

DAYSRING DAYBOOK

Monthly Newsletter of Dayspring Presbyterian Church, 11445-40 Ave, Edmonton, AB, CAN, T6J 0R4

March 2023

Dayspring reads

"Books are a uniquely portable magic." - Stephen King

This issue of the *DayBook* is about books - 16 books that have been read, and that are recommended, by Dayspringers and friends of Dayspring. The editors have chosen not to identify the persons who submitted these books reports - some of which are in the first person while others are in the third person.

The editors have also chosen not to categorize these books.

To obtain books that you cannot find at your favourite bookseller or at the library, try using this search engine.

www.bookfinder.com

***At Home in Mitford** by Jan Karon

I have been reading a fiction series that starts with *At Home in Mitford* by Jan Karon. It is a warm, funny, feel-good series following an older Minister in a small town full of amazing characters that you get to know and love. It's an older book but I definitely recommend it. Other books by Jan Karon: ***A light in the window; A New song; These high green hills; Come Rain or come shine; Out to Canaan; In this mountain; To be where you are; Light from heaven; In the company of others; Shepherds abiding***; etc.

***Prayer** by Philp Yancey

This is a very readable and thought-provoking book. I read it some time ago, but plan to reread it, particularly in light of the tragedies in Ukraine, Turkey and Syria. I have been praying diligently but need reassurance that my prayers are being heard. Sometimes discouragement sets in and I have to remind myself that our Lord has the perfect plan. In the book, Yancey talks about types of prayer, reasons for prayer, how to pray and even delves into unanswered prayer. All are good reminders that prayer is not just a pathway for sending requests!

***Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC** by Frederick Buechner

"Whether your faith is that there is a God or that there is not a God, if you don't have any doubts you are either kidding yourself or you are asleep. Doubts are the ants of the pants in faith. They keep it awake and moving." That is how Buechner (pronounced Beek-ner), a Presbyterian minister who lives in Vermont, writes. The book is written as a kind of glossary with shorter or longer articles on about 140 topics that are important for faithful living

* * * * *

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." -Dr. Seuss



"A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies . . . The [person] who never reads lives only one."
George R. R. Martin

In This Issue

- Introduction and 3 book descriptions
- 6 book descriptions
- From our Minister a recent book read
- 2 book descriptions
- 4 book descriptions

***Pandemic: Letters from prairie minister**

by Sheldon Carr

This book began as daily letters the author wrote for his parishioners. Each day he focused on some small piece of scripture from the daily Revised Common Lectionary. He wanted to help people to see that scripture matters and that it speaks to us in the 21st century. In the beginning he thought that he was writing for his parish. As time went on, he realized that he too was learning to live life and experience this time of trial with psalms, the prophets, and the Gospels as his guide. Primarily, he wanted his letters to encourage people in this time of pandemic. He wanted the letters to be a sign of hope when discouragement was everywhere.

***Chokecherry** by Norma Hawkins

This is a book of gentle humor about small-town life in rural Saskatchewan. The author has almost certainly drawn on her experiences as a minister's wife in rural Saskatchewan and elsewhere, and used her experiences to inform the main character - who is also a minister's wife. The book is about a minister's new assignment in the fictional community of Chokecherry, three hours north of Saskatoon by bus. The couple ineptly manage in the poor parish of 500 people, scraping together enough money to buy an old car but not always able to buy groceries. The locals mistakenly assume that the minister has an independent income. His wife must learn how to drive and also learn to play the organ--very poorly--with one-finger renditions of hymns. Based on personal experiences, Chokecherry is a comical and mostly affectionate look at prairie life in the 1950s. It is a book about the foibles of imperfect people who accept each other's imperfections, even when they are annoyed by them.

***A Town Called Solace** by Mary Lawson

This novel, set in a small town in Northern Ontario in 1972, is told through three narrators. The novel goes back and forth to uncover layers of grief, remorse and love that connect them and provide suspense, dark humor, and deep human trauma – described by a great storyteller.

***From the Garden to the City: The Place of Technology in the Story of God** (2022 edition) by John Dyer

Here's a brief snippet from the introduction: "In the decade since the first edition of this book was published, our world has continued to ac-

celerate technologically, with once futuristic technology becoming mainstream (cryptocurrency, virtual reality, smart speakers, self-driving electric cars) and mainstream technology becoming commonplace (phones, social media, videoconferencing). Even with all this change, the core argument of the book—that theologically, technology is a good gift from God that plays a significant part in the biblical story, and that practically, technology is never neutral but has an embedded value system that transforms individuals and communities—is still true. And yet these technological accelerations and cultural movements invite updated examples and new reflection."

***The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism** by Timothy Keller

The author is the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City. He addresses the frequent doubts that skeptics and non-believers bring to religion. Using literature, philosophy, anthropology, pop culture, and intellectual reasoning, Keller explains how the belief in a Christian God is, in fact, a sound and rational one. To true believers he offers a solid platform on which to stand against the backlash toward religion spawned by the Age of Skepticism. And to skeptics, atheists, and agnostics he provides a challenging argument for pursuing the reason for God. BTW – the title should have been "Belief during an Age of skepticism."

***Old Babes in the Wood** by Margaret Atwood

This is a collection of 15 short stories by one of Canada's best-selling and most prolific authors – with 65 books published to date and still going strong in her 80s.

The two intrepid sisters of the title story grapple with loss and memory on a perfect summer evening; "Impatient Griselda" explores alienation and miscommunication with a fresh twist on a folkloric classic; and "My Evil Mother" touches on the fantastical, examining a mother-daughter relationship in which the mother purports to be a witch. At the heart of the collection are seven extraordinary stories that follow a married couple across the decades, the moments big and small that make up a long life of uncommon love—and what comes after.

* * * * *

"A book is a garden, an orchard, a storehouse, a party, a company by the way, a counselor, a multitude of counselors." – Charles Baudelaire

FROM OUR MINISTER

**Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus*

by Nabeel Qureshi

About two years ago a dear member of the congregation gave me a book to read. This happens from time to time. I almost always find time to read books given to me. But I have more than a few. So, some times it takes a while to get to them all. I think I've read this one at just the right time. Its feels providential.

Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus is a deeply personal and thought-provoking memoir that chronicles the author's journey from being a devout Muslim to becoming a follower of Jesus Christ. The book offers a unique perspective on the intersection of Islam and Christianity and sheds light on the challenges faced by Muslims who are considering the Christian faith.

One of the strengths of the book is the author's ability to explain complex theological concepts in a way that is accessible to a general audience. He provides a detailed overview of the central beliefs and practices of Islam, as well as the differences between Sunni and Shia Islam. Similarly, he offers a clear and concise explanation of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which can be a stumbling block for many Muslims.

Despite the book's strengths, there are a few weaknesses that should be noted. One of the main criticisms of the book is that it oversimplifies the differences between Islam and Christianity. The author's portrayal of Islam as a legalistic and works-based religion may be accurate for some Muslims, but it does not reflect the full diversity of Islamic beliefs and practices. Similarly, the book's portrayal of Christianity as a religion of grace and love may not fully capture the nuances of Christian theology and practice.

Despite these criticisms, *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus* is a powerful and engaging memoir that will appeal to a wide range of readers. The author's personal journey from Islam to Christianity is compelling and thought-provoking, and his insights into the challenges faced by Muslims who are considering the Christian faith are valuable. While the book may not be suitable for academic research, it is an important contribution to the wider conversation on the intersection of Islam and Christianity. Overall, I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in exploring the complexities of religious conversion and the relationship between Islam and Christianity.

Brad

**Spare* by Prince Harry the Duke of Sussex

As an Armchair Social scientist - deep in the armchair - I enjoyed this book that was published in Canada by Random House Canada. In the acknowledgement thanks is given to Harry's "...collaborator and friend, confessor, and sometime sparring partner, J.R. Moehringer". It is very well written.

The exploration of one of humanity's more public social experiments, the monarchy, is explored from Prince Harry's personal perspective. "...my story in my words." Also, given a great deal of attention is our drive for information, misinformation, and disinformation and the consequences of that - intended or otherwise. Systemic racism is another important topic that is tackled.

And finally, as I step out of my armchair and into my work world; treating Mental Illness, Addiction, and Trauma, I am always grateful when a person of courage comes forward and can share their experience, strength, and hope. Early parental loss, substance abuse, military trauma, and PTSD have real effects on people and their families and can be successfully treated.

All information for this report was taken directly from the book itself. Happy reading!

**Pilgrim's Progress* (Updated, Modern English) by John Bunyan

Often disguised as something that would help him, evil accompanies Christian on his journey to the Celestial City. As you walk with him, you'll begin to identify today's many religious pitfalls. These are presented by men such as Pliable, who turns back at the Slough of Despond; and Ignorance, who believes he's a true follower of Christ when he's really only trusting in himself. Each character represented in this allegory is intentionally and profoundly accurate in its depiction of what we see all around us, and unfortunately, what we too often see in ourselves. But while Christian is injured and nearly killed, he eventually prevails to the end. So can you.

The best part of this book is the Bible verses added to the text. The original *Pilgrim's Progress* listed the Bible verse references, but the verses themselves are so impactful when tied to the scenes in this allegory, that they are now included within the text of this book. The text is tweaked just enough to make it readable today, for the young and the old. Youngsters in particular will be drawn to the original illustrations included in this wonderful classic.

****Truth Be Told: My Journey Through Life and Law by Beverly McLachlin***

The author tells her story growing up in Pincher Creek, Alberta, studying at the University of Alberta, a career in law and then taking on the top job in Canada as the 17th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. After her retirement, she wrote this memoir and two mysteries.

****The Power of Teamwork: How We Can All Work Better Together by Brian Goldman***

The author, a Canadian medical doctor, explores three areas where hierarchy prevails and lack of communication can be fatal: the aviation industry, the military, and the operating room. Dr. Goldman offers a very helpful guide when resistance may be involved in a team meeting or problem solving: **“See it. Say it.”**

****Faithful Presence: Seven Disciplines That Shape the Church for Mission by David Fitch***

In our quest to renew the church, Christians have walked through seeker-friendly, emergent, missional, and other movements to develop new expressions of the body of Christ. Now in the post-Christian world in North America we're asking the question again: Is there a way to be the church that engages the world, not by judgment nor accommodation but by becoming the good news in our culture?

****Ragged Company by Richard Wagamese***

It's a friendship that has been forged together while living on the streets. Four chronically homeless people, Amelia One-Sky, Timber, Dick, and Digger find refuge during a severe cold snap in Toronto. They find a cigarette package with not only some unsmoked cigarettes but three \$20 bills and a lottery ticket. The ticket is a winner to the tune of 13.5 million dollars and so begins a new journey. Unable to claim it right away for lack of proper identification, they enlist the help of a street friend, Granite, a prior journalist who was going through rough times.

The chapters weave through each of the five perspectives as they have access a new life. However, the present potential remains clouded by their pasts and it is difficult for each to move forward and embrace their new life. The part I found especially profound was that, "Home is home—wherever you may be. And friendship and familiarity is more important than many things in life."



Contact Us
Dayspring Presbyterian Church,
 11445-40 Ave,
 Edmonton, AB, CAN, T5J0R4
 Admin@DayspringChurch.ca
 780-435-3111

Visit us on the web at
www.DayspringChurch.ca

DayBook Editors:
 Marilyn & John Carr
 DayBook@DayspringChurch.ca

DayBook Deadlines
 3rd Sunday of each month, September
 through June

SESSION

Moderator: Brad Childs

Session Clerk: Gina Kottke

Deputy Clerk: Iris Routledge

Roll Clerk: Darlene Eerkes

Other Elders

Jane de Caen

Jan Ray Moncada

Peter Eerkes

Heather Tansem

Sam Malayang

MINISTER

The Rev. Brad Childs

CHURCH STAFF

Church School Coordinator: Lynn
Vaughan

Youth Coordinator: Fionna McCrostie

Music Director

Binaifer (Binu) Kapadia, B.Mus.

Administrative Assistant: Linda

Custodian: Jim