



# CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA  SYNOD OF VICTORIA AND TASMANIA

## Otira Theological Book Club 2026

**“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 8846 *Email:* [info@ctm.uca.edu.au](mailto:info@ctm.uca.edu.au)

*Website:* <http://ctm.uca.edu.au/>

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 180 titles to choose from, so you're bound to find at least one title to suit your group.

### **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](mailto: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.

---

<b>Albom, Mitch</b>	<b><i>Tuesdays With Morrie</i></b>	
29 copies	192pp	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 must read this book. Morrie was a wise wonderful man, full of love and warmth – a true story*

---

<b>Allen, Holly Catterton &amp; Lawton Ross, Christine</b>	<b><i>Intergenerational Christian Formation</i></b>	
14 copies	330pp	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 most of the 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.

---

<b>Ariarajah, Wesley</b>	<b><i>Not Without My Neighbour</i></b>	
14 copies	130pp	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.

---

**Ashby Roland**

8 copies

***A Faith To Live By***

252pp

**\*\*NEW\*\***

2018

This book of interviews is a timely one. At a time when Christianity and religions in general, are under sustained attack from new atheists such as Richard Dawkins and the late Christopher Hitchens, there is an urgent need for intelligent, thoughtful, clear and honest reflections on faith which can be widely accessed and understood. In *A faith to live by* many of the interview subjects explain how they can believe in, and live by, their faith, and deal with questions and doubts from within their belief and practice as Christians.

---

**Baird, Julia**

10 copies

***Phosphorescence***

80pp

2020

A beautiful, intimate and inspiring investigation into how we can find and nurture within ourselves that essential quality of internal happiness – the “light within” that Julia Baird calls Phosphorescence – which will sustain us even through the darkest times.

Please note that this book does have some adult language in the last few chapters.

---

**Bandy, Thomas**

18 copies

***Kicking Habits***

320pp

2001

*Upgrade Edition.* 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.

---

**Barber, Bruce**

18 copies

***The Lord's Prayer***

57pp

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 *Forum on Faith and Society*.

---

**Barr, Liz & Andrew**

16 copies

***Jobs For The Boys***

249pp

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**

19 copies

***Practising Our Faith***

231pp

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 *being* 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***

- *We all found this a very helpful book and easy to read*
- *The group really valued this insightful book*

- *This book had a wide variety of opinions – some chapters more of interest than others. The chapter on Death was for me, great.*
  - *Mixed comments about the contents – some actively disliked the book but all participated in discussion*
- 

**Beresford, Quentin**  
17 copies

***Rob Riley, An Aboriginal Leader's Quest For Justice***  
336pp 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**

- *Distressing but compelling reading. Deserves to be widely read*
  - *Was very well researched and distressing reading*
- 

**Bird, Carmel**  
18 copies

***The Stolen Children***  
185pp 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.

---

**Bodycomb, John**  
15 copies

***No Fixed Address***  
271pp 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**  
15 copies

***The One With Many Names***  
72pp 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**  
23 copies

***Pastrix***  
204pp 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**

- *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*
  - *Some people found her language a challenge, but they kept reading anyway*
  - *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.*
  - *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*
- 

**Borg, Marcus**

19 copies

***Meeting Jesus For The First Time***

140pp

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**

- *Lots of stimulating discussion. Another great book*
- 

**Borg, Marcus**

18 copies

***Reading The Bible Again For The First Time***

302pp

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**

- *Tremendous book, very well received*
  - *What a great book, we all found it enlightening*
  - *We found this book most helpful although for some the chapter on revelations was confusing*
- 

**Borg, Marcus**

17 copies

***The God We Never Knew***

178pp

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**

- *This book is highly recommended by our group. Comments were refreshing, liberating, articulate, accessible, and enlightening. We felt Borg fully achieved his aims.*
- 

**Borg, Marcus**

29 copies

***The Heart Of Christianity***

226pp

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**

- *Enjoyed the book very much. Answered a few questions on our own faith and understanding.*
  - *Great book! Several of our members intend to buy a copy as an ongoing resource*
- 

**Borg, Marcus & Crossnan, John  
Dominic**

***The Last Week***

18 copies

238pp

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 provokin*
- 

**Borg, Marcus & Wright, N.T.**

***The Meaning Of Jesus – Two Visions***

17 copies

250pp

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**

- *Excellent Book! Promoted discussion. We will probably have to have it back again next year*
  - *We felt this book was too difficult for a book club. Not many could finish the book and still felt confused by it*
- 

**Bowker, John**

***Beliefs That Changed The World***

18 copies

205pp

2007

*The History and Ideas of the Great Religions.* 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**

- *We all thought this a good reference book about the basics of the faiths presented*
  - *Found it very interesting, it created a great deal of discussion*
- 

**Boyd-Macrae, Clare**

***Three Gates To Paradise***

18 copies

242pp

2006

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*

---

**Boyd-Macrae, Clare**

18 copies

***The Whole Shebang***

235pp

2008

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.*
- 

**Breare, Hedley & Lyn**

19 copies

***Praying in Secret***

80pp

1998

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 tradition.

---

**Brown, Barry**

10 copies

***William Witton***

321pp

2006

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 'landowner' 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 a research paper. More on Buntingdale would be nice, and it would have been nice if this was proofread / 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.*
- 

**Brown, Cavan**

16 copies

***Pilgrim Through This Barren Land***

155pp

1977

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.

---

**Brueggemann, Walter**

10 copies

***Chosen?: Reading the Bible Amid the Israeli Palestinian Conflict***

87pp

2015

Walter Brueggemann's *Chosen?* speaks clearly to the ongoing crisis in the Holy Land, exploring the continuing meaning of the scriptural concept of election ("chosenness"), and the biblical understanding that the Holy Land is a gift to that chosen people. This book is an important and accessible contribution to the Christian understanding of the Scriptures and their ongoing relevance in world politics and includes a helpful study guide to facilitate its use in group settings.

---

<b>Brueggemann, Walter</b> 13 copies	<b><i>The Bible Makes Sense</i></b> 155pp	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.

---

<b>Budden, Chris</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Following Jesus In Invaded Space</i></b> 179pp	
-----------------------------------	---	--

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 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*

---

<b>Butler Bass, Diana</b> 20 copies	<b><i>Christianity After Religion</i></b> 304pp	2013
--	--	------

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.

---

<b>Butler Bass, Diana</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Christianity For The Rest Of Us</i></b> 336pp	2007
--	--	------

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](http://www.dianabutlerbass.com).

---

<b>Byrne, Brendan, S.J.</b> 20 copies	<b><i>Inheriting The Earth: The Pauline Basis Of A Spirituality For Our Time</i></b> 336pp	2007
--	---	------

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.

---

<b>Campbell, Wes</b> 20 copies	<b><i>Dimensions Of Christian Faith In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></b> 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.

---

**Campbell, Wes**  
26 copies

***Towards a Theology of Peace***  
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. 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 starker. 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.

---

**Cannold, Leslie**  
20 Copies

***The Book of Rachael***  
328pp

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 Miriam, 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**  
17 copies

***The Supper Of The Lamb***  
270pp

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.

---

**Chacour, Elias**  
20 copies

***Blood Brother***  
238pp

2003

As a child Elias lived in a small Palestinian village. People were proud of their Christian heritage and lived peacefully with their Jewish neighbours. Early in 1947 their idyllic lifestyle was swept away as thousands of Palestinians were killed and many were forced into refugee camps. As an exile in his native land, he

began a year long struggle with his love for the Jewish people and the world's misunderstanding of Palestinians. How was he to respond?

---

**Chacour, Elias And Mary E. Jensen**     ***We Belong To The Land***     2007  
18 copies     205pp

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 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.*
- 

**Champion, Denise**     ***Anaditj***     2021  
15 copies     66pp

Aunty Denise Champion is a proud Adnyamathanha woman from the Finders Ranges in South Australia, and the Theologian in Residence at Uniting College in Adelaide. In her new book, *Anaditj*, Aunty Denise speaks of a life principle for Adnyamathanha Peoples, 'a state of being'.

A literal English translation of the meaning of *Anaditj* is 'the way things are', however as Aunty unpacks this the reader will discover far deeper and profound meanings. Speaking of the "dark spaces between the stars", Aunty describes "Dark Emu", from which Bruce Pascoe took the title of his book about the way First Nations Peoples cared for the land, cultivated it and harvested it; Adnyamathanha Peoples look at the night sky and see the dark spaces between the constellations.

How do you read the Scriptures? Aunty Denise begins to open the readers mind to fresh understandings: "Jesus... a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek"; could this be the "priesthood of all Creation"? She challenges the Western constructs and invites the reader to open themselves to Adnyamathanha ancient wisdom.

---

**Champion, Denise**     ***Yarta Wandatha***     2014  
16 copies     66pp

*Yarta Wandatha* is by Adnyamathanha woman, and Uniting Church minister, Denise Champion. Aided in writing by Rosemary Dewerse, Aunty Denise not only tells the stories of her people but also delves into their deep theology. The UCA's Revised Preamble to the Constitution reminds us that First Peoples knew, and were sustained by, God in this land before the coming of other people to Australia. Explore this ancient journey with a much-loved Aboriginal Elder.

---

**Claiborne, Shane**     ***The Irresistible Revolution***     2006  
16 copies     367pp

We enter a movement of the Spirit that begins in the heart and extends through our hands into a broken world. The author stirs up questions about the Church and the world and challenges you to live out an authentic Christian faith. This book will comfort the disturbed, disturb the comfortable and invite believers to change the world with Christ's radical love.

### **Book Group Comments**

- *We found the book very readable and very challenging. Not a comfortable read. It made us look honestly at what following Jesus really means*
- 

**Claiborne, Shane & Wilson-Hartgrove, Jonathon**

20 copies

***Common Prayer Pocket edition***

155pp

2017

Common Prayer Pocket Edition helps today's diverse church pray together across denominations. With sensitivity to the particulars of various liturgical prayer traditions, and using an advisory team of liturgy experts, the authors have created a tapestry of prayer that celebrates the best of each tradition. As a condensed version of the original Common Prayer, this convenient and portable book provides the perfect companion either for group prayer or for those who are away from their spiritual community.

---

**Clendinnen, Inga**

17 copies

***True Stories***

118pp

1998

We have seen nations destroyed by false and fatally divisive histories. The author believes that democratic peoples need true stories about their past so argues forcefully for the rejection of any single, simple account of the Australian past and urges responsiveness to a multiplicity of stories catching different experiences and situations.

---

**Collins, Francis S.**

19 copies

***The Language Of God***

305pp

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**

- *Found this book exciting. Although the science was beyond us. Collins statements of beliefs are very inspiring*
  - *An excellent book. We all enjoyed it even though the technical data was a bit daunting in places.*
  - *Great Book. A scientist who can explain the science in words we could understand and relate the wonders known and unknown to God*
  - *This book engendered good discussion. Some of us found the scientific detail a bit challenging but overall, everyone enjoyed reading it*
  - *Excellent book! Most of us really enjoyed it. Very understandable explanation of scientific concepts*
  - *Parts of this book were too hard for our group, but otherwise an interesting argument*
  - *Well liked, good discussion*
- 

**Costello, Tim & Millar, Royce**

19 copies

***Wanna Bet?***

246pp

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**

***Streets Of Hope***

18 copies

235pp

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**

***Walking on Bones***

20 copies

82pp

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 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.

---

**Craven, Margaret**

***I Heard The Owl Call My Name***

27 copies

131pp

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**

- *A book that was much appreciated by all members and which led to a full evening's discussion*
  - *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*
- 

**Critchett, Jan**

***Untold Stories***

18 copies

273pp

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 some remarkable individuals who managed to make a life in the interstices of the society that had dispossessed them.

**Book Group Comments**

- *Much of this book was quite a revelation to some members of our group*
  - *A great book – challenge to our thinking – much discussion*
  - *Had an 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***

36 copies

200pp

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**

20 copies

***Seeking God***

144pp

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 John**

22 copies

***Committed To Change***

106pp

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**

21 copies

***In his Strength***

110pp

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 inspire you. Be prepared for your faith to be challenged and strengthened as you share Noriko's journey.

**Diamant, Anita**

14 copies

***The Red Tent***

395pp

1998

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**

- *We suggest that people need to read the biblical Genesis version as well as the book*
- *The book was generally well accepted. Some male members returned it after only reading the 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.*



---

**Douglas, Sally**

14 copies

***The Church as Salt***

150pp

2022

The Jesus community is called to be the salt of the earth, a metaphor that contains rich and disruptive challenge. Salt is little. We weep salty tears and grow up in dark salty wombs. Salt preserves. Salt draws out taste and too much salt spoils everything.

With scholarly insight into the biblical text, early church writers and theology, as well as her pastoral experience in ministry, Sally Douglas invites us to wrestle afresh with the metaphor of being salt. Here we discover a call into discipleship that is free from the success criteria of consumerist culture and free from nostalgia.

This book is not a 'how to' manual. Instead, through stories of ancient and contemporary salty communities, reflection questions and liturgies, the book is a nourishing resource for people and communities seeking faithful ways of being church today.

---

**Dutney, Andrew (Ed.)**

18 copies

***From Here To Where?***

153pp

1988

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**

21 copies

***Where Did The Joy Come From?***

56pp

2001

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**

17 copies

***Playing God - Ethics And Faith***

178pp

2001

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**

- *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**

13 copies

***Food, Sex And Death***

175pp

1993

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.

---

**Edwards, Tilden**

15 copies

***Living Simply Through The Day - Spiritual Survival In A Complex Age***

255pp

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.

---

**Fisher, Judi & Wood, Janet (Ed.)**      ***A Place At The Table - Women At The Last Supper***  
17 copies                                      89pp    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**                                      ***Theology - A Very Short Introduction***  
17 copies                                      191pp    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**                                      ***Praying With Icons***  
9 copies                                      162pp    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.

---

**Forester, Duncan B.**                              ***Apocalypse Now?***                              **\*\*NEW\*\***  
9 copies                                      152pp    2005

How may people of faith respond wisely, constructively, and courageously to the challenges of a time of terror? How might religious reasons in public debate be a force for reconciliation rather than violence and hatred? In a world in which religious arguments and religious motivations play such a huge public role, there is an urgent responsibility for interpreting what is happening and engaging with religious views which are commonly regarded as alien, threatening or dangerous. In *Apocalypse Now?*, Duncan Forrester argues that disorders and atrocities which include the Gulag, the Holocaust, 9/11, the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, and the Tsunami disaster have shown us that we stand not at the end of history but in the midst of an apocalyptic age of terror which has striking similarities to the time in which Christianity was born. Moving between two times of terror - the early Centuries of Christianity, and today - Forrester asks how religious motivations can play a positive role amid conflicts and disasters. Reading the 'signs of the times' to try to understand what is happening in today's age of terror, Forrester argues that there are huge resources in the Christian tradition that can be productively deployed for a more constructive and faithful response. We are at a turning point - this is a book which should be read.

---

**Fraser, Ian M.**                                      ***Living A Countersign: From Iona To Basic Christian Communities***  
18 copies                                      126pp    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.

---

**Galbraith, Douglas (Ed.)**  
20 copies

***Worship In The Wide Red Land***  
106pp

1985

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.

---

**Gallagher, Nora**  
17 copies

***The Sacred Meal***  
321pp

2006

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***

- *This book engendered great discussion and made us aware of the different ways the members of our group regard communion*
- 

**Gallagher, Nora**  
21 copies

***Things Seen and Unseen***  
241pp

1998

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.

---

**Glasson, Barbara**  
20 copies

***I Am Somewhere Else***  
127pp

2006

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 bread maker will enthral both readers inside and outside the church.

---

**Glynn, Paul**  
10 copies

***A Song For Nagasaki***  
168pp

1988

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***

- *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*



### **Book Group Comments**

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

**Grierson, Denham**

17 copies

***Conversations At The Edges Of The Raft***

63pp

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**

17 copies

***Tapestry Of Voices***

250pp

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**

18 copies

***Reconciliation Searching For Australia's Soul***

188pp

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.

**Held Evans, Rachel**

20 copies

***Searching for Sunday***

268pp

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**

8 copies & 4 audiobooks

***Inspired***

266pp

2018

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.

---

<b>Holloway, Richard</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Doubts And Loves</i></b> 251pp	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.

---

<b>Horsfield, Rodney</b> 15 copies	<b><i>Baptism An Evangelical Sacrament</i></b> 51pp	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.

---

<b>Hotham Mission</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Finding Shelter</i></b> 139pp	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.*

---

<b>Johnston, Robert K.</b> 8 copies	<b><i>Useless Beauty</i></b> 208pp	<b>**NEW**</b> 2004
--	---------------------------------------	------------------------

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.

---

<b>Kenny, Amy</b>	<b><i>My Body Is Not A Prayer Request</i></b>	
-------------------	---	--

Much of the church has forgotten that we worship a disabled God whose wounds survived resurrection, says Amy Kenny. It is time for the church to start treating disabled people as full members of the body of Christ who have much more to offer than a miraculous cure narrative and to learn from their embodied experiences.

Written by a disabled Christian, this book shows that the church is missing out on the prophetic witness and blessing of disability. Kenny reflects on her experiences inside the church to expose unintentional ableism and cast a new vision for Christian communities to engage disability justice. She shows that until we cultivate church spaces where people with disabilities can fully belong, flourish, and lead, we are not valuing the diverse members of the body of Christ.

Offering a unique blend of personal storytelling, fresh and compelling writing, biblical exegesis, and practical application, this book invites readers to participate in disability justice and create a more inclusive community in church and parachurch spaces. Engaging content such as reflection questions and top ten lists are included.

**Kirk, J.R. Daniel**

18 copies

***Jesus have I loved, but Paul?***

224pp

2012

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 to a good discussion.*
- *One remark was that the writer tended 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**

20 copies

***Wide and Deep***

68pp

2017

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.

**Kushner, Harold S.**

22 copies

***When Bad Things Happen To Good People***

155pp

1992

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*

---

**Lake, Meredith**  
15 copies

***The Bible in Australia: A Cultural History***  
336pp 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.

---

**Law, Eric**  
19 copies

***The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb***  
321pp 2006

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."

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!

***Book Group Comments***

- *We found this book very relevant to our multicultural Melbourne*

---

**Le Griffon, Heather**  
18 copies

***Campfires At The Cross***  
316pp 2006

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.

***Book Group Comments***

- *Some of us thought this writer had chosen a position and collected material with only that point of view. Nevertheless, we enjoyed the book*

---

**Levine, Amy-Jill**  
17 copies

***The Misunderstood Jew***  
240pp 2006

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.

***Book Group comments***

- *Stimulated much discussion, but found this book quite difficult, at some stage quite annoying*
- *We found this book rather heavy going, but it led to a good discussion*

---

**Lewis, Peter**  
13 copies

***Acting in Solidarity***  
279pp

2011

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.

***Book Group Comments:***

- *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*

---

**Linn, Dennis, Sheila & Matthew**  
18 copies

***Don't Forgive Too Soon***  
184pp

1997

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.

---

**Loader, Bill**  
18 copies

***The Christmas Stories***  
72pp

1986

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, Bill**  
13 copies

***The New Testament With Imagination***  
150pp

1998

This book offers a new way of reading the New Testament and many 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, Bill**  
18 copies

***Jesus And The Fundamentalism Of His Day***  
150pp

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.

---

**Mackay, Hugh**  
21 copies

***Beyond belief***  
280pp

2016

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*

**Maddox, Marion**  
18 copies

***God Under Howard***  
319pp

2005

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**  
22 copies

***Christian Meditation***  
60pp

1977

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**  
18 copies

***Waging Peace On Islam***  
343pp

2000

Relations between Islam and the West grow more polarised. At a personal level, many Christians fear 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**  
20 copies

***An Ordinary Bloke***  
147pp

2017

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. An Ordinary Bloke: The Making of a Modern Mystic provides us with that opportunity.

---

**Masters, Gwenyth**  
20 copies

***Reclaiming an Ancient Heritage***  
184pp

2014

Gwen Masters offers a thoughtful, careful, solid and thorough exploration of Celtic Christianity, with a care to warn against misty-eyed appeals to be 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 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*

---

**Mayes, Andrew**  
20 copies

***Another Christ***  
160pp

2017

Growth in Christlikeness is a goal for all Christians and especially for those in leadership. But the images of Christ that have become the institutional norm refer to a model of pastoral ministry that seems to allow no scope for innovation or eccentricity. In this riveting book, Andrew Mayes explores how the first century setting of Jesus reveals his identity as builder; hermit; rebel; mystic; reveller; jester; iconoclast; revealer and enigma; liberator; traveller; and mentor, brother and trailblazer. The aim of *Another Christ* is to encourage us to see how these images can inform the practice and spirituality of leadership today, and to this end, each chapter ends with a set of penetrating questions and ideas for further reading.

---

**Mayfield, Paul**  
17 copies

***Soul Cry***  
67pp

2004

"This book began as a collection of poetry written over 10 years. At the suggestion of friends, I filled out the 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*

---

**McGinlay, Hugh (Ed.)**  
22 copies

***Joy Pain***  
96pp

2000

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**  
23 copies

***A Cloud Of Witnesses: Ten Great Christian Thinkers***  
140pp

1997

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.

---

**McKerrow, Joel**

***Woven: A Faith For the Dissatisfied***  
290pp

**\*\*NEW\*\***

2019

This is not a book of cookie-cut spirituality. It is not a book of answers, nor programmable spiritual growth. This book is a question. An invitation. A beckoning toward movement and a faith that can weather the storms of life. In *Woven*, Joel McKerrow dares to put forth that our questions, struggles and doubts are not something to be feared but may provide us with the path toward a vibrant faith. Joel takes us on a pilgrimage, from childhood belief to grief over a lost religion, to a richer, more sustaining faith that was previously unimaginable to him. This is a demanding and compelling account of what it means to rethink our Christian beliefs and find both a restoration and a reconstruction into the expansiveness of God's story.

---

**McLaren, Brian**  
18 copies

***A Generous Orthodoxy***  
348pp

2004

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***  
277pp

2004

12 copies

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.

---

<b>Mead, Loren</b> 15 copies	<b><i>Five Challenges For The Once And Future Church</i></b> 113pp	1996
---------------------------------	---	------

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.

---

<b>Mead, Loren</b> 15 copies	<b><i>The Once And Future Church</i></b> 104pp	1991
---------------------------------	---	------

Mead takes a broad look at past and present changes in the church and postulates a future to which those changes are calling us. Denominations, once structured to deliver resources to far-off lands of foreign mission, now encounter the mission field in the layperson's workplace and the community surrounding the local congregation. Thus, the church is called to reinvention for this new mission frontier

---

<b>Miles, Sara</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Take this Bread</i></b> 283pp	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 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*
- 

<b>Moore, Thomas</b> 19 copies	<b><i>Care Of The Soul</i></b> 309pp	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 halfway*
- 

<b>Mortenson, Greg &amp; Relin, David Oliver</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Three Cups Of Tea</i></b> 349pp	2006
---	--	------

One Man's Mission to Promote Peace: One School at a time. 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**  
19 copies

***The Apostles' Creed: A Guide to the Ancient Catechism***  
112pp 2018

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?

---

**Negus, George**  
19 copies

***The World From Islam***  
286pp 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**  
13 copies

***Truth To Tell The Gospel As Public Truth***  
90pp 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.**  
11 copies

***Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality***  
128pp 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. This book was 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 & Calder, Andy**  
18 copies

***Voices In Disability And Spirituality From The Land Down Under***  
170pp 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**

- *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*
  - *Difficult read, particularly the early articles. However worthwhile as it raised awareness of group to some shortcoming in our local environment*
- 

**Nicoll, Mac (Ed)**

20 copies

***Some of my friends are poets***

71pp

2009

Upon discovering several 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**

- *How well these poems express things which touch writers deeply and encourage us to think deeply also*
  - *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*
- 

**Nicoll, Mac (ed)**

20 copies

***Let their voices be heard***

101pp

2012

'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**

- *Many of these works were very much appreciated. We enjoyed them so much more as we shared our reactions in the group.*
- 

**Nicoll, Mac (ed)**

13 copies

***Inklings***

125pp

2014

33 pieces of poetry, prose and artwork, combined into one publication, edited by Mac Nicoll.

**Book Group Comments**

- *We have been encouraged to read more poetry*
  - *Had an excellent discussion*
  - *We all thought this book lovely*
- 

**Nicols, Alan**

17 copies

***On The Path To Mutual Respect***

81pp

2007

Mac Nicoll compiles a third volume of Australian poets, writers and artists at work. As expressed by 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*****Jesus Before Christianity***

18 copies

185pp

2000

Nolan's portrait of Jesus introduces us to the man as he was before 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**

- *Mixed reception – some found the book excellent, other more theologically aware has reservations*
- 

**Nouwen, Henri**

31 copies

***Reaching Out***

150pp

1976

The three movements of spiritual life examined are Loneliness to Solitude, Hostility to Hospitality and Illusion to Prayer.

---

**Nouwen, Henri**

15 copies

***The Wounded Healer***

100pp

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:**

- *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*
- 

**Nouwen, Henri**

20 copies

***In The Name Of Jesus***

81pp

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:**

- *A very readable and inspiring book. Looking forward to reading more of Henri Nouwen*
- 

**Nouwen, Henri**

9 copies

***Beyond The Mirror***

71pp

1990

Henri Nouwen describes a serious accident which led to a deepening of his spiritual understanding of life.

**Book Group Comments**

- *Our group divided in their opinion of this book – half loved Henri's honesty. We all found the book very easy to read*
- 

**Nouwen, Henri**

18 copies

***Love In A Fearful Land***

116pp

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**  
19 copies

***A Path Is Made By Walking It***  
216pp

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**  
23 copies

***Pondering Pieces of the Puzzle***  
159pp

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

**Book Group Comments**

- *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*

multiple times in different contexts. It is suggested to flick through and decide which ones to read and discuss as a group.

---

**Parkinson, Lorraine**  
20 copies

***Made on Earth***  
345pp

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*.

---

**Parkinson, Lorraine**  
21 copies

***The World According to Jesus***  
252pp

2011

Arguing that the church has lost its way - Dr Lorraine Parkinson pushes away centuries of doctrinal overlay 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.

---

**Pattel-Gray, Anne & Brown, John**      ***Indigenous Australia***  
16 copies                                      64pp    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*

---

**Peeler, Amy**                                      ***Women and The Gender of God***  
7 copies    286pp    2022

God values women. While many Christians would readily affirm this truth, the widely held assumption that the Bible depicts a male God persists—as it has for centuries. This misperception of Christianity not only perniciously implies that men deserve an elevated place over women but also compromises the glory of God by making God appear to be part of creation, subject to it and its categories, rather than in transcendence of it. Through a deep reading of the incarnation narratives of the New Testament and other relevant scriptural texts, Amy Peeler shows how the Bible depicts a God beyond gender and a saviour who, while embodied as a man, is the unification in one person of the image of God that resides in both male and female. Peeler begins with a study of Mary and her response to the annunciation, through which it becomes clear that God empowers women and honours their agency. Then Peeler describes from a theological standpoint how the virgin birth of Jesus—the second Adam—reverses the gendered division enacted in the garden of Eden. While acknowledging the significance of the Bible's frequent use of "Father" language to represent God as a caring parent, Peeler goes beneath the surface of this metaphor to show how God is never sexualized by biblical writers or described as being physically involved in procreation—making the concept of a masculine God dubious, at best. From these doctrinal centres of Christianity, Peeler leads the way in reasserting the value of women in the church and prophetically speaking out against the destructive idolatry of masculinity.

---

**Pearson, Keith D.**                              ***Praying The Bible***  
36 copies    16pp    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    65pp    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.

---

**Perrin, Julie**                                      ***Tender: Stories that Lean into Kindness***

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 & Flynn, Hazel**      ***Hazel’s Journey A Personal Experience Of Alzheimer’s***  
14 copies    306pp    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.

**Pilkington, Doris**    ***Rabbit-Proof Fence***  
18 copies    133pp    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 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***  
22 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 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!*
- *Worthwhile resource for churches that are working with disadvantaged groups*

---

<b>Porter, Muriel</b> 25 copies	<b><i>Land Of The Spirit?</i></b> 102pp	1990
------------------------------------	--	------

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. Beginning with the Dreaming of Aboriginal spirituality to the present reality of Australia, a multicultural society with its own ethos.

---

<b>Prior, Randall (Ed.)</b> 17 copies	<b><i>The Gospel And Cultures</i></b> 147pp	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.

---

<b>Pryor, Robin (Ed.)</b> 15 copies	<b><i>Open To God</i></b> 120pp	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.

---

<b>Purnell, Douglas</b> 16 copies	<b><i>Conversations As Ministry</i></b> 154pp	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*
- 

<b>Ramsland, John &amp; Mooney, Christopher</b> 18 copies	<b><i>Remembering Aboriginal Heroes</i></b> 373pp	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*
- 

<b>Ray, Colin</b> 21 copies	<b><i>A Guide For Elders</i></b> 320pp	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.

---

<b>Reynolds, Henry</b> 17 copies	<b><i>Black Pioneers</i></b> 293pp	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*
- 

<b>Reynolds, Henry</b> 17 copies	<b><i>Why Weren't We Told?</i></b> 259pp	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*
- 

<b>Robinson, Anthony</b> 17 copies	<b><i>Changing The Conversation</i></b> 199pp	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*
- 

<b>Root, Andrew</b> 16 copies	<b><i>Relationships Unfiltered</i></b> 148pp	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.

---

<b>Sacks, Jonathan</b> 18 copies	<b><i>The Dignity Of Difference</i></b> 209pp	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**

14 copies

***The Vertical Self***

196pp

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 sabotaged 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**

13 copies

***Shadowlands***

158pp

2006

Traditional theology evolved in a worldview 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, Durham**

20 copies

***Search For Understanding: Is There A Problem With Traditional Theology?***

158pp

2006

Traditional theology evolved in a worldview 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.

---

**Song, Choan-Seng**

16 copies

***The Stranger On The Shore***

44pp

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 lifestyles 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.

---

**Steinke, Peter**  
20 copies

***A Door Set Open***  
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**  
18 copies

***Abide with me***  
294pp

2006

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**  
17 copies

***The Spirituality Revolution***  
228pp

2003

We are amid 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**

- *This book required real concentration but provided fantastic quotes and discussion*
  - *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*
- 

**Theissen, Gerd**  
21 copies

***The Shadow Of The Galilean***  
205pp

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**

- *Three of us enjoyed this book with its usual format and two of us were not so keen*

---

**Thompson, Geoff**

20 copies

***Disturbing Much, Disturbing Many***

282pp

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**

- *Found this book hard to read. This book is not for lay people*

---

**Tonkin, Daryl & Landon, Carolyn**

18 copies

***Jackson's Track***

297pp

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**

18 copies

***Voices From The Edge***

92pp

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**

18 copies

***Why Warriors Lie Down And Die***

269pp

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*

---

**Tutu, Desmond & Mpho**

20 copies

***The Book of Forgiving:  
The Fourfold Path for Healing Ourselves and Our World***

240pp

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.

---

**Tutu, Desmond**

14 copies

***God Has A Dream – A Vision Of Hope For Our Time***

148pp

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**

17 copies

***The Soul's Slow Ripening: 12 Celtic Practices for Seeking the Sacred***

192pp

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).

---

**Volf, Miroslav**

31 copies

***Free of Charge***

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*
- 

**Watson, Nigel**

29 copies

***Easter Faith And Witness***

106pp

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**

18 copies

***Where Are You God?***

47pp

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.

---

**Webb, Val**

11 copies

***Testing Tradition and Libertating Theology***

285pp

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**

18 copies

***Living In The Image Of Christ***

75pp

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.

**Wells, Samuel**

12 copies

***A Cross in the Heart of God: Reflections on The Death of Jesus***

131pp

2020

In this collection of short essays, Samuel Wells explores the testimony of the sweep of the Scriptures to the cross-shaped heart of God. An excellent resource for Lenten studies, or any time.

**West, Janet**

18 copies

***Daughters Of Freedom***

434pp

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, the group really appreciated this book*
- *Has several editing error, however provided good discussion and an interesting study of the varied role of women in Australian church*

**Whitaker, Robyn**

17 copies

***Even The Devil Quotes Scripture***

128pp

2018

In *Even the Devil Quotes Scripture*, Robyn J. Whitaker looks to the Bible as a guide to interpreting the Bible, and her findings breathe new life into our understanding and use of Scripture. As it turns out, the uses of Scripture within Scripture are flexible, open to frequent reinterpretation, and rarely literal.

For instance, Ezra and Nehemiah reinterpret laws about whether Jews can marry foreigners in the wake of the Babylonian exile. Their contradiction of earlier traditions found in Deuteronomic law do not invalidate Scripture but rather represent its diverse applications for the prophets' specific situations. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus presents a more demanding interpretation of Mosaic law in the Sermon on the Mount, while in Mark's Gospel he all but ignores its prohibition of working on the Sabbath. Yet the common ethos of the two gospels prioritizes compassion over legalism.

Ultimately, Whitaker ascertains one definitive characteristic of inner-biblical interpretation: love. After all,

the Old Testament passage most frequently quoted in the New Testament is Leviticus 19:18: "Love thy neighbour." Thus, Whitaker proposes a hermeneutic of love-a litmus test for the validity of a scriptural interpretation measured in charity. Ideal for any devoted reader of the Bible, *Even the Devil Quotes Scripture* opens our eyes to the Bible as a living, loving gift of God's unfolding revelation.

---

**Williams, Rowan**  
20 copies

***Being Christian***  
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*
- 

**Williams, Rowan**  
20 copies

***Being Human***  
128pp

2018

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

---

**Williams, Rowan**  
20 copies

***God With Us***  
128pp

2017

From the pen of one of our greatest living theologians, here is a fresh and compelling introduction to the foundation story of the Christian faith. Full of illuminating theological insights, and with questions for discussion or personal reflection at the end of each chapter, this is the perfect book for all those who want to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the heart of the gospel.

---

**Wilson, Bruce**  
16 copies

***Reasons Of The Heart***  
231pp

1998

The author explores ways of knowing to secular rationalism - ways which create wholeness and purpose, open 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**  
18 copies

***Full Circle - From Mission To Community***  
314pp

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**

17 copies

***Where Is God When It Hurts?***

298pp

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.**

18 copies

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

301pp

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*