enrich our lives and the lives of others while reinforcing faith in God. Although presented from a Christian point of view, the practices themselves are universally applicable.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We all found this a very helpful book and easy to read</i> • <i>The group really valued this insightful book</i> • <i>Many helpful passages</i> • <i>This book had a wide variety of opinions – some chapters more of interest than others. The chapter on Death was for me, really great.</i> • <i>Mixed comments about the contents – some actively disliked the book but all participated in discussion</i> 		
Beare, Hedley And Lyn.	<i>Praying In Secret</i>	
19 copies	80 pp	1988
Look at how meditative prayer can be an important part of your day and how daily devotions can be a source of spiritual energy. Follow the pattern of a service of worship, drawing on insights from a wide range of devotional traditions		
Beresford, Quentin.	<i>Rob Riley, An Aboriginal Leader's Quest For Justice</i>	
18 copies	336 pp	2006
A biography of triumph and tragedy. Much of Rob's life was a triumph of the human spirit against great adversity and this legacy remains. All who care about reconciliation should read this book.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Distressing but compelling reading. Deserves to be widely read</i> • <i>Was very well researched and distressing reading</i> 		
Bird, Carmel.	<i>The Stolen Children</i>	
18 copies	185 pp	1998
Stories out of the pain, separation and displacement of the stolen children. Acknowledging the human tragedy created during a misunderstood and shameful part of our history.		
Blake, Meredith.	<i>The Bible in Australia: A Cultural History</i>	**NEW**
15 copies	336 pp	2018
The revelatory story of the Bible in Australia, from the convict era to the Mabo land rights campaign, Nick Cave, the Bra Boys, and beyond. Thought to be everything from the word of God to a resented imposition, the Bible has been debated, painted, rejected, translated, read, gossiped about, preached, and tattooed. At a time when public discussion of religion is deeply polarised, Meredith Lake reveals the Bible's dynamic influence in Australia and offers an innovative new perspective on Christianity and its changing role in our society. In the hands of writers, artists, wowsers, Bible-bashers, immigrants, suffragists, evangelists, unionists, Indigenous activists, and many more. A must-read for sceptics, the curious, the lapsed, the devout, the believer, and non-believer.		
Blanksby, Arthur.	<i>Some Of My Lives Back There</i>	
11 copies	394 pp	1995
Arthur was Principal of Otira College from 1968-1979. This book is written by one who is both preacher and poet: a man committed to spreading the gospel of Christ, a man with an eye for detail and a concern for truth.		
Bodycomb, John	<i>No Fixed Address</i>	
13 copies	271 pp	2010
Fifty four years ordained, with nothing to prove or to fear, Body comb answers questions many have been afraid to ask. Acknowledging that everyone is the product of a story, he sets his idea of faith as journey firmly within his own experience, dealing with who or what we mean by G-O-D, who Jesus is, and religious pluralism. Written in the avuncular style that marks his preaching and teaching this book will appeal to both scholar and lay reader.		

Book Group Comments

- *What a wonderful book to inspire us to look at the bible with a sense of expectation of seeing things in new ways. All members present thought it challenged them.*
 - *All agreed that this was the best book we had studied Words like "Liberating" and exhilarating" were expressed*
-

Bodycomb, John.***The One With Many Names***

16 copies

72 pp

1993

The author explores the many titles given to God, not to discover what these names tell us about God, but rather to discover what they say about us. Explore the ways we talk about God to deepen our understanding of personal wholeness, human relations and life today.

Bolz-Weber, Nadia***Pastrix***

20 copies

pp

2013

Foul-mouthed and heavily tattooed, former stand-up comic-turned-Lutheran pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber weaves hilarious rants and stunning theological insight into her personal narrative of a flawed, beautiful, and unlikely life of faith. Bizarre, rich, and remarkable, PASTRIX turns spiritual memoir on its ear in a sardonically irreverent and beautifully honest page-turner that readers will never forget. Nadia Bolz-Weber takes no prisoners as she reclaims the term pastrix (a negative term used by some Christians who refuse to recognize women as pastors) in this wildly entertaining and deeply resonant memoir about an outrageous, unlikely life of faith. From a commune of haggard-but-hopeful slackers to the wobbly chairs and war stories of Alcoholic Anonymous, from a funeral in a smoky downtown comedy club to an unexpected revelation during the Haitian stations of the cross, PASTRIX is a journey of cranky spirituality that intersects religion with real life, weaving incredible narrative, hilarious rants, and poignant honesty to portray a life deeply flawed and deeply faithful - giving hope to the rest of us. This book contains course language as well as Nadia's story as founding pastor to House for All Sinners and Saints, Colorado.

Book Group Comments

- *Easy to read, stimulating, honest*
 - *Nadia's thoughts about devil/demons/darkness invoked much discussion for and against*
 - *We all thought this a great message about inclusiveness*
 - *Much stimulating discussion not just on the book but leading on from it related to our own church and its activities with the marginalised of own community*
 - *Great personal story with strong theology & gave us new perspectives to consider*
 - *What a great book! Nadia challenged us with her stories - she has a great ability to present an extra dimension to some well-known stories*
 - *Some people found her language a challenge, but they kept reading anyway*
 - *We really enjoyed this book. It was so easy to read and to relate to*
 - *Has been a good wake up call for putting inclusiveness into practise and recognising difficulties*
 - *The book is written in a readable style - a touch American.*
 - *The author is willing to reveal herself but shows a keen awareness of the continual presence of God.*
 - *A remarkable book. One of the very few that the whole group was enthusiastic about.*
 - *Although loud and rebellious, Badia Bolz-Weber is a shining example of authentic discipleship lived out in humility*
 - *This is an easy enlightening read and we suggest future readers not judge this title by its cover*
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Borg, Marcus And Crossnan, John***The Last Week*****Dominic.**

18 copies

238 pp

2007

Two top Jesus experts offer what they believe is the real story of Jesus' final week in Jerusalem. 'Holy Week' the most sacred time of the Christian year with its climax on Good Friday and Easter. Includes a Reader's Guide for individual and group use.

Book Group Comments

- *Tremendous book! Several of our members plan to buy copies*
- *Gave us many valuable insights and much discussion*
- *Excellent discussion from a book that required concentrated reading*
- *Very well received by group members who found the book revealing and thought provoking*

Borg, Marcus And Wright, N.T.	<i>The Meaning Of Jesus – Two Visions</i>	
17 copies	250 pp	2000
Two leading Jesus scholars with widely divergent views go to the heart of these questions presenting opposing visions of Jesus that shape our faith today. Candid, spirited, and thoughtfully debated.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Excellent Book! Promoted discussion. We will probably have to have it back again next year</i> • <i>We felt this book was too difficult for a book club. Not many could finish the book and still felt confused by it</i> 		
Borg, Marcus J.	<i>The Heart Of Christianity</i>	
25 copies	226 pp	2004
What is the heart of Christianity? What does it mean to be Christian today? Here are two quite different answers. An earlier vision of Christianity then an emerging vision. We live in a time of conflict and change in the church.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Enjoyed the book very much. Answered a few questions on our own faith and understanding.</i> • <i>Great book! Several of our members intend to buy a copy as an ongoing resource</i> 		
Borg, Marcus J.	<i>The God We Never Knew</i>	
18 copies	178 pp	1997
From the distant, authoritative God of our childhood to an equally powerful, dynamic adult understanding of God we trace the author's own spiritual journey as he reveals how to embrace a fresh, authentic view of God that is fully compatible with good science, critical thinking and religious pluralism - a view that promotes a much healthier and more vital life of faith today.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This book is highly recommended by our group. Comments were: refreshing, liberating, articulate, accessible, and enlightening. We felt Borg fully achieved his aims</i> • <i>Had a very good discussion – I personally enjoyed it and found it a very rewarding book</i> • <i>A very interesting and thought provoking book</i> 		
Borg, Marcus J.	<i>Meeting Jesus For The First Time</i>	
15 copies	140 pp	1995
We have all met Jesus before. We received some impression, some image of him, however vague or specific. Here is an account of contemporary Jesus scholarship, (told in simple language), and of his personal struggle to find authentic faith.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Lots of stimulating discussion. Another great book.</i> 		
Borg, Marcus J.	<i>Reading The Bible Again For The First Time</i>	
17 copies	302 pp	2002
Many inside and outside organised religions are searching for an enlightened, contemporary way to be believers and to appreciate the profound richness of the Bible. Borg offers a bold new understanding of scripture that respects both tradition and reality, blending the best of biblical scholarship with concern for authentic faith and how it is lived today.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tremendous book, very well received</i> • <i>What a great book, we all found it enlightening</i> • <i>We would highly recommend this book</i> • <i>We found this book most helpful although for some the chapter on revelations was confusing</i> 		
Bowker, John.	<i>Beliefs That Changed The World</i>	
18 copies	205 pp	2007
<i>The History and Ideas of the Great Religions.</i> From the Jewish exodus over 3,000 years ago to the importance of Shinto in modern Japan, the histories of the world's prominent religions are brought to light and the central tenets behind each are revealed. A timely reflection on the way religious beliefs continue to shape our world.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We all thought this a good reference book about the basics of the faiths presented</i> • <i>Excellent</i> 		

- Found it very interesting, it created a great deal of discussion

Paula Gooder

13 copies

Sometime around 56 AD, the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Rome. He entrusted this letter to Phoebe, whom he describes as the deacon of the church at Cenchræe and a patron of many. But who was this remarkable woman? Biblical scholar and popular author and speaker Paula Gooder imagines Phoebe's story—who she was, the life she lived, and her first-century faith—and in doing so opens up Paul's world, giving a sense of the cultural and historical pressures that shaped his thinking and the faith of the early church. After the narrative, Gooder includes an extensive notes section with comments on the historical context, biographical details, cultural practices, and more. Rigorously researched, this is a book for anyone who wants to engage more deeply and imaginatively with Paul's theology.

Phoebe

320 pages

****NEW****

2018

Boyd-Macrae, Clare.

18 copies

Clare shares her doubts, her dark as well as luminous moments with simplicity and sincerity in her latest book of articles and reflections. As Olga Lorenzo writes in the introduction she offers something of immeasurable generosity in this collection of stories about her life.

Book Group Comments

- *Some thought the early chapters were a bit lightweight. But the later chapters showed Clare's openness in looking at problems of depression and her struggle to deal with it. A very honest book, also an amusing one.*
- *A delight to read and much wide ranging discussion*

The Whole Shebang

235 pp

2008

Boyd-Macrae, Clare.

18 copies

The shops and streets of Brunswick, family, friends, birth and death, walking the dog, demolishing a house or standing up for refugees, Clare writes about her life and faith with breathtaking frankness, inviting us into an intimate space. Clare's articles and reflections appear regularly in The Age.

Book Group Comments

- *Fantastic – we could all relate with it, positive, and prophetic*

Three Gates To Paradise

242 pp

2006

Barry Browm

18 copies

This small volume tells the story of Mr William Witton, a pioneer lay leader of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Victoria. William Witton was an early 'land owner' in Melbourne and had a deep anguish concerning the impact of white settlement upon the indigenous Australian peoples. Read his story, this research manuscript, relating to the life and lay ministry of Mr William Witton (1811 – 1886)

Book Group Comments

- *Thank you to Barry for his research, especially in that William Witton was a lay preacher – NOT ordained. We would have liked more about Mary and her personality. At times repetitive, but definitely a research paper. More on Buntingdale would be nice, and it would have been nice if this was proof read / edited prior to publishing. William sounds like a wonderful person, as does Mary Ann. Our group found this very interesting as it is where our churches / congregations come from – Warrnambool, Koroit, Port Fairy and Portland.*

William Witton

321 pp

2006

Breward, Ian.

12 copies

The Melbourne College of Divinity Bicentennial lectures form the content of this book. Five very readable chapters trace our history, look at implications for our style of Christianity and then look towards the future.

Australia: The Most Godless Place Under Heaven?

110 pp

1988

Brown, Cavan.

15 copies

Explore the desert in our history and literature, link this with the role of the desert in biblical witness and look at ways in which contemporary Australians can encounter God in the barrenness of much of modern life.

Pilgrim Through This Barren Land

225 pp

1991

Brueggemann, Walter.

14 copies

The Bible Makes Sense

155 pp

1977

A book which helps the Bible to come alive as it explores the world view of the Bible. It calls on us to nurture an historical imagination, to see it as 'insiders' and find energy and illumination.

Budden, Chris

Following Jesus In Invaded Space

18 copies

179 pp

This book asks whose interest's theology protects when it is part of a community that invaded the land of Indigenous peoples. Developing a theological method and position that self-consciously acknowledges the church's role in occupying Aboriginal land in Australia, it dares to speak of God, church and justice in the context of past history and continuing dispossession.

Book Group Comments

- *This book was a very challenging read. The theology was too deep for some of us. However we were challenged to be reminded of our sometimes racist and paternalistic attitudes and to question what is normal*

Butler Bass, Diana.

Christianity After Religion

18 copies

321 pp

2006

Diana Butler Bass offers a fresh interpretation of the "spiritual but not religious" trend and shares a hope-filled vision for a renewed faith that stays true to the real message of Jesus.

Book Group Comments

- *This was a great book with many aspects relevant to our congregation*
- *Whatever our thoughts on this book, our discussion was delightful and enjoyed by all*

Butler Bass, Diana.

Christianity For The Rest Of Us

18 copies

321 pp

2006

How the Neighbourhood Church is Transforming the Faith. Church renewal isn't only about the dramatic and large-scale but about transformations in local communities nourished by the readiness to learn from a wide spectrum of Christian wisdom. The author is a popular speaker at retreats and workshops and made a visit to Australia mid-year 2009. You can visit her online at www.dianabutlerbass.com

Book Group Comments

- *This was a great book with many aspects relevant to our congregation*
- *Whatever our thoughts on this book, our discussion was delightful and enjoyed by all*
- *Most readers enjoyed the book but found some chapters no applicable for Australia*

Byrne, Brendan, S.J.

Inheriting The Earth: The Pauline Basis Of A Spirituality For Our Time

11 copies

110 pp

1990

A teacher of New Testament at the United Faculty and a Jesuit priest, Brendan traces in the writings of St Paul, God's concern for relationship with individual Christians, our life together and the world. Explore the two poles of freedom and responsibility.

Campbell, Wes

Towards a Theology of Peace

20 copies

50pp

2015

As the centennial remembrances of 'the Great War' draw attention to a century of global warfare, the importance of peace and peacemaking in an age of terrorism becomes ever more stark. Wes provides three studies towards a theology of peace, exploring the impacts of war, the Church's vocation of peace, and the challenge to live without the protection of weapons.

Rev Dr Wes Campbell is a retired Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church with experience in parish ministry, university chaplaincy, UCA synod and assembly roles, and a sustained commitment to peace, justice and social responsibility.

Book Group Comments:

- *An interesting and challenging book.*

Campbell, Wes

Christian Faith in the 21st Century

20 copies

50pp

2015

"The Christian message is always spoken in a particular time and place. It is an embodied word. It is always contextual (Lesslie Newbigin). These studies take

Seriously that we are living in the twenty-first century." Wes provides studies on becoming human in a global age, new beginnings, living towards the one future in Jesus Christ, being the Church in Australia and receiving the gift of First Peoples, and living toward a future made whole.

Rev Dr Wes Campbell is a retired Minister of the Word in the Uniting Church with experience in parish ministry, university chaplaincy, UCA synod and assembly roles, and a sustained commitment to peace, justice and social responsibility.

Cannold, Leslie

The Book of Rachael

20 Copies

328 pp

2011

It is the women of Nazareth who takes the centre stage: the rebellious, gifted Rachael, consigned by her sex to a life of drudgery; Bindy, the crone who teaches her the skills of the healer; Shona her sister, the victim of a harsh social code; and their mother Miriame, a woman seemingly unable to love. When Rachael falls in love with her brother's dearest friend, the rebel Judah of Iscariot, it seems that at least one of the women of Nazareth may find happiness. Then a message comes from her brother in Jerusalem. And the events begin to unfold that will change not just Rachael's life, but the world-forever.

Book Group Comments:

- *Probably pitched at younger people. Maybe whetting the appetite for faith and finding out more from the biblical record*
- *Enjoyed the early parts of the novel. Thought it lost its way, or perhaps changed direction and the ending seemed rather contrived*
- *Very good discussion from this book. First section more convincing showing conditions for women in this era and village life. Relevant to conditions in many countries today*

Capon, Robert Farrar.

The Supper Of The Lamb

18 copies

270 pp

2000

From a passionate and talented chef who also happens to be an Episcopalian priest comes this surprising and thought-provoking treatise on everything from prayer to poetry to puff pastry.

Catterton Allen, Holly & Lawton Ross, Christine

Intergenerational Christian Formation

16 copies

pp

2012

Most churches and faith communities segment their ministries by age and generation. The kids go to children's church; the teens go to youth group. Worship services are geared toward different generational preferences, and small groups gather people at the same life stage, whether singles, young marrieds, parents or empty nesters. In some congregations, people may never interact with those of other ages. But it was not always so. Throughout biblical tradition and the majority of history, communities of faith included people of all ages together in corporate worship, education and ministry. The church was not just multigenerational; it was intergenerational, with the whole church together as one family and people of all ages learning from one another in common life. In this comprehensive text, Holly Allen and Christine Ross offer a complete framework for intentional intergenerational Christian formation. They provide the theoretical foundations for intergenerationality, showing how learning and spiritual formation are better accomplished through intergenerational contexts.

Chacour, Elias And Mary E. Jensen.

We Belong To The Land

18 copies

205 pp

2007

The story of a Palestinian Israeli, Elias Chacour, the Archbishop of Galilee of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church, who lives for Peace and Reconciliation.

Book Group Comments:

- *We found this book a real inspiration. Father Chacour is an example to us all of how to persist for our rights without resorting to violence*
- *One of the best if not the best book we have had for interest and stimulating thought and discussion*
- *Provided lively discussion. Generally considered a recap/update on the 'Blood Brothers' story.*

Chacour, Elias.

Blood Brothers

Collins, Francis S.	<i>The Language Of God</i>	
18 copies	305 pp	2007
Dr Collins is the head of the Human Genome Project and one of the world's leading scientists. He works at the cutting edge of the study of DNA, the code of life, and has an unshakable faith in God and scripture. He believes that faith in God and in science can coexist harmoniously within a person. In this book he makes his case for God and for science. Essential reading for anyone who wonders about the deepest questions of faith: Why are we here? How did we get here? What does life mean?		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Found this book really exciting. Although the science was beyond us. Collins statements of beliefs are very inspiring</i> • <i>An excellent book. We all enjoyed it even though the technical data was a bit daunting in places.</i> • <i>Great Book. A scientist who can explain the science in words we could understand and relate the wonders known and unknown to God</i> • <i>This book engendered good discussion. Some of us found the scientific detail a bit challenging but overall everyone enjoyed reading it</i> • <i>Excellent book! Most of us really enjoyed it. Very understandable explanation of scientific concepts</i> • <i>Parts of this book were too hard for our group, but otherwise an interesting argument</i> • <i>Well liked, good discussion</i> 		
Costello, Tim & Royce Millar.	<i>Wanna Bet?</i>	
18 copies	246 pp	2000
Australians have long been told that they 'love to gamble'. This book challenges the myth, its origins and the way it has been exploited by the gambling industry.		
Costello, Tim.	<i>Streets Of Hope</i>	
18 copies	235 pp	1998
A warm, personal story of the author's first ministry in St Kilda: the encounters, characters and challenges to his skills as a lawyer, his convictions as a churchman, his ideas and values. About family, sex, spirituality, caring, charity, law, the powerless and the need for community in an age of insecurity.		
Cranmer, John & Grierson, Denham	<i>Walking on Bones</i>	
20 copies	82 pp	2017
Walking On Bones is an echo from Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. It is exploring the idea that much of our present social experience, particularly in the Church, is akin to walking on dry bones. The poems in Walking On Bones explore how the Spirit may be discerned in ordinary things, reflecting on our own experience, and entering into the everyday with open eyes. Author's John Cranmer and Denham Grierson invite us to explore the intuitive dimension of our experience alongside the rational in this poetic conversation about life and the Spirit.		
Book Group Comments		
Craven, Margaret.	<i>I Heard The Owl Call My Name</i>	
28 copies	131 pp	1974
A young Anglican priest who has not long to live, is sent to the Indian village in the wilds of British Columbia. While sharing the hunting and fishing, the festivals and funerals, the joys and sorrows of a once proud tribe, he learns enough of life to be ready to die. This very readable novel, speaks of incarnation, identification with people and what it is to minister.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A book that was much appreciated by all members and which led to a full evenings discussion</i> • <i>We all loved this book – poignant, inspiring, a celebration of human spirit. The writer said succinctly what she wanted to convey while allowing the reader's emotions to be felt</i> 		
Critchett, Jan.	<i>Untold Stories</i>	
18 copies	273 pp	1998
A series of Aboriginal biographies from the Western District of Victoria, drawing on the oral tradition of local Koorie Elders and on official records. This book opens our eyes to a number of remarkable individuals who managed to make a life in the interstices of the society that had dispossessed them.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Much of this book was quite a revelation to some members of our group</i> 		

- *A great book – challenge to our thinking – much discussion*
- *Had a really interesting discussion about this book, even though some of us didn't like it very much – the repetition of the basic story and the way the stories were arranged*

Crossan, John Dominic

The Greatest Prayer

20 copies

200 pp

2010

It is Christianity's greatest prayer. It is also Christianity's strangest prayer. It is prayed by all Christians but it never mentions Christ. It is prayed in all churches but it never mentions Church. It is prayed on all Sundays but it never mentions Sunday. It is also called the "Lord's Prayer" but it never mentions "Lord." It is prayed by fundamentalist Christians but it never mentions the inspired inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth, the miracles, the atoning death, and bodily resurrection of Christ. It is prayed by evangelical Christians but it never mentions the evangelism or gospel...

Book Group Comments

- *Found this book informative, dense*
- *Provoked much in-depth discussion*
- *Reading the Lord's Prayer will never be the same!*

De Waal, Esther

Seeking God

20 copies

144 pp

2017

Seeking God has become a contemporary spiritual classic. It has introduced many thousands of people to the humane and gentle wisdom of St Benedict. Although his Rule is a short document written in the 6th century to guide a community of monks in theory daily living. its insights into what makes a balanced and fulfilled life are amazingly relevant today. St Benedict shows us how the ordinary and humdrum can become the opportunity to find the presence of God in our own daily lives

Book Group Comments

- *What a good book for discussion. The group had plenty to offer and everyone agreed that a solid subject was written in a very thoughtful and clear way.*
-

Delphin-Stanford, Delphine And Brown ***Committed To Change***

John.

21 copies

106 pp

1994

Written long before the Apology to the Stolen Generations in 2008 by the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, this book recognises the vision of Rev Charles Harris, National President of the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in 1988 when the covenanting vision was brought to the national Uniting Church Assembly. The book briefly recalls the history and struggle for justice and peace, and outlines a process and the experiences of covenanting groups. Does covenanting still have a place in post-Apology Australia?

Dethlefs, Noriko

In his Strength

20 copies

110 pp

2009

Noriko is one of the most remarkable women you could ever meet. In 2005 she made the huge decision to give up her academic work to accompany her husband Roger with CBM in Afghanistan. Over the next four years her life was completely turned upside down. Aided by her strong and vibrant faith, love for people and ever present sense of humour, Noriko faithfully recorded her experiences through regular emails to her friends. They will make you laugh. They will make you cry. They will definitely inspire you. Be prepared for your faith to be challenged and strengthened as you share Noriko's journey

Department Of Employment, Education & Training (Deet) ***Stories From Home***

16 copies

53 pp

2004

Stories of traumatic experiences, great loss and hardship, by new settlers, some migrants, some refugees or asylum seekers who have settled in the Goulburn Valley.

Diamant, Anita.	<i>The Red Tent</i>	1998
18 copies	395 pp	
The story of Dinah, Jacob's only daughter in the Book of Genesis. Moving panoramically from Mesopotamia to Canaan to Egypt and narrated by Dinah, of her upbringing by the four wives of Jacob to her growth into one of the most influential women of her time.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We suggest that people need to read the biblical Genesis version as well as the book</i> • <i>The book was generally well accepted. Some male members returned it after only reading the fairly explicit early chapters – this could indicate that it would be more acceptable for an all-female group. Members found the depiction of the lives of women in that culture informative and fascinating. It is a beautifully written book.</i> • <i>Members agreed this book was an interesting and worthwhile read, raising awareness, encouraging us to carefully read and consider the facts behind particularly the Old Testament writing.</i> • <i>We all enjoyed this book, felt it made us look at the bible stories to see and understand the culture of the times</i> 		
Dicker, Gordon.	<i>Faith With Understanding</i>	1981
16 copies	207 pp	
This book attempts to open up theology for the ordinary person, free from jargon or needless complexity. The author seeks to have the reader discover the joy of understanding what they believe and how their faith influences life.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Good solid read</i> 		
Dicker, Gordon.	<i>The Bible With Understanding</i>	1988
13 copies	128 pp	
The writer's aim is to help readers understand and use the Bible more effectively for everyday living. He shows how differing views of the authority and interpretation of Scripture have caused unresolved arguments in the Church about beliefs and ethics.		
Dillard, Annie	<i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i>	1975
20 copies	271pp	
Pilgrim at Tinker Creek is a series of essays that combines scientific observation, philosophy, daily thoughts, and deeper introspection with glorious prose. On the surface, Annie Dillard is simply exploring a place called Tinker Creek and its inhabitants: But as her observations range well beyond the landscape into worlds of esoteric fact and metaphysical insight, each paragraph becomes suffused with images and ideas. Annie Dillard offers up her own knowledge with reverence for her material and respect for her reader. She observes her surroundings faithfully, intimately, sharing what can be shared with anyone willing to wait and watch with her.		
Book Group Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What an interesting book, we wondered did Annie ever have time to do anything other than search out facts and observe nature? Some people loved it others didn't like it at all.</i> • <i>Found this book not at all enjoyable or meaningful. Only one member finished reading, the rest gave up after two chapters.</i> • <i>There were mixed receptions for this book. Some members felt it wasn't for them and read no further than the first chapter. Others decided to persevere and gained more from reading on. Others really loved it – especially the women in the group. We all gained a lot from the discussion</i> • <i>This is an amazing book – very dense and inspired a lively discussion. It was agreed that the 'afterward' should be read first</i> 		
Dingo, Sally.	<i>The Story Of Our Mob</i>	1998
18 copies	312 pp	
This uplifting story spans three generations of an Aboriginal family's long struggle to find dignity and worth in a culture not their own.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>All enjoyed this book for its detail of Aboriginal life and culture and the historical and social references made</i> • <i>All agreed it was one of the most interesting books we have enjoyed. Discussion was stimulating and wide reaching. A book to really make you think and learn a lot about aboriginal culture and life and the effects of white settlement</i> 		

Donaghy, Bronwyn.	<i>Anna's Story</i>	1996
10 copies	254 pp	
Just fifteen she was leaving school to start the job of her dreams. Beautiful, with a loving family and many friends, on October 21 1995, she took an ecstasy tablet and died three days later. A family devastated a community in shock.		
Douglass, Jane Dempsey.	<i>Reform And Renewal</i>	1995
20 copies	32 pp	
The author draws on her extensive knowledge of the sixteenth century reformation to recall the struggles and tensions of the time and to reflect on some lessons to be learned for the church today.		
Dutney, Andrew (Ed.)	<i>From Here To Where?</i>	1988
19 copies	153 pp	
We are encouraged to think about the way ahead. Issues are discussed: land rights, white Aboriginal relationships, prejudice, wealth and poverty and the church's role.		
Dutney, Andrew.	<i>Where Did The Joy Come From?</i>	2001
20 copies	56 pp	
A voyage of rediscovery. Andrew revisits the Basis of Union and uncovers the joy and excitement of the early days of the Uniting Church. Share his passion for the deep wisdom and sound teaching that are the marks of this foundation document of the church.		
Dutney, Andrew.	<i>Playing God - Ethics And Faith</i>	2001
17 copies	178 pp	
The author believes that bioethics has been left to experts for too long. This sensitive area of decision making should belong to those who wrestle personally with the hard decisions - the sick and those who care for them.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found this book very helpful • Positive comments on the 'what kind of God' section and on the God and the problem of suffering. Too much spent on the concept of play 		
Dutney, Andrew.	<i>Food, Sex And Death</i>	1993
15 copies	175 pp	
The writer shares with his readers his struggle to find meaning after his baby son died within days of birth. The reader joins him in a search for something meaningful to say about God in the light of human suffering.		
Dutney, Andrew.	<i>Introducing The Uniting Church In Australia</i>	2008
18 copies	39 pp	
Andrew is one of the leading interpreters of the history and theology of the Uniting Church. Through books, essays, lectures, seminars and academic courses on the Uniting Church he has helped a generation to share the vision of the UCA's founders.		
Book Group Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A useful little book. We all felt we needed to look again at the Basis of Union 		
Ed Doug Pagitt & Tony Jones	<i>An Emergent Manifesto of Hope</i>	2006
18 copies	321 pp	
Many have heard of the emerging church, but few people feel like they have a handle on what the emerging church believes and represents. Is it a passing fad led by disenfranchised neo-evangelicals? Or is it the future of the church at large? Now available in trade paper, An Emergent Manifesto of Hope represents a coming together of divergent voices into a conversation that pastors, students, and thoughtful Christians can now learn from and engage in. This unprecedented collection of writings includes articles by some of the most important voices in the emergent conversation, including Brian McLaren, Dan Kimball, and Sally Morgenthaler. It also introduces some lesser known but integral players representing "whose next" within the emerging church. The articles cover a broad range of		

topics, such as spirituality, theology, multiculturalism, post colonialism, sex, evangelism, and many others. Anyone who wants to know what the emerging church is all about needs to start here.

Book Group Comments

- *Wordy, too much jargon but in each of the sections incidents or observations that were very relevant to our own congregation*
- *A hard book to get into. We felt that the 'manifesto' was not well explained. Many didn't finish the book, but those who did felt that they were glad they had persevered*

Edwards, Tilden.	<i>Living Simply Through The Day - Spiritual Survival In A Complex Age</i>	
15 copies	255 pp	1977

The author takes us through the 'basic windows of the day', eating, sleeping, relating and praying and offers suggestions from his own experience on prayer.

Evans, Alwyn.	<i>Walk In My Shoes</i>	
18 copies	346 pp	2004

After a perilous and terrifying escape from war-torn Afghanistan a family find themselves in Australia, a place they know nothing about. They are exhausted and traumatised, but so full of hope. But their struggle isn't over yet. An inspiring novel for all Australians.

Book Group Comments

- *Everyone found this a very rewarding book to read and discuss. It was relevant and well written and showed amazing insight into the emotional and physical traumas this family faced*

Fisher, Judi & Wood, Janet (Ed.)	<i>A Place At The Table - Women At The Last Supper</i>	
20 copies	89 pp	1993

This book attempts to answer the questions "Why were no women present?" 'If in fact they were present, why were they omitted from the story?' It reconsiders the New Testament accounts of the Last Supper and considers the contribution art makes to our theological and biblical understanding.

Book Group Comments

- *Good discussion. Brought home to some members just how far they have come*

Ford, David.	<i>Theology - A Very Short Introduction</i>	
17 copies	191 pp	1999

This book provides believers and non-believers with a balanced survey of the central questions of contemporary theology. The author's interrogative approach draws the reader into considering the principles underlying religious belief.

Forest, Jim.	<i>Praying With Icons</i>	
9 copies	162 pp	1997

Fascinating and beautiful, this book offers a simple introduction to the tradition of icons with special emphasis on their function in the spiritual life. Forest provides a personal and practical guide to how one prays with icons.

Foster, Richard.	<i>Celebration Of Discipline - The Path To Spiritual Growth</i>	
25 copies	179 pp	1978

An American Quaker writes simply and encouragingly about the ways to a spiritual life. Classical spiritual disciplines are described with present day illustrations and helps the inner journey. Plus study guides.

Fraser, Ian M.	<i>Living A Countersign: From Iona To Basic Christian Communities</i>	
19 copies	126 pp	1990

In a day of increasing anonymity, the place of community and especially Christian community is increasingly being recognised. Ian Fraser gives many examples of Christian communities from Iona, Scotland to many other parts of the world.

Book Group Comments

- *Lots of stimulating discussion*

Fung, Raymond.	<i>The Isaiah Vision</i>	1991
16 copies	55 pp	
An "ecumenical strategy for congregation-based evangelism", based upon a belief that mission and witness belongs with local congregations and communities - the restored community where old and young find their place and fulfilment.		
Galbraith, Douglas (Ed.)	<i>Worship In The Wide Red Land</i>	1985
20 copies	106 pp	
One feature of the church at worship is the increasing participation by lay people in the leading of services. Fifteen authors, all recognized for their contribution to the development of worship in the UCA, explore the meaning and practice of worship and preaching today.		
Glynn, Paul.	<i>A Song For Nagasaki</i>	1988
10 copies	168 pp	
The story of a Japanese atheist, born into a medical family where the ancient Shinto faith was the mainstay and who became a Christian. A M.D. pioneer professor of radiology at the University of Nagasaki who exemplified the characteristic of Japanese Christian history, total commitment and even martyrdom and who died of atomic disease.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Taught us a great deal about Japan's history, but most of it showed how positives can be found in the most horrendous circumstances by a person of faith</i> • <i>All agreed that this is one of the best books we had to read and discuss. AN amazing story of a great Christian</i> 		
Gallagher, Nora	<i>The Sacred Meal</i>	2006
18 copies	321 pp	
In her inimitable style of memoir and personal reflection, Nora Gallagher explores the beauty and mystery of this most fascinating of topics. Whether exploring the history of Christian communion, taking us inside the workings of a soup kitchen, or sharing times of joy and sadness with friends, she reminds us what it means to partake of, and be part of, the body of Christ.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This book engendered great discussion and made us aware of the different ways the members of our group regard communion</i> 		
Gallagher, Nora	<i>Things Seen and Unseen</i>	1998
20 copies	241pp	
This is a book for those who doubt their faith, resist the institutional church, and yet are drawn to both. The author offers her insight into faith in artfully written chapters sprinkled with the wisdom of an array of writers from C.S. Lewis to medieval mystic Mechthild of Magdeburg. This is not, however, a collection of platitudes but a story of faith practiced in understanding and supporting a gay priest and in helping the homeless, hungry, sick, and dying, primarily through the Episcopal church to which she belongs.		
Gill, Athol	<i>The Fringes of Freedom</i>	1990
14 copies	267	
Despite being published in 1990, <i>The Fringes of Freedom</i> continues to resonate with anyone who seriously contemplates the call to radical discipleship. Under headings of Following Jesus, Living Together and Working for Justice, Gill offers a skilful analysis of the call to Christian community, messianic mission, evangelism, peace and social justice, among others, from an informed faith perspective.		
Glasson, Barbara	<i>I Am Somewhere Else</i>	2006
20 copies	127 pp	
This book presents a spirituality arising from the experience of an unusual and innovative ministry in the centre of Liverpool. Barbara Glasson cherishes 'the bread church' an inclusive faith community where people gather to bake bread and worship God together. Her remarkable reflections on the journey of faith, from the point of view of a theologian and a breadmaker will entral both readers inside and outside the church.		
Book Group Comments:		

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Gondarra, Djiniyini. *Let My People Go*
15 copies 35 pp 1986
By a noted church leader in the Northern Synod on Church renewal, Christian Theology of the Land Contextualization and Unity. Gondarra writes as an Aboriginal Christian and visionary leader of his people.

Graham, Duncan (Ed.) *Being Whitefella*
18 copies 189 pp 1994
Sixteen 'whitefellas' explore their relationship with Aboriginal Australia, looking at events which shaped their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal culture and history. In their lively, highly readable and personal stories these writers share experiences and wrestle with the issues of today.

Book Group Comments

- *Excellent – reminded us what has happened since 1994 and also what has not happened. Most found it compulsive reading and excellent discussion resulted.*
- *We thought this book quite interesting, if a bit old*
- *This book created lots of discussion and made us think more deeply about how we could relate in a more positive way with our fellow Australians.*

Grant, Arch. *Aliens In Arnhem Land*
14 copies 71 pp 1995
The Methodist Church had been active in Darwin from the beginning in 1873. Church ministry had been to Europeans, then the Chinese when they were brought to the area. Work among the aborigines was sporadic and mainly limited to those in prison. In 1914 discussions took place with the Government and new ministry began in 1916.

Grant, Stan. *The Tears Of Strangers - A Memoir*
18 copies 259 pp 2002
"My father's name is Stan and I am named after him. Strangely, or maybe not, I've never felt comfortable with that name - Dad calls me Dylan while others call me Guy." In a career in journalism, Stan's own story is the most difficult and powerful that he could ever tell - a journey of coming to terms with his aboriginality and identity.

Book Group Comments

- *Group found the book riveting, promoted great discussion*
- *We really enjoyed this book, a bit technical in some places*

Grierson, Denham. *Conversations At The Edges Of The Raft*
16 copies 63 pp 1993
Where should Christians place themselves? At the centre or at the edge of social experience? This writer argues that Christians should place themselves at the edge of social experience, so they can critique and evaluate current social practice and trends.

Book Group Comments

- *Stimulated considerable discussion, both on and off the topic*
- *We all thought this a most helpful and challenging book – a real gem*

Guinness, Michele. *Tapestry Of Voices*
17 copies 250 pp 1993
The original idea was to compile a book of meditations specifically for women, but the author didn't really believe the sexes differ very greatly in the needs of their spiritual diet. A book about women for women and the men who like them.

Book Group Comments:

- *We found this book a treasure. The experiences of women, both every day and in difficult, poignant and even dangerous situations, made fascinating reading. Even the guys like it!*
- *What a wonderful book, we all enjoyed it and were encouraged by it*

Habel, Norman. *Reconciliation Searching For Australia's Soul*
18 copies 188 pp 1999
Reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians continues to tear at the heart of Australia, exposing our struggle or soul. In the deepest sense, this is not just political and social, but also spiritual and human.

Hansen, Ian. *The Naked Fish*
15 copies 225 pp 2002
A memoir that arises out of an overlooked strata of Australian society: the Christian middle-class family, where faith and feeling run deep. Not often is a book a life story and also a faith journey. Ian Hansen tells his story of growing up in the 1930s and 1940s in a suburban, church-going family. A moving story of a man's continuity of faith.

Held Evans, Rachel *Searching for Sunday*
20 copies 268 pp 2015
For a generation that has largely said "count me out", church represents a complicated relationship of both longing and apathy. There's a history there - a past full of confusion and hurt, but a past that often is impossible to abandon. In *Searching for Sunday*, Rachel Held Evans exposes her own thorny relationship with church, articulating the concerns, frustrations, and hopes of many of her peers. Through a series of stories told around the church's sacraments - baptism, confession and communion, among others - Evans offers the beginnings of a road map back to church and the resurrection that awaits when we are willing to give up and begin again

Book Group Comments

- Amazing book - everyone in the group enjoyed and related to many of the sections
-

Held Evans, Rachel *Inspired*
8 copies, 4 audiobooks 266pp 2018 *****NEW*****
If the Bible isn't a science book or an instruction manual, then what is it? What do people mean when they say the Bible is *inspired*? When Rachel Held Evans found herself asking these questions, she began a quest to better understand what the Bible is and how it is meant to be read. What she discovered changed her--and it will change you too. Drawing on the best in recent scholarship and using her well-honed literary expertise, Evans examines some of our favourite Bible stories and possible interpretations, retelling them through memoir, original poetry, short stories, soliloquies, and even a short screenplay. Undaunted by the Bible's most difficult passages, Evans wrestles through the process of doubting, imagining, and debating Scripture's mysteries. The Bible, she discovers, is not a static work but is a living, breathing, captivating, and confounding book that is able to equip us to join God's loving and redemptive work in the world.

Holloway, Richard *Doubts And Loves*
18 copies 251 pp 2001
Prepare to be challenged by this inspiring book by the former Bishop of Edinburgh. He is disturbed about the Institutional church and its emphasis upon preserving tradition and methods. Easy to read but difficult to forget are the concepts of what part Christianity plays in today's world. This is a sensitive, brave, inspiring book.

Horsfield, Rodney. *Baptism An Evangelical Sacrament*
16 copies 51 pp 1984
Six studies on the various aspects of baptism. Theological argument and examples of pastoral situations with questions for discussion are included in each chapter.

Hotham Mission. *Finding Shelter*
18 copies 139 pp 2009
Through the stories of asylum seekers, staff and volunteers, this book describes the experiences of those with whom the Hotham Mission Asylum Seeker Project has worked and the ways in which the agency has developed in response to their needs.

Book Group Comments

- *This was a very enlightening book, it made us aware of a whole group of people who are suffering injustices right here and we all wanted to do what we could to alleviate in any small way.*

Johnston, Robert *Useless Beauty* 2006
 18 copies 321 pp
 How should Christians relate to the difficult and contradictory messages of modern movies? In *Useless Beauty*, Robert K. Johnston presents the bold position that films can be our "eyeglasses and hearing aids" in understanding the Book of Ecclesiastes. Taking up movies such as *American Beauty*, *Magnolia*, and *About Schmidt*, he addresses such biblical issues as life and death, chance and choice, loneliness and connection, and God's presence and absence to deepen our understanding of life's beauty amid its confusion and pain. Christian filmgoers, pastors, and youth leaders will find Johnston's book a valuable source of insight into the relationship between Christianity and popular culture. This book predominately refers to movies released between 1990-2002.

Keck, Leander. *The Church Confident* 1993
 20 copies 128 pp
 The author examines four central aspects of the church's life - worship, theology, ethos, and communication. A call to restore the praise of God to the centre of worship.

Kirk, JR Daniel *Jesus have I loved, but Paul?* 2012
 18 copies pp
 Readers of the Bible are often drawn to Jesus's message and ministry, but they are not as positively inclined toward Paul. What should people who love Jesus do with Paul? Here Pauline scholar J. R. Daniel Kirk offers a fresh and timely engagement of the debated relationship between Paul's writings and the portrait of Jesus contained in the Gospels. He integrates the messages of Jesus and Paul both with one another and with the Old Testament, demonstrating the continuity that exists between these two foundational figures. After laying out the narrative contours of the Christian life, Kirk provides fresh perspective on challenging issues facing today's world, from environmental concerns to social justice to homosexuality.

Book Group Comments

- Found this book quite difficult, confusing, left us with no answers but interesting discussion.
- All agreed that it was a 'hard read' but it opened up to a good discussion.
- One remark was that the writer had a tendency to be as 'long winded' as Paul himself.
- Not a book for reading in bed (unless you wanted to be put sleep)
- Most of the book was puzzling to our members he often made statements which seems to contradict things he'd said before. Good discussion because it made us search to find why we disagreed
- Despite the tempting title of this book, it was considered too difficult for study by lay people.

Koh-Butler, Amelia *Wide and Deep* 2017
 20 copies 68 pp
 Liturgies for thriving and Emerging Churches, this is a beautiful collection of prayers, litanies, liturgies and poems that include Welcome to Country; Gatherings for multi-cultural situations; Celebrations of membership and Covenanting together in community.

Book Group Comments

Kushner, Harold S. *When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough* 1987
 19 copies 191 pp
 Rabbi Kushner applies his compassionate mind to a problem, one more delicate than that of sudden tragedy but just as dangerous - the feeling that life is utterly meaningless. A deeply moving and compassionate book which brings us renewed faith, comfort and inspiration.

Kushner, Harold S. *When Bad Things Happen To Good People* 1992
 39 copies 155 pp
 The author and his wife were confronted with the knowledge their son had an incurable terminal disease which would take him in childhood. He wrestles with the conflict between the goodness of God and the bitterness of suffering.

Book Group Comments

- Was enjoyed by most, and promoted good discussion.

Law, Eric	<i>The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb</i>	
18 copies	321 pp	2006
<p>In the book Eric Law delivers a passionate plea for Isaiah's vision of the peaceable realm to be lived out in multicultural community. He writes, "If cultures are analogous to animals then Isaiah 11 becomes a vision of cultures living together in harmony and peace."</p> <p>Law does an exceptional job unpacking ideas of internal and external culture. External cultural differences are easy to change or coexist with, however, internal differences are like the iceberg under water—daunting, mysterious, and seemingly impossible to challenge. Using a colour-blind test as an example of internal culture, Law illustrates how people see things differently. To successfully take our faith across culture, he argues, we must empower, franchise, and equally value the different perceptions. The beginning of the journey across cultures is about listening and paying attention to both answers!</p>		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We found this book very relevant to our multicultural Melbourne</i> 		
Le Griffon, Heather.	<i>Campfires At The Cross</i>	
18 copies	316 pp	2006
<p>When the Bunting Dale Mission at Birregurra near Colac, was threatened with closure, its aboriginal inhabitants displayed admirable self-determination and local settlers rallied around them until political circumstances changed. This story of the life and work of its founder Francis Tuckfield is an important contribution to our understanding of colonial history.</p>		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Some of us thought this writer had chosen a position and collected material with only that point of view. Nevertheless we enjoyed the book</i> 		
Levine, Amy-Jill.	<i>The Misunderstood Jew</i>	
17 copies	240 pp	2006
<p>After two thousand years of ignorance, the time has come for church and synagogue, Jews and Christians to understand our intertwined histories, to see Jesus as a Jew who made sense to other Jews in a Jewish context, to learn how our two traditions came to a parting of the ways. Explore how the gains in interfaith relations can be nurtured and expanded.</p>		
Book Group comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stimulated much discussion, but found this book quite difficult, at some stage quite annoying</i> • <i>Thanks, interesting discussion</i> • <i>We found this book rather heavy going, but it led to a good discussion</i> 		
Lewis, Peter	<i>Acting in Solidarity</i>	
12 copies	279 pp	2011
<p>This book traces the history, with a particular focus on the Uniting Church whose former constituents (Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational Churches) has a considerable presence among the Aboriginal peoples. It examines the Uniting Church's serious efforts to come to terms with its colonial past, seeking to understand previous failures, trying to find ways of being a church truly reconciled to its Indigenous members.</p>		
Book Group Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Solid going particularly the introduction and early chapters but excellent coverage of all the happenings in the field. The last chapter and conclusion very helpful</i> 		
Linn, Dennis, Sheila And Matthew.	<i>Don't Forgive Too Soon</i>	
18 copies	184 pp	1997
<p>Most of us know that we should forgive those who hurt us. But how can we forgive when we have tried everything we can think of, including prayer, yet we still feel stuck in a hurt? This book tries to untangle a complex issue for many Christians.</p>		

Loader, Bill. *The Christmas Stories* 1986
16 copies 72 pp
Many Christians, uneasy about how we celebrate Christmas, which has become so commercialised and trivialised, are looking for ways of rediscovering the real significance of this special time.

Loader, William. *The New Testament With Imagination* 1998
17 copies 150 pp
This book offers a new way of reading the New Testament and many different ways of introducing it through imagination and sampling key passages. There are no wild flights of imagination, no making up stories, just reflections of what we already know but from a likely perspective within the scene. Each of the five chapters begins with an exercise in imagination followed by four sets of passages from the N.T. each with a reflective comment.

Loader, William. *Jesus And The Fundamentalism Of His Day*
18 copies 150 pp 1998
This book is about how we read the Bible, handle the religious tradition we have received and sort out what matters most from what matters little or not at all. For those who accept the Bible as God's Word yet struggle to understand its teaching for our lives.

MacLeod, Donald *A Faith to Live By: Understanding Christian Doctrine* ****NEW****
8 copies 320pp 2016
This is a comprehensive examination of Christian doctrine, practically explained - The Inspiration of Scripture, the Trinity, Sin, the Incarnation, the Atonement, Justification, Christian Liberty, Baptism, the Church, the Lord's Supper, the Second Coming, the Resurrection, Hell and Heaven. It equips the reader to present their faith intelligently to others.

Mackay, Hugh. *Generations - Baby Boomers, Their Parents And Their Children*
17 copies 207 pp 1997
Hugh, a distinguished social researcher and novelist, devotes his analytical skills to the task of exploring the attitudes, values and outlook of three generations of contemporary Australians. His analysis will change the way you think about inter-generational differences and conflicts.

Mackay, Hugh. *Beyond belief* 2016
20 copies 280 pp
Around two-thirds of us say we believe in God or some 'higher power', but less than one in ten Australians attend church weekly. In *Beyond Belief*, Hugh Mackay presents this discrepancy as one of the great unexamined topics of our time. He argues that while our attachment to a traditional idea of God may be waning, our desire for a life of meaning remains as strong as ever.

Mackay interviews dozens of Australians representing many different points on the spectrum of faith, including some who are part of the emerging 'spiritual but not religious' movement. He exposes the deep vein of ambivalence about religion that runs through our society: we may not actively worship, but we still like to see local churches operating in our midst, and we use 'our' church to marry, christen our babies, educate our children and commemorate our dead. He points out some uncomfortable truths, such as our tendency to call on God only in a crisis, and unpacks our human need for 'answers', even when science can't find them. He endorses the Christian ideal of the good life - a life lived for others - but acknowledges that there are many pathways to that same goal, not all of them religious.

Written with all the insight and compassion we have come to expect of our leading chronicler of Australian life, *Beyond Belief* is an engrossing exploration of the ways

Book Group Comments

- *Provoked lots of discussion*
- *Challenging. Interesting*
- *Nice to have a contemporary book*
- *What a great book. We thought there was so much to discuss that we'll need to borrow it again*

Mackay, Hugh.	<i>Right & Wrong</i>	2004
18 copies	236 pp	
As our lives become more complicated, we face a growing number of moral choices. Happiness and peace of mind depend upon knowing we have made the <i>right</i> choices – but how can we decide what is right or wrong, especially when there is no one to guide us?		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This book generated a good discussion and an appreciation of the author's intent but very disappointed that there was no Biblical input.</i> 		
Maddox, Marion.	<i>God Under Howard</i>	2005
18 copies	319 pp	
In the 2004 federal election campaign religion seemed to spring out of nowhere to take centre stage. Assiduously cultivated by John Howard, an extreme form of conservative Christianity now has real influence on our politicians and their policies.		
Main, John.	<i>Christian Meditation</i>	1977
22 copies	60 pp	
Until his death in 1982, John Main was Prior of a Benedictine Community in Montreal. This book is a brief introduction to meditative prayer by use of a prayer word or 'mantra'.		
Mallouhi, Christine.	<i>Waging Peace On Islam</i>	2000
18 copies	343 pp	
Relations between Islam and the West grow more polarised. At a personal level, many Christians are scared of meeting Muslims. Christine, who has married into a Muslim family and lived much of her life in the Middle East, suggests we should start seeing Muslims as people. "Muslims need to see Jesus, and the only way most of them will see him is in us.		
Manton, Jill	<i>An Ordinary Bloke</i>	2017
20 copies	147 pp	
From unlikely beginnings, Eugene Lincoln Napoleon Veith established a business that became the largest capital city metropolitan parcel organisation in Australia. Yet despite his grand name and success, Eugene Veith always described himself as an ordinary bloke. He grew up in rural Victoria amidst illness and poverty, and his adolescence was turbulent and painful. It was also the time when his childhood faith burst open in an event that was the beginning of his love affair with God which matured throughout his long life. In time, he realised his dream of using the profits from his business to support Christian missions and challenge unjust social structures. The legacy of this continues to grow today through the Entrust Foundation, which he established in 2008, not long before he died. This is the outer expression of his inner life with God. In the general rush of everyday living, people seldom talk of their experience of God at a deep and intimate level, but in the right context and at the right time, some do. When this happens, it is a rare privilege to listen in and to recognise that we are on holy ground. <i>An Ordinary Bloke: The Making of a Modern Mystic</i> provides us with that opportunity.		
Book Group Comments		
Masters, Gwenyth	<i>Reclaiming an Ancient Heritage</i>	2014
20 copies	184 pp	
Gwen Masters offers a thoughtful, careful, solid and thorough exploration of Celtic Christianity, with a care to warn against misty-eyed appeals to resuscitating former glory days, or a retreat to tribalism or anarchy. Building on advanced tertiary studies in this field, Gwen's summary introduction to Celtic spirituality offers a rich web of alternatives to a dominant and dualistic Western Christianity centred in Rome. Celtic Christianity brings to focus a discipleship incarnated in the culture, history and geography of everyday life. Imitating Jesus, 'becoming more Christ-like', transcends every cultural context but is also only ever expressed within particular contexts of culture and community. Way beyond merely spirituality for white Anglo-Celtic Australians, this careful exploration of the heart-felt commitments of a Celtic worldview will resonate with the deeply-held values of creation, community and everyday life of the many other cultural groups in the Uniting Church, and beyond.		

From the book's blurb: If history is what legitimises Christian traditions, then Celtic Christian spirituality has much to offer today's world, bequeathing alternatives to enrich and challenge our lives. The ancient Celts perceived that all creation and the everyday were sacred; that wrongdoing was a weakness that could be healed; that justice should be transforming and reconciling; that anam chara (soul friends) were companions on life's journey; that hospitality was a requirement for community health; that laws were necessary to protect the innocents in times of war. This great wisdom provided a beacon on light during the European dark ages. Reclaiming an ancient Celtic heritage can transform our lives – regardless of time and place differences. Today the Celtic story invites our attention and careful consideration, proposing options that have long been forgotten – or maybe even deliberately cast aside.

Book Group Comments

- *Very well written book. A lot of time and effort has gone into it*
- *Found it heavy going but worth the effort (rather a lot of repetition), but discussion was very interesting*

Mavor, John (Ed.)

Growing As Disciples

14 copies

250 pp

1995

This book draws on the collective wisdom of many Christians in Australia. The stories are simple, moving and effective. They reveal how people deepened their spirituality & rediscovered for themselves the importance of prayer, community and service.

Mayes, Andrew

Another Christ

****NEW****

20 copies

160 pp

2017

Who do you understand Jesus to be? In this book, Mayes explores a number of images for Jesus – some that may be surprising ... and challenging ...

Mayfield, Paul.

Soul Cry.

17 copies

67 pp

2004

"This book began as a collection of poetry written over 10 years. At the suggestion of friends, I filled out the particular experience from which such verse emerged. This exercise bought prayer to the fore as a determinant in my journey."

Book Group Comments:

- *There was a lot of discussion about the author and his feeling of grief and depression. Because we are a very close and trusting group members were able to share some of their experiences of loss and grief, but this would not always be so and so the book needs to be approached with caution. Some of the poetry was beautiful, but some were very dark and obscure in meaning*
- *Really enjoyed this book. Gave us much to think about and to discuss*

Mcbride, James.

The Color Of Water

18 copies

291 pp

2000

The author grew up one of twelve in the all black housing projects of Brooklyn, the son of a black minister and a woman who would not admit she was white. McBride was an adult before he discovered the truth about his mother: the daughter of a failed Orthodox rabbi, she had run away to Harlem, married a black man and founded an all-black Baptist church in her living room.

Book Group Comments

- *Amazing*
- *Everyone enjoyed this book. Stimulating discussion included themes of race, religion, culture, identity, discrimination, mixed marriages, parenting, family and more*

Mcdonagh, Sean.

To Care For The Earth - A Call To A New Theology

14 copies

214 pp

1986

In a passionate appeal for a new theology the author looks for a new story of creation. He is led to take a fresh look at the Bible and the Christian tradition, to highlight the richness of the Benedictine and Franciscan spirituality as a response to the gift of creation, offering new insights into sacramental practice, Christian prayer and missionary practice.

Book Group Comments

- *Very interesting, but a little out of date. There are new circumstances so since 1986*

McGinlay, Hugh (Ed.) *Joy Pain* 2000
22 copies 96 pp
The debate on sexuality at the U.C.A.'s 1997 Assembly was followed by a report as to how the church should continue to address the unresolved issues. The Assembly published a 'resource to assist the church in its continuing dialogue on the matters as yet unresolved in relation to sexuality'. Joy Pain is that resource.

Book Group Comments

- *When we met for discussion everyone had found the wide approach to the subject with so many different comments very interesting.*

McGrath, Alistair. *A Cloud Of Witnesses Ten Great Christian Thinkers* 1997
23 copies 140 pp
Key ideas and some biographical details are presented by ten leading Christian thinkers. The contributions of Athanasius, Luther, Barth, C.S. Lewis and others to Christian thought, will stimulate and inform your own thinking on the meaning of grace, God in Scripture and nature and the human longing for God.

Book Group Comments

- *A great book, lots of discussion*

McLaren, Brian *A Generous Orthodoxy* 2004
18 copies 348 pp
In a sweeping exploration of belief, author Brian McLaren takes us across the landscape of faith, envisioning an orthodoxy that aims for Jesus, is driven by love, and is defined by missional intent. A Generous Orthodoxy rediscovers the mysterious and compelling ways that Jesus can be embraced across the entire Christian horizon. Rather than establishing what is and is not "orthodox," McLaren walks through the many traditions of faith, bringing to the centre a way of life that draws us closer to Christ and to each other. Whether you find yourself inside, outside, or somewhere on the fringe of Christianity, A Generous Orthodoxy draws you toward a way of living that looks beyond the "us/them" paradigm to the blessed and ancient paradox of "we."

Book Group Comments

- *This book was generally well received. Good discussions*
- *This book provided great material for discussion.*

Mcrae-McMahon, Dorothy. *Memoirs Of Moving On A Life Of Faith, Passion And Resilience* 2004
12 copies 277 pp
Dorothy, a retired UCA minister, has held many local and international positions in the church and been an activist in community affairs for almost 50 years. She is the recipient of a Jubilee Medal from the Queen for work with women in NSW, an Australian Government Peace Award and the Australian Human Rights Medal.

Mead, Loren. *The Once And Future Church* 1991
19 copies 92 pp
A challenging and thought-provoking discussion on the changing face of the church and the world. Suggestions and implications offer stimulating and fresh approaches for transforming congregations. A list of study questions is also available.

Mead, Loren. *Five Challenges For The Once And Future Church* 1996
15 copies 100 pp
Mead presents five key challenges facing today's church **and** how they represent opportunities for the evolutionary, transformative changes which must take place if the Church is to remain a viable institution. It is an excellent resource for small groups and elders councils.

Metaxas, Eric *Bonhoeffer* 2010
20 copies 608pp
'Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy' has been named a ground-breaking biography of the life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, one of the most fascinating, complex figures of the 20th century. A definitive, deeply moving narrative, Bonhoeffer delves into a story of great moral courage shown in the face of the monstrous evil that was Nazism.

** Due to the length of this title, allocation length is over two months (Based on book groups meeting monthly)

Book Group Comments

- *What a fantastic book – not everyone finished it but we who did found it helpful historically as well as enlightening and broadening our thinking through the development of Dietrich's theology*

Miles, Sara

18 copies

Take this Bread

283 pp

2007

A self-proclaimed blue-state, secular-intellectual, lesbian, left-wing journalist with a strong sceptical streak, Miles was hardly a candidate for Christian conversion. Yet convert she did, wholeheartedly at age 46. The journey from sceptical secularist to devout Christian was long, complicated, and often convoluted, but the story she makes of it is engaging, funny, and highly entertaining.

Book Group Comments

- *What a challenging book! We all felt we learned much and also have new ways to look at things which puzzle us.*
- *Our group enjoyed reading this book. The book showed a very different role of the church. It highlighted many differences in the traditional way of doing things*
- *Very interesting – inspiring but very challenging. Promoted widespread discussion*

Miller, Doug.

16 copies

The Dead Sea Scrolls And Jesus Christ

23 pp

1992

A discussion of the views of Dr Barbara Thiering, written at the request of the Synod of Victoria in 1993.

Moore, Thomas

18 copies

Care Of The Soul

309 pp

1992

The author draws on his own life as a therapist practising 'care of the soul', his studies of world religions, teaching of Jungian psychology and art therapy, music and art, to provide this inspirational guide to examine the connections between spirituality and the problems of individuals and society.

Book Group Comments:

- *Found this book rather difficult, final chapters were more readable. Many members gave up on the book half way*

Morgan, Sally.

17 copies

My Place

358 pp

1987

An autobiography of an Australian aboriginal woman, who travelled back to her grandmother's birthplace, allowing us to hear the stories of three generations, in a search for truth. Sally Morgan and her family are confronted with their own suppressed history and fundamental questions about their identity.

Mortenson, Greg And Oliver Relin, David.

18 copies

Three Cups Of Tea

349 pp

2006

One Man's Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time (349pp) After a terrifying and disastrous attempt to climb K2 in northern Pakistan, a mountaineer called Greg Mortenson drifted, cold and dehydrated into an impoverished village. Moved by the inhabitants' kindness he promised to return and build a school. This is the story of that promise and its extraordinary outcome as over the next decade he built not just one but fifty five schools in remote villages across the forbidding and breathtaking landscape of Pakistan and Afghanistan, just as the Taliban rose to power.

Book Group Comments

- *Found this book to be one of the most inspiring books we have read. Highly recommended.*
- *Wonderful book – some members recommending it to friends or planning to give it as a gift*

Myers, Ben

20 copies

The Apostles' Creed: A Guide to thd AncientCatechism

112 pp

2018

****NEW****

The Apostles' Creed is used in our Baptismal liturgy. Christians across the world, in different places, in different languages and for centuries have recited these words, singly and together. What do we know of its early use, and what truths live in its words that have inspired generations?

Book Group Comments

Negus, George.	<i>The World From Islam</i>	
18 copies	286 pp	2003
In the author's inimitable no-nonsense style, this journey is hell-bent on demystifying the issues, misconceptions and prejudice that have set the Islamic and non-Islamic worlds against each other. Explore the questions pre-occupying non-Muslims in our post-September 11, post-Bali, post-Saddam World: Should we fear Islam?		
Newbegin, Leslie.	<i>Truth To Tell The Gospel As Public Truth</i>	
13 copies	90 pp	1991
The author affirms the gospel as the truth for both personal life and life at the public level, thus running counter to much contemporary thinking about the impossibility of knowing ultimate truth. He argues that other modes of thought are to be evaluated in the light of the gospel.		
Newell, Philip J.	<i>Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality</i>	**NEW**
	128 pages	1997
Listening for the Heartbeat of God presents spirituality for today, modelled on the vital characteristics of Celtic spirituality throughout the centuries. The emphasis is on the goodness of creation and of humanity made in the image of God.		
Generously donated by Ormond Uniting Church after they read the book and felt that it was an exceptionally worthwhile addition to Otira. Other groups have since also read this publication and said that they thought it was brilliant and incredibly rewarding!		
Newell, Christopher And Calder, Andy.	<i>Voices In Disability And Spirituality From The Land Down Under</i>	
18 copies	170 pp	2004
In recent years disability theology has emerged alongside Black theology and women's theology as a new genre seeking to express the concerns of people whose experience has often been marginalized. This is a thoughtful book, placing criticism where it is due, telling how it is for excluded people. The editors have brought together a collection of authors, expert in a variety of fields to comment on spirituality and the world of disability. They raise issues of importance to everyone – the person next door as well as health professionals and religious workers.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Most members of the group found the early chapters too academic for lay people, but we all agreed that it was a very worthwhile read and helped us to examine our attitudes to disability</i> • <i>Difficult read, particularly the early articles. However worthwhile as it raised awareness of group to some shortcoming in our local environment</i> 		
Nicoll, Mac (Ed)	<i>Some of my friends are poets</i>	
20 copies	71pp	2009
Upon discovering a number of gifted poets among ministers and congregations in his role as a Presbytery Minister, Mac Nicoll was stirred to compile a volume of works in celebration of their art. The result is 'Some of my friends are poets', an evocative anthology of 52 poems which seeks to see readers encountered by reflections on 'parents, pain, death, hope, surprise, guilt, grace, joy, sadness', and allowed a space for their own identification with the works.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How well these poems express things which touch writers deeply and encourage us to think deeply also</i> • <i>Very positive reactions to this collection. Each member had their favourite and enjoyed reading aloud and sharing the ways in which the poems moved them</i> 		
Nicoll, Mac (ed)	<i>Let their voices be heard</i>	
20 copies		
'Let their voices be heard' vibrantly brings together poetry, prose and painting as Mac Nicoll draws again upon a wide circle to produce a second anthology, demonstrative of the significant richness of spirituality within the arts.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Many of these works were very much appreciated. We enjoyed them so much more as we shared our reactions in the group.</i> 		

Nicoll, Mac (ed)	<i>Inklings</i>	
20 copies	125pp	2014
'Let their voices be heard' vibrantly brings together poetry, prose and painting as Mac Nicoll draws again upon a wide circle to produce a second anthology, demonstrative of the significant richness of spirituality within the arts.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We have been encouraged to read more poetry</i> • <i>Had an excellent discussion</i> • <i>We all thought this book lovely</i> 		
Nichols, Alan.	<i>On The Path To Mutual Respect</i>	
17 copies	81 pp	2007
Mac Nicoll compiles a third volume of Australian poets, writers and artists at work. As expressed my Nicoll, you will meet writers and authors who are "dealing with life in all its diversity. The title of this volume conveys a sense of a "hint, a sneaking suspicion, a glimpse, a touching of the depths, a pointing to a deeper significance, an experience of transcendence, and a sense that 'there is more". 35 artists have offered their works to this volume including Clare Boyd Macrae, Gail Pritchard, Jeff Shrowder and Rod Horsfield.		
Nolan, Albert.	<i>Jesus Before Christianity</i>	
18 copies	185 pp	2000
Nolan's portrait of Jesus introduces us to the man as he was <i>before</i> he became enshrined in doctrine, dogma and ritual, a man deeply involved with the real problems of his time - the real problems of our time as well.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mixed reception – some found the book excellent, other more theologically aware has reservations</i> 		
Nouwen, Henri.	<i>Reaching Out</i>	
31 copies	150 pp	1976
The three movements of spiritual life examined are Loneliness to Solitude, Hostility to Hospitality and Illusion to Prayer.		
Nouwen, Henri.	<i>The Wounded Healer</i>	
15 copies	100 pp	1972
This is a positive and hope-filled book that speaks directly to those men and women who want to be of service in the Church but find the familiar ways crumbling.		
Book Group Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Half our group though this hard to read and some didn't finish it – the rest of us loved and couldn't understand why they found it difficult</i> 		
Nouwen, Henri.	<i>In The Name Of Jesus</i>	
20 copies	81 pp	1989
Here is a powerful vision of leadership for now and the future, especially in the church. Nouwen is strongly influenced by his experience as a priest with the handicapped people of l'Arche Community in Toronto.		
Book Group Comments:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A very readable and inspiring book. Looking forward to reading more of Henri Nouwen</i> 		
Nouwen, Henri.	<i>Beyond The Mirror</i>	
9 copies	71 pp	1990
Henri Nouwen describes a serious accident which led to a deepening of his spiritual understanding of life.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Our group divided in their opinion of this book – half loved Henri's honesty. We all found the book very easy to read</i> 		
Nouwen, Henri.	<i>Love In A Fearful Land</i>	
18 copies	116 pp	1985
The author, a teacher at an American Theological Seminary, decided to spend some time in the third world. As a result he has produced this book: a story of love, ministry, martyrdom, prayer and friendship in Guatemala. In notebook style and well-illustrated with photographs this book on being Christian in trying situations, speaks		

powerfully to us.

Pak Poy, Patricia.

A Path Is Made By Walking It

23 copies

216 pp

2015

'A path is made by walking it' is an ancient Chinese saying which affirms the process of change in society. It states the need for individual purpose and collective action in bringing about political and social change – in this case for a mine-free world. A collection of essays by people who have taken steps on that path and colleagues who have worked with them.

Book Group Comments

- *This book gives us hope that other problems can be tackled when groups of various persuasions concentrate on the prime aim and persist despite the various 'regulations of governments.*

Parker, Julianna

Pondering Pieces of the Puzzle

19 copies

159 pp

2006

Pondering the divine can seem like trying to do an enormous 3D jigsaw puzzle when the pieces have been spread around the world. You pick up the pieces from expected and unlikely places. The light you are working in changes, altering the appearance of pieces. You can have a good run when a few pieces go together easily. Sometimes you can look at a piece for ages before you see where and how it fits. Sometimes you ignore a piece, failing to recognise its significance. This series of sermons offers some of the author's knowledge and experiences. They are not to be read consecutively, some experiences have been used multiples times in different contexts. It is suggested to flick through and decide which ones to read and discuss as a group

Book Group Comments

- *Wonderful discussion*
- *Mixed reception - most liked many of the pieces. One member is planning to buy her own copy*
- *We all enjoyed this book - easy to read and offered new ways to look at old stories*
- *Excellent book for discussion. The discussion was wide with many people bringing their opinions*

Parkinson, Lorraine.

Made on Earth

****NEW****

20 copies

345 pp

2015

In this book Lorraine Parkinson sets out compelling reasons why the gospels may be found to have been 'made on earth'. She builds a strong argument that each gospel was written to make a distinct case for Jesus as the Christ. She presents detailed evidence that the Christ of the gospels is the creation of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John, plus later editors. The sub-text of this book contends that by including teachings of Jesus alongside claims for him as Christ, gospel writers bequeathed to Christianity two contradictory gospels – the gospel of Jesus and the gospel about Jesus. There is both detailed and courageous biblical scholarship in Made on Earth.

Book Group Comments:

-

Parkinson, Lorraine.

The World According to Jesus

****NEW****

21 copies

252 pp

2011

Arguing that the church has lost its way ... Dr Lorraine Parkinson pushes away centuries of doctrinal overlay in order to take with absolute seriousness the teachings of the Jewish man Jesus, as recorded in Matthew's Gospel. This marvellously accessible book, full of down to earth practicality and refreshing wisdom, is a must for any discussion group or individual committed to a genuine, progressive vision of an enlightened humanity without borders that divide.' Dr Val Webb Australian theologian and author of Stepping Out with the Sacred: human attempts to engage the divine. Through her intriguing explanation of the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount, Parkinson sets out compelling reasons why a real commitment to following the vision of Jesus of Nazareth can bring to reality the best possible world. In another age the author of this book would have been convicted of heresy at the very least. Her case for a 21st century new Reformation of the church is a must for all who have doubted or rejected the old Christianity and are looking for the way forward.

Book Group Comments:

-

Pattel-Gray, Anne And Brown, John.

Indigenous Australia

16 copies

64 pp

1997

The British justified the occupation of Australia a little over 200 years ago on the ground that it was *terra nullius* - no one's land. This booklet engages in a lively and thought-provoking dialogue on the experiences and the continuing search for how the Word can become flesh in aboriginal culture.

Book Group Comments

- This was a very interesting book – denominational differences seem to be even more a stumbling block than we experience

Pearson, Keith D.

Praying The Bible

38 copies

16 pp

1982

Ways of using the Bible as a starting point for prayer. The methods of St Benedict and Ignatius of Loyola are outlined and suggestions given for their use. Prayers from the New Testament Letters are also included. This is not a study but an aid to prayer.

Book Group Comments:

- *We found this book more suitable for private devotions rather than one for discussion*

Perrin, Julie

Spinifex Blessing

20 copies

65 pp

2017

Julie Perrin presents Spinifex Blessing, 24 stories of faith and life from the Sunday Age faith column. These volumes capture luminous moments in ordinary life with economy and lyricism. Julie is known to the Uniting Church as the writer of the lyrics to the song Deep Stillness along with providing a comprehensive companion guide for discussion and contemplation.

Book Group Comments

- *We really enjoyed this book.*

Perrin, Julie

Tender: Stories That Lean Into Kindness

****NEW****

13 copies

176pp

2019

In our world the short, quick, easily consumed—tweet, text, soundbite, post, clip, pic—dominates our awareness. Designers of social media seem intent on capturing our attention as often as possible in the shortest time available. But what if we are deeper, more mysterious, less easily manipulated than Facebook and Twitter would like us to be? What if there is more to us than this reductive ever-present commodification of ourselves allows?

The beautiful stories that follow seem paradoxically to be perfectly tuned to our need for 'short'—most of them are only a page and a half—and yet have the effect of slowing us down, stretching out our inner space for pondering, for meeting the world around us. The word 'tender', the word 'kindness', the gentleness of the word 'lean', are not common in public discourse. These subversive stories show us, without saying so, how desperately we need them. But more than that. They offer us, in a series of brilliantly crafted vignettes, a way of grasping what these words can mean across an extraordinary range of common human situations

Pieters-Hawke, Sue And Flynn Hazel.

Hazel's Journey A Personal Experience Of Alzheimer's

copies

306 pp

2004

This is an intensely moving story of Hazel Hawke – an intelligent, independent woman struggling with the disease that is affecting an ever increasing number of Australians. From early denial to the awful anger that came after diagnosis and the acceptance that has developed since. Inspiring, revealing and insightful.

Book Group Comments

- *Excellent – informative and sparked excellent discussion*

Pilkington, Doris.

Rabbit-Proof Fence

18 copies

133 pp

2002

A true account of Doris Pilkington Garimara's mother Molly made legendary by the film 'Rabbit-Proof Fence'. Aged 8, 11 and 14, Molly led her two sisters on an extraordinary walk of 1,600 kilometres after their escape from a government institution for Aboriginal children removed from their families.

Book Group Comments

- *We appreciated this book on two levels – as an amazing adventure story and also as a revelation of appalling attitudes to the stolen generation by the bureaucrats of the period. We also watched the movie but felt that the book was more authentic*

Pinsky, Mark

Amazing gifts

20 copies

312pp

2012

'Amazing Gifts: Stories of Faith, Disability, and Inclusion' is a unique and touching collection of personal stories of inclusion, both practical and inspirational. The concrete examples will encourage and challenge, and serve to demonstrate the many ways in which we benefit from inclusive communities.

Book Group Comments

- *We all enjoyed this book, some found it a little too repetitive. We noted that in the majority of stories it was a feeling of exclusion or lack of awareness of the difficulty experienced that prompted the carer to start advocating for appropriate measures*
 - *The main questioning of the book was that it is very related to the American situation, felt it was valuable to have sit down before us the value of inclusion of disabled*
 - *For the first time in many years we found this book very repetitive and therefore rather boring – however it has had the result of realising how many books we have enjoyed reading!*
 - *Amazing book, much discussion*
 - *Found it to be a very readable and affirming book*
 - *Worthwhile resource for churches that are working with disadvantaged groups*
-

Porter, Muriel.***Land Of The Spirit?***

25 copies

102 pp

1990

The Australian Religious Experience (102pp) The aim of this book is to provide a general picture of the place of religion in Australian life and to examine what it means for the nation as a whole. Beginning with the Dreaming of Aboriginal spirituality to the present reality of Australia, a multicultural society with its own ethos.

Potter, Ron.***God's Powerful Gospel***

15 copies

55 pp

1987

Twenty-five sessions raise practical questions and rich opportunities for prayer, worship and sharing experiences. Ideal at any time, they are especially appropriate when Mark is used in the lectionary (Year B).

Potter, Ron.***Let's Tackle The Book Of Revelation***

11 copies

32 pp

1993

The Book of Revelation was written to bring hope and encouragement to persecuted Christians. The author wanted to shore up their faithfulness; he wanted to move them emotionally with images of heaven, the coming downfall of Rome, the judgment of God on all wickedness and the salvation awaiting believers.

Prior, Randall (Ed.)***The Gospel And Cultures***

18 copies

147 pp

1997

Following the 1991 World Council of Churches Assembly the Victorian Council of Churches (VCC) based in Melbourne established a Commission on the Gospel and Cultures.

Pryor, Robin (Ed.)***Open To God***

14 copies

120 pp

1991

Several Uniting Church writers discuss contemporary issues related to praying, and then ten writers, drawing on various Christian traditions, offer practical suggestions about new ways to pray that have worked for them.

Purnell, Douglas.***Conversations As Ministry***

17 copies

154 pp

2003

This book is one half of a conversation with a wise friend: you will have to imagine our side. The author provides a structure for thinking about the 'where, when, and who' of a conversation and suggestions for how to begin and end a conversation.

Book Group Comments

- *We thought this book so good that we have recommended it to our church council to buy.*
 - *We learnt from this book. Even though we are all lay people the first half of the book especially was appreciated*
 - *Excellent book. Should be a standard self-learning book for all Ministers and Theology students*
 - *Useful. A good discussion starter, created a lot of conversation*
-

Ramsland, John & Christopher Mooney ***Remembering Aboriginal Heroes***

18 copies

373 pp

2006

This book offers an unparalleled biographical exploration of various Aboriginal people such as Albert Namatjira,

Harold Blair, Harry Penrith lives, offering an understanding of the resilient Aboriginal culture and its vital place in Australian society.

Book Group Comments

- *A very interesting book introducing us to many Aboriginal Heroes we had not learnt of in the past*
- *Promoted very interesting discussion*

Ray, Colin.

A Guide For Elders

20 copies

320 pp

1994

Elders have the responsibility and privilege of sharing with the minister in the spiritual oversight of the congregation. This book shows how the gifts of elders have been used in congregations all over Australia and how elders can fulfil their mission in the church. It includes practical and proven advice for this calling.

Reynolds, Henry.

Black Pioneers

17 copies

293 pp

2000

The author debunks the notion that indigenous peoples have contributed nothing towards the creation of a prosperous modern society. *Black Pioneers* pays tribute to the labour and skill of thousands of black men, women and children who worked for the Europeans in a wide range of occupations. Their intriguing stories are revealed.

Book Group Comments:

- *A very well received book*
- *We all thoroughly enjoyed this book.*
- *Great discussion ensued*

Reynolds, Henry.

Why Weren't We Told?

18 copies

259 pp

1999

This book is a frank account of the author's personal journey towards the realisation that he grew up with a distorted and idealised version of the past - a vision of peaceful settlement. Why were we denied the truth?

Book Group Comments:

- *This is a great book, deserves to be more widely known. Unflinching truth telling. Reynolds own journey reflects how far he has come and is a challenge to us all to acknowledge our own ignorance and search for the truth. Highly recommended*

Robinson, Anthony

Changing The Conversation

18 copies

199 pp

2008

Robinson invites church leaders and members into ten crucial conversations that will change their congregation's culture and help them respond with greater vitality, effectiveness, and faithfulness to our postmodern culture and its challenges.

Book Group Comments

- *Raised important ideas and described the current situation of 'the church' well.*
- *Very American centred – very few of our churches are as big as even the small ones he mentioned. Most of the points he makes are valid and worthy of consideration*
- *Appreciated his plea to get away from traditional questions and answers and talk more about more fundamental issues.*
- *Valuable reading for church leaders and exit students from Theological College*

Root, Andrew

Relationships Unfiltered

15 copies

148 pp

2009

In this thoughtful and insightful book, Andrew Root challenges us to reconsider our motives and begin to consider simply being with and doing life alongside teenagers with no agenda other than to love them right where they are, by place sharing. As Root, shares his stories (and others') of success and failures in relational youth ministry, you'll find practical ideas to help you recreate the role of relationships in your youth ministry

Rowe, Keith.

Living With The Neighbour Who Is Different

15 copies

61 pp

2000

The story of a faith tradition and culture that is not Christian. For some in the churches this presence is welcomed as

an enrichment of our Australian society; others see it as threatening our way of life and sense of community

Rutherford, Graeme. *Watchers In The Morning*
18 copies 137 pp 1994
Spirituality for contemporary Christians. The author shares his profound vision of what other traditions have to offer the lives of modern Christians, presenting a passionate case for a renewed spirituality that is faithful to the Word of God.

Sacks, Jonathan. *The Dignity Of Difference*
18 copies 209 pp 2006
Philosopher, theologian, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth since 1991, Jonathan is well known outside the Jewish community as a writer and broadcaster. He writes with a plea for tolerance in an age of extremism, ethnic tensions, civilization clashes and the use of religious justification for acts of terror, a clear and present danger to humanity.

Book Group Comments

- *Quite a difficult book. Those of us who managed to read it found it excellent and challenging*
- *Responses varied with this book. Some found it difficult to absorb, others found it well researched*
- *Members of the group were impressed by this book - it is uncanny how relevant it is today, almost every day some item(s) in the news relates*

Sayers, Mark *The Vertical Self*
14 copies 196 pp 2010
This book is about laying down the burden of creating your own identity. It is a call to rediscover the one thing that can really fulfil: radical holiness. We are drawn, cajoled, and beckoned by God to our true selves, Sayers says. Yet this desire is derailed and sabotages by our culture, which offers cheap imitations of our true identities instead of the image of God. By stepping into this journey of discovering what God truly desires for our lives, we won't just discover a new way of living out our faith – we will discover a liberating, revolutionary, life embracing way of being truly human.

Book Group Comments

- *This book generated some good discussion but was felt to be mainly about a younger generation that our book club covers.*
- *The early chapters on what is vertical and horizontal growth held the most interest*
- *Didn't like the book, very American in style and attitude*

Sibley, Brian. *Shadowlands*
12 copies 176 pp 2000
We look at the childhood and literary legacy of C.S. Lewis to see how despite grief and painful doubts his faith shone through.

Smith, Durham. *Search For Understanding Is There A Problem With Traditional Theology*
20 copies 158 pp 2006
Traditional theology evolved in a world-view of two millennia ago; it is rightly regarded as inspirational in that context. We now live in a vastly different world, so different that the ancient doctrines seem to many as inadequate, unconvincing, if not irrelevant

Book Group Comments

- *Excellent promoted good discussion*
- *All enjoyed the book and provoked good discussion*
- *We found this book quite inspiring, some looking to buy a copy themselves*

Smith-Christopher, Daniel *Jonah, Jesus And Other Good Coyotes*
18 copies 194 pp 2007
Smith-Christopher shows us that biblical peacemaking recognizes and then crosses - or "runs" - borders. All too often, borders and other imaginary lines drawn between groups of people have a way of becoming the basis for conflict, bigotry, and ultimately, war. Danger signs are evident when people use "borders" to talk about the goodness

of everyone within "our" border, and the evil of everyone "over there." Modern social commentators use the phrase "the other" to refer to the tendency of human groups to develop a positive image of them by contrasting it with negative images of others.

Book Group Comments

- *Mixed reactions to this book. Some found it a worthwhile biblical study. Some thought Smith-Christopher sometimes stretched the material to fit his thesis. Others found it too difficult*
- *Mixed reaction – promoted good discussion and provided some new insights*

Song, Choan-Seng.

The Stranger On The Shore

18 copies

44 pp

1992

How do you communicate the Christian gospel in a world of many cultures? Often, the gospel message has been used to destroy these cultures and life-styles of people who have been urged to abandon their traditions and customs. We are asked not to ignore these traditions but to make theological sense of them.

Spong, John Shelby.

Rescuing The Bible From Fundamentalism

17 copies

249 pp

1992

In this provocative book, the outspoken and controversial Bishop Spong reveals how literal interpretations of Scripture have been used to *justify slavery * ban textbooks *deny the rights of gays and lesbians *subordinate women and *justify war and revenge. * Spong liberates the Bible's message of hope for *all* people.

Spong, John Shelby.

Why Christianity Must Change Or Die

17 copies

257 pp

1999

The author challenges, provokes, amuses and inspires in good measure which will bring many to re-think their attitudes to Christian believing.

Book Group Comments

- *It was a great book*

Steinke, Peter

A Door Set Open

20 copies

141pp

2010

We resist change less when we associate it with mission and fortify it with hope. So argues long time congregational consultant Peter Steinke in his fourth book, *A Door Set Open*, as he explores the relationship between the challenges of change and our own responses to new ideas and experiences. The door is set open for exploration and new creation.

Book Group Comments

- *A challenging book – not an easy read. Good discussion about change and our resistance to it; emotional aspects; the mission (God's mission) and our part in it through small acts for others*
- *Hard to get into, but did stimulate good discussion*
- *At first we were not impressed but at our discussion it really was talking to our church and our need to change and realise how good our mission of walking with Jesus and the need to talk to others about it*

Strout, Elizabeth

Abide with me

17 copies

294 pp

2006

Abide with me, by Elizabeth Strout, the story of a young congregational minister stunned by and struggling with the death of wife and life as a single father, is beautiful, compassionate and thoughtful. Set in 1950's New England we meet Tyler Easkey a man whose beautiful wife has just died. Much loved by his parishioners he appears to be a model of a successful young pastor. But all is not as it seems. Beneath the veneer of a happy marriage we realise his wife might not have liked life as a poor clergy wife as much as it first appears. His young daughter's grief expresses itself in behaviour her teachers and the parishioners find hard to understand or sympathise with. Soon they start to gossip. Tyler fails to see what is staring him in the face, turning to Dietrich Bonhoeffer instead of attending to the various tensions between his daughter and her teacher, his housekeeper, his parishioners and within himself.

Book Group Comments

- *Mixed reactions to this one. On writing style it was felt that too many 'issues' were crammed into one narrative resulting in a not totally believable scenario. However the description of small country churches and the expectations of the minister and his/her family stimulated interesting discussion. Overall not a recommended read*

Tacey, David.	<i>The Spirituality Revolution</i>	
17 copies	228 pp	2003
We are in the midst of a spiritual revolution. Churches are emptying and traditional forms of faith are being abandoned. Meanwhile, interest in a more personal spiritual experience has never been greater. What is happening to our society?		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This book required real concentration but provided fantastic quotes and discussion</i> • <i>This provoked interesting discussion - interesting that this book was first published in 2003 and many people would still not have encountered these ideas of spirituality</i> 		
Tanner, Ian & Merritt, David (Eds.)	<i>What Does Our Church Say?</i>	
16 copies	134 pp	1989
Questions people in the UCA across Australia are asking with responses from church leaders in key areas of responsibility. Do you have to go to Church to be a Christian? Is sex before marriage sinful?		
Taylor, John.	<i>Kingdom Come</i>	
18 copies	110 pp	1989
Explore what might happen in our generation if the gospel of Jesus could be proclaimed in a manner more closely related to the original inspiration and authentic message of Jesus: would it fire people's imaginations and bring about a radical change of direction in their lives?		
Theissen, Gerd.	<i>The Shadow Of The Galilean</i>	
20 copies	205 pp	1984
Here in narrative form is an account of the activity of Jesus of Nazareth, scrupulously constructed so that it does not deny or go against the insights of even quite radical New Testament scholarship. What makes it different from other such attempts is that Jesus never actually appears. What we find everywhere is his shadow, his effect.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three of us enjoyed this book with its usual format and two of us were not so keen. 		
Thompson, Geoff	<i>Disturbing Much, Disturbing Many</i>	
20 copies	282 pp	2016
The first report of the Joint Commission on Church Union that led to the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia warned: "If we go forward into a union on the basis of a fresh confession of the faith of the Church, we shall disturb much and disturb many". This book assumes that the posture of 'disturbance' runs through the Basis of Union, exploring its theological background – particularly its emphasis on core Christological claims – as well as bringing several of the Basis' key claims into conversation with some of the UCA's current theological debates.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found this book really hard to read. This book is not for lay people 		
Toibin, Colm.	<i>The Blackwater Lightship</i>	
18 copies	273 pp	1999
It is Ireland in the early 1990s. Three women, Dora Devereux, her daughter Lily and granddaughter Helen have arrived after years of strife, at an uneasy pace. Helen's adored brother is dying, so they join him and two of his friends. These six, from different generations and beliefs are forced to listen to each other and come to terms with each other.		
Book Group Comments		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Excellent discussion starter. Although most members of our group did not enjoy the book, they related to many aspects and readily expressed ideas, misconceptions, experiences etc.</i> • <i>This fascinating story provided stimulus to some of the best discussion ever</i> 		
Tonkin, Daryl & Landon, Carolyn.	<i>Jackson's Track</i>	
18 copies	297 pp	1999
Daryl Tonkin is white and his wife Euphie is black - neither of them is prepared for the conflict their forbidden love ignites. This book tells of one man's courage and determination to pursue what he knows is right. An unforgettable true story of joy, tragedy and hope.		

Trainer, Michael Stories Brady, Michael. *Voices From The Edge*
18 copies 92 pp 1991
A refreshing approach for reflecting from the lives of a struggling people in the light of the Gospel of Luke. The book provides us with a starting point for our own theological reflection.

Trudgen, Richard. *Why Warriors Lie Down And Die*
18 copies 269 pp 2000
Essential reading for anyone interested in indigenous peoples. It provides hope and new direction for those simply searching for answers as to why "the problems" seem to persist in Aboriginal communities. It also offers insights for those who want a greater understanding of the issues involved in achieving true reconciliation.

Book Group Comments

- A truly great book for us to read, full of information on their way of life and the reasons for the difficulties indigenous people face today

Turley, Bruce. *Being There For Others*
10 copies 136 pp 1979
A resource to offer an informed basis for thought about and involvement in pastoral ministry. It is beamed at lay people in the church. The first section seeks to sketch a broad framework for action and reflection and in part two applying the broad principles to specific situations.

Tutu, Desmond & Mpho. *The Book of Forgiving: The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World* ****NEW****
20 copies 240 pp 2015
We all need to forgive and be forgiven. Yet both can be hard. This contemplative and story based book offers a way that is challenging, insightful, and potentially healing.

Book Group Comments

Tutu, Desmond. *God Has A Dream – A Vision Of Hope For Our Time*
18 copies 148 pp 2005
Nobel Laureate Desmond Tutu has been admired throughout the world for his heroism and grace in human rights struggles. In this book he shares the spiritual message that guided him through many troubled times.

Book Group Comments

- Good lively discussion. Q&A at the end of the book very helpful for bringing out preacher detail and reflection
- Everyone enjoyed this book, some are looking to buy a copy to read when feeling down
- A terrific book – much thought and discussion

Valters Paintner, Christine. *The Soul's Slow Ripening: 12 Celtic Practices for Seeking the Sacred* ****NEW****
20 copies 192 pp 2018
Valters Paintner (from Abbey of the Arts) brings yet another creative offering to help us all listen to the invitation of God. Through a range of creative practices, we are encouraged to focus on discernment from a Celtic perspective (environmentally centred).

Book Group Comments

Volf, Miroslav *Free of Charge*
20 copies 256pp 2006
Volf contends with serious and significant issues of giving and forgiving, generosity and sacrifice through personal story, popular culture, the blending of theology and spirituality and rich examinations of Paul's vision of God's grace.

Book Group Comments

- Terrific discussion – all agreed it is a great book – very insightful
- Over emphasis on pointe which made the book too long and repetitive
- Great illustrations from scripture, literature, mythology as well as true stories
- The book was intellectually and ethically challenging

- *Everyone enjoyed the book. It was like a self-learning tool*

Wallis, Jim ***The Call to conversion***
 15 copies 179 pp 1982
 A book which brings together the concern for renewal in the life of prayer and spirituality and at the same time takes seriously the concern for social justice. Hailed as one of the challenging calls to the Church today.

Watson, Nigel. ***Easter Faith And Witness***
 29 copies 106 pp 1990
 This book is for ordinary Christians who want to know what the Bible says about the resurrection of Jesus and the essentials of the Christian faith.

Book Group Comments

- *Excellent book for Easter/Lenten studies rather scholarly and meant for theological students.*

Watson, Nigel. ***Where Are You God?***
 18 copies 47 pp 1994
 Explore some of the experiences of God's presence and absence found in the Bible. See how these became opportunities to discover what God really wanted of the people. We can learn about God even at times when God seems absent. A series of six studies with discussion questions.

Watson, Nigel. ***Striking Home***
 15 copies 191 pp 1987
 This book is about current interpretation of the New Testament and preaching from it. It rewards those who are willing to struggle with the meaning of the text and provides some sermons to illustrate the methods being offered.

Book Group Comments:

- *We found this book rather heavy going – maybe more suited to those who wish to preach. Enjoyed the sermons at the end*

Webb, Val ***Testing Tradition and Libertating Theology***
 11 copies 285 pp 2015
 There has never been one truth, despite what people claim. Theological ideas have waxed and waned through history, taking conflicting turns with changing leaders, worldwide vies and political forces. This fast paced, lay friendly book, backed by serious, inquisitive scholarship, follows this maze, shining a spotlight into dark corners and dusty shelves to observe ideas silenced and others declared eternal. As many people walk away from churches that are unwilling to face the big questions, this book offers readers permission to think for themselves.

Book Group Comments:

- *Refreshing, accessible, readable*
- *It's an amazing book that warrants much further study*
- *Great book -speaking personally it's good to know other people ask the same questions I do*

Weber, Hans-Ruedi. ***Living In The Image Of Christ***
 18 copies 75 pp 1991
 This book on the ministry of the laity takes up an ever-recurring theme in the life of the Church. In the past Christ has been spoken of as prophet, priest and king. The author introduces 3 new roles for us to look at.

West, Janet. ***Daughters Of Freedom***
 18 copies 434 pp 1997
 The History of Women in the Australian Church. Spanning over 200 hundred years, a stirring story of nuns, clergy wives, missionaries, laywomen, eminent citizens, relative unknowns, Aboriginal and European women leaders who have all helped shape the Australia we know.

Book Group Comments:

- *Excellent, depressing, relevant... group really appreciated this book*
- *Has a number of editing errors... however provided good discussion and an interesting study of the varied role of women in Australian church*

Williams, Rowan ***Being Human*** *****NEW*****
 20 copies 128 pp 2018

The third book in Williams' "Being ..." series. Williams explores some of the fundamental questions of what it means to be human.

Williams, Rowan

Being Christian

20 copies

96pp

2014

Full of sensitive pastoral advice and shot through with arresting and illuminating theological insights, Rowan Williams' new book explores the meaning and practice of four essential components of the Christian life: baptism, Bible, Eucharist and prayer. This book is an invitation to everyone to think through the essentials of the faith and how to live it, making it an ideal gift for anyone at the start of their spiritual journey or thinking about confirmation.

Book Group Comments:

- *Fabulous discussion wonderfully concise. Lots of discussion*
- *It made us discuss things we are not so good at discussing*
- *Williams took us right to the basics of Christianity*
- *Straightforward yet profound*
- *Good to read as an individual but better addresses as a group*
- *This is a GREAT book*

Wilson, Bruce.

Can God Survive In Australia?

15 copies

224 pp

1984

Rather than being an abstract discussion of God's existence, probe the social changes which have made God appear to most Australians as irrelevant as ice-chests in a world that has invented the refrigerator. Seek to identify the new gods of post-Christian Australians and to explain where we are going spiritually.

Book Group Comments:

- *We had rather negative feelings approaching this book. As it was published in 1983 we doubted its relevance. However the book led to a worthwhile discussion about whether Wilson's predictions for the church were accurate and where the church is today*

Wilson, Bruce.

Reasons Of The Heart

16 copies

231 pp

1998

The author explores ways of knowing to secular rationalism - ways which create wholeness and purpose, open up other worlds of reality and put us in touch with ourselves and with God. A central theme is the concept of 'theophany' - a manifestation or appearance of God to a human being.

Wright, Edie.

Full Circle - From Mission To Community

18 copies

314 pp

2002

The remarkable and moving story of three generations of Edie Wright's family. Through its captivating description of life for an Aboriginal family *Full Circle* emerges with hope, that despite decades of government policy and action which worked to assimilate, fragment and disperse indigenous families, the circle of kinship, land and culture need not be broken.

Yancey, Philip.

What's So Amazing About Grace?

16 copies

293 pp

2000

We speak of grace often. But do we understand it or do we truly believe in it . . . and do our lives proclaim it as powerfully as our words? "There is nothing we can do to make God love us more. There is nothing we can do to make God love us less." Yancey, a courageous writer who challenges our misconceptions about Christianity

Yancey, Philip.

Where Is God When It Hurts?

17 copies

298 pp

1997

Sensitive and caring, this unique book discusses pain - physical, emotional, and spiritual - and helps us understand why we suffer from it and how to cope with our own and that of others. Using examples from the Bible this book speaks to everyone for whom life sometimes doesn't make sense. The author puts our questions into perspective, helping us find out exactly where God really is when we hurt.

Book Group Comments

- *All found the book challenging and informative*

Yancey, Philip.

Reaching For The Invisible God – What Can We Expect To Find?

18 copies

301 pp

2000

This relationship with God we can't see, hear, or touch – how does it really work? This book offers deep, satisfying insights that affirm and dignify the questions we are sometimes afraid to ask. Yancey explores six foundational areas: our thirst for God; faith during times when God seems unavailable; the nature of God himself; our personal relationship with God; stages along the way; and the end of spiritual transformation.

Book Group Comments

- *We were very moved by the authors honesty and insights and the God he discovered through his search*

Study Guides

Study Guides are available for the following titles.

- God Under Howard
- Don't Forgive Too Soon
- I Heard the Owl call my name
- Shadow Land
- Soul Cry
- The Blackwater Light Ship
- The God we never knew
- The Once and Future Church
- The Tears of Strangers
- The World from Islam
- Why weren't we told
- Take This Bread
- Why?
- The Bible in Australia: A cultural history
- Inspired (Available online)

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