



# Libraries Alive

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*To Further  
the Gospel  
Through  
Church Libraries*

## C.S. Lewis lives!



by Ron Klug

Fantasy is alive and well. Witness the success of the movie versions of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and the Harry Potter books and movies. These are soon to be joined by a new movie version of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the first to be published of the Chronicles of Narnia by Christian writer C.S. Lewis (1895-1963). This new release of a major movie gives church librarians a fine opportunity to attract new readers to the library and to introduce them to some of Lewis's major books. ("If you like the Harry Potter books, you might want to try the Chronicles of Narnia.")

Throughout his career as a university teacher of literature at Oxford and Cambridge, Lewis wrote dozens of books. Some were academic works of literary criticism; many were works related to the Christian faith to which Lewis was recon-verted at the age of 33.

### How to read Narnia

In 1955 Lewis published the first of the Chronicles of Narnia, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, to be followed by six succeeding volumes. In the original boxed set, the books were numbered in the order in which they were published. The new set by Harper numbers the books according to their Narnian chronology of events, beginning with *The Magician's Nephew*, the history of the creation of Narnia.

This chronological order is the one Lewis himself recommended:

1. *The Magician's Nephew*
2. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*
3. *The Horse and His Boy*
4. *Prince Caspian*
5. *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"*
6. *The Silver Chair*
7. *The Last Battle*

The books are rich in Christian themes and symbols and appeal to children (ages 6 to 12), teens, and adults. For that reason they make fine reading aloud in the family. The series has been enormously successful, having sold 30 million copies in print form, as well as in CDs, DVDs, and audiotapes. PBS Videos offers excellent dramatizations of four of the Chronicles.

continued on page 4

## TALK ONLINE with fellow librarians

Join NCLA's online discussion at:

[www.churchlibraries.org](http://www.churchlibraries.org)

Click on the link, Roundtable Discussion.

Post a question or join in any of the informative topics being discussed.



*Letter from our Editor / Sandra Burrowes*

## What would you change?

Dear Friends,

If you could change one thing in your library this year, what would it

be? The new year is when many of us think about new possibilities, whether for our lives or our libraries. Does your wish list sometimes seem to be an impossible dream? Don't despair. On the contrary. Chances are good that you can think of one step, or maybe several, to get you on your way. The secret is to take it.

Maybe your dream is to build up one area of your library ministry. Do you yearn to reach out to youth or refresh a tired children's ministry? Or perhaps you are feeling a nudge to automate your library this year. Or what about that weeding you've been meaning to get to? Whether your dream is promoting your library better, getting more volunteers to lend a hand, or simply getting good materials into more hands, today might just be the best day to take the first step toward your goal.

In my church, we have recently filled a new position, that of a children's ministry director. What a wonderful partnership

this could be to bring even more materials to the children and youth. I am genuinely excited about the prospect and have set up an exploratory meeting next week. What first step can *you* take to make a dream come to life in your library this year?

Your friends here at NCLA applaud and support your good work, and want to be your partner when you need a helping hand. Why not take advantage of the Mentor Program, which pairs one librarian with

*"What first step can you take to realize a dream for your library this year?"*

another to help tackle a specific library challenge. Or make use of the new NCLA discount program to stretch limited library dollars. Peruse our index of resources on file; from policy guidelines to the latest book lists, for help in an area you are focusing on. If there is a specific challenge that faces you or your library, be in touch. Let us help make the dream for your library come true. ■

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sandra Burrowes'.

*Sandra Burrowes publishes Libraries Alive from Eagan, Minnesota, where she provides marketing, writing and editing services. She works with her church library at Fairmount Avenue United Methodist in St. Paul, MN.*

## Removing labels from books

*by Bern Marcowitz*

A simple hair dryer can often be as effective at removing labels as pricier commercial products. Set on low heat, it can also be very effective in removing nearly anything glued to paper.

If your books happen to get wet, the hair dryer can also be a valuable emergency drying tool. Some also find it to be effective on beginning mildew.

*Bern Marcowitz is a consultant to Brodart. Ask him questions at [bookcare@brodart.com](mailto:bookcare@brodart.com)*

## Cookie crumb clean-up

Ah, the holidays! Cake, pie, candy, and cookies! Yummy! Cleaning up all those sweet crumbs is a good time to think about cleaning up the cookies in your computer. How you delete cookies depends upon your operating system and browser.



### Deleting cookies

#### Internet Explorer 4.x or later:

1. From the View menu, select Internet Options.
2. Click the Settings button, and then click View Files.
3. From the View select Details.
4. Click Internet Address to arrange the list so all the cookie files are together.
5. Select the cookie files and delete.

Follow the same steps for Internet Explorer 5.x but before proceeding to step two, notice the "Temporary Internet Files" section and click the Settings button. Follow the remaining steps. Explorer 6.x makes the process easy, combining elements from previous versions. From the Start menu, choose Control Panel, then Internet Options. Locate the "Temporary Internet Files" section and click "Delete Cookies."

#### Netscape or Mozilla users

From Tools, select Options, and then Privacy. In Privacy, display the Cookies category (double-click on it if it's not already open). Click View Cookies. The Stored Cookies window opens. Select one or more cookies and click Remove Cookie, or click Remove All Cookies.

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## *C.S. Lewis lives!, cont. from p. 1*

Readers who like the Chronicles of Narnia might want to move next to Lewis's Space Trilogy: *Out of the Silent Planet*, *Perelandra*, and *That Hideous Strength*. Teenagers might appreciate this set of three sci-fi novels involving space travel and life on other planets.

Some of Lewis's books on Christian faith use fictional techniques. *The Screwtape Letters* presents letters by a senior devil written to a junior tempter on earth, giving him advice on how to win people from The Enemy (God) for Our Father Below (Satan). *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* also uses the form of letters, this time containing advice on prayer and the Christian life. *The Great Divorce* takes place in hell and heaven. These three can be heartily recommended to teenagers and adults for their fresh insights and ways of expressing the Christian faith.

From here adults and older teens might move to the more reasoned defenses of Christian doctrine like *Mere Christianity*, *Miracles*, and *The Problem of Pain*. Readers who are grieving, especially the death of a spouse, might appreciate Lewis's account of his own mourning in *A Grief Observed*.

For those who want to learn more about the life of C.S. Lewis, a good start is Lewis's spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, which includes the story of his reconversion to Christian faith. The best biography is *Jack: The Life and Times of C.S. Lewis* by his student and friend, George Sayer. The romance of Lewis and Joy Davidman has been dramatized (with some inaccuracies) in *Shadowlands*, both a BBC and a Hollywood version.

All of Lewis's writings are remarkable for their freshness, warmth and sound counsel on the Christian life. As books that can be

read and reread with delight and blessing, they deserve a prominent place in the core collection of any church library. ■

*Ron Klug is a free-lance writer and editor, as well as former editor of Lutheran Libraries (1982-1992). In 1988 he and his wife, Lyn, led a tour to England for church librarians, with a focus on the life and writings of C.S. Lewis.*

## WEB LINKS for C.S. Lewis

### [www.cslewis.org](http://www.cslewis.org)

The C.S. Lewis Foundation features education lessons on *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* as well as related links.

### [www.ChristianityToday.com/ctmag/special/cslewis.html](http://www.ChristianityToday.com/ctmag/special/cslewis.html)

*Christianity Today's* December 2005 issue features a special Lewis section. Many articles can be viewed online.

## NOTABLE BOOKS by C.S. Lewis

*The Chronicles of Narnia*  
Boxed edition, Harper Trophy, 1994,  
\$45, 0064471195

*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*  
Library binding, Sagebrush, 1999,  
\$14.15, 0881030775

*Out of the Silent Planet*  
(Space Trilogy, Book 1)  
Paper, Scribner, 2003, \$13,  
0743234901

*Perelandra*  
(Space Trilogy, Book 2)  
Paper, Scribner, 2003, \$13,  
074323491X

*That Hideous Strength*  
(Space Trilogy, Book 3)  
Paper, Scribner, 2003, \$14,  
0743234928  
Library binding, Sagebrush, 2001,  
\$23, 0613071832

*Screwtape Letters*  
Paper, Harper, 2001, \$11.95,  
0060652934

*The Great Divorce*  
Paper, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001,  
\$10.95, 0060652950

*Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*  
Paper, Harvest Books, 2002, \$12,  
0156027666

list continues on page 7

# Announcing NCLA's 2006 conference!

by Rachel Riensche

Imagine a world of possibilities for church librarians—then make the imagined real! Plan now to be with us November 2-4, 2006, for NCLA's biennial conference in Bloomington, MN.

Looking for new ideas for your church library? Hunting for ways to grow your library ministry? Wondering what makes a church library a success?

Attend

*Imagine!* and

you'll join hundreds of fellow church librarians for two inspiring days filled with speakers, workshops, new resources, networking opportunities, special events, exhibits, authors, and more! You'll leave refreshed and filled with new ideas for your library ministry.

## Save with early bird registration!

Register before September 30, 2006, for the lowest rates: \$190 (both days) or \$110 (one day). Late registrations and non-member rates will be higher. Watch your mailbox for registration forms to arrive on or around June 1, 2006.

## *Wired Librarian, cont. from p. 3*

### In Safari for Mac OS X

1. Select Preferences.
2. Click the Security tab.
3. Click Show Cookies.
4. In the sheet that drops down highlight the cookie(s) and click Remove, or Remove All.
5. When finished, click Done.

As a special bonus, plan to arrive a day early and participate in a special private tour of the brand-new Minneapolis Public Library in downtown Minneapolis.

Hotel reservations must be made directly with Holiday Inn Select, 3 Appletree

Square, #1B, Bloomington, MN 55425 at (952) 854-9000. Ask for "National Church Library Conference" and you'll get the special rate of \$89 plus tax per night.

The hotel offers free high-speed wireless

Internet in all guestrooms as well as a full-service health club including Whirlpool spa, sauna, tanning and massage facilities. It also offers free shuttle service to the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport as well as the nearby Mall of America. Both destinations have light rail stations, and you can catch the Hiawatha Line to downtown Minneapolis for even more shopping and dining experiences!

Watch for more conference details in the next issue of *Libraries Alive* or visit NCLA at [www.churchlibraries.org](http://www.churchlibraries.org). ■

Even though the cookies have been removed, you will reacquire those same cookies the next time you return to those Web sites. To keep your computer running its best, perform this maintenance on a regular basis. In the meantime, enjoy those holiday goodies! ■

*Ellen Bosman is director of technical services at New Mexico State University.*

## Watch your mailbox!

Conference registration forms will arrive on or around June 1, 2006.

Return yours early and save with our Early Bird registration rates!

## Attention, Chapter Reporters

### Next deadline: Feb. 1

Please report upcoming events slated for April 1, 2006, and beyond.

### Future deadlines:

Feb. 1 Spring issue  
May 1 Summer issue  
Aug. 1 Fall issue  
Nov. 1 Winter issue

Send news to

**Sandra Burrowes at**  
[news@churchlibraries.org](mailto:news@churchlibraries.org)

## Chapter News and Calendar

NCLA chapters enthusiastically welcome your inquiries and/or attendance! For more information about chapter membership or upcoming events, contact the chapter nearest you. **Interested in launching a new chapter?** Contact Executive Director Sue Benish at 651-430-0770 or [suebenish@churchlibraries.org](mailto:suebenish@churchlibraries.org).

### (AZ) Tucson Area

Contact: Gerrie Buzard,  
520-749-5014

### (CA) Mountain View (Pomona Valley) NEW CHAPTER!

Contact: June Anderson at  
909-981-0266 or [little-june1@juno.com](mailto:little-june1@juno.com)

### (CA) Orange County

On April 21 at 9:30am,  
Grace Lutheran in  
Huntington Beach will  
host the spring meeting.  
Dee Baden reporting.  
Contact: Debbie Schmidt,  
949-364-0384

### (CA) San Diego County

New and returning officers  
include: Sandra Cully-Pres.,  
Kathie Russell-V.P., Karen  
McFann-Treas. Mira Mesa  
Presbyterian will host the  
March 2006 meeting. Carol  
Spaulding reporting.  
Contact: Sandra Cully at  
619-479-2385.

### (CA) Sierra/Central Valley

Fremont Presbyterian in  
Sacramento will host the  
April 1 spring conference.  
Lois Ortmann reporting.  
Contact: Doris Beckert,  
916-482-8674 or  
[bdbeckert@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bdbeckert@sbcglobal.net)

### (CO) Pikes Peak

Holy Family Catholic, 331  
Main St. in Security, will host  
the April meeting. Children's

literature will be the focus,  
and a book display will be  
on hand. Suzann Alstrin  
reporting. Contact: Suzann  
Alstrin, 719-594-4248

### (IA) Hawkeye Chapter

St. John's by the Campus  
Episcopal, 2338 Lincoln Way  
in Ames, will host the April  
22 meeting. Contact: Janet  
Gray at [janheng@aol.com](mailto:janheng@aol.com) or  
515-233-2720.

### (IA) Siouxland Regional

First Lutheran in Sioux Falls  
will host the Jan. 21 meeting  
from noon-2:30pm. Cathy  
Smith, of Sioux Falls' gift  
shop Ten Thousand Villages,  
will speak and sell books.  
Paula Goettsch reporting.  
Contact: Paula Goettsch at  
605-331-4747.

### (IL) Chicagoland

Contact: Jan Springborn,  
847-543-0970

### (IL) Rockford Area

Contact: Ruth Anderson,  
815-398-3421

### (MN) Granite City

Next meeting, Spring 2006.  
Contact: Pat Tollefsrud at  
[gregpatt@uslink.net](mailto:gregpatt@uslink.net) or  
218-963-2634

### (MN) Lake Superior

Promotion will be the topic  
of the January 28 meeting,  
hosted by Lakeview  
Covenant in Duluth. Twin

Ports Book & Bible will  
showcase new fiction and  
books for children. A "Give  
Thanks" DVD fundraiser is  
planned with proceeds  
going to support next year's  
chapter events. Anita Murray  
reporting. Contact: Nancy  
Olson at 218-729-9228 or  
[solson5491@aol.com](mailto:solson5491@aol.com)

### (MN) SE Minnesota

Holy Anargyroi Greek  
Orthodox Church, 703 W.  
Center St., Rochester, will  
host the May 6, 8am meet-  
ing. Elections will be held.  
The program will highlight  
the architecture and icons of  
the host church. Maureen  
Steenblock reporting.  
Contact: Judy Kereakos,  
507-288-9138 or  
[jkeareakos@att.net](mailto:jkeareakos@att.net)

### (MN) Twin Cities Area

Golden Valley Lutheran will  
host the chapter's 40th  
anniversary celebration and  
meeting, "Basket of  
Memories, Basket of  
Dreams," on Jan. 28, 8am-  
lunch. Melva Eckvall report-  
ing. Contact: Deanna  
Gordon, 763-544-2810

### (ND) Northern Prairie

Contact: Brenda Langerud at  
701-662-3569

### (OH) Buckeye

Contact: April Parfitt,  
614-279-5761

## Chapter News and Calendar continued

### (SC) South Carolina

Contact: Pat Pillsbury at  
843-588-1282 or  
patpill@bellsouth.net

### (SD) Sioux Valley

Contact Paula Goettsch at  
605-331-4747

### (WI) Fox Valley

Next meeting in April or May.  
Contact: Joy Johnson,  
920-739-4699

### (WI) La Crosse Area

Contact: Shirley Erickson at  
608-788-8426

### (WI) West Central WI

Contact: Sue Olson at  
715-835-1502 ■

## C.S. Lewis lives!, continued from p. 4

### *Mere Christianity*

Paper, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001,  
\$11.95, 0060652926

### *Miracles*

Paper, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001, \$12.95,  
0060653019

### *The Problem of Pain*

Paper, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001, \$10.95,  
0060652969

### *A Grief Observed*

Paper, HarperSanFrancisco, 2001, \$9.95,  
0060652381

### *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*

Paper, Harvest Books, 1966, \$13, 0156870118

## BEST BIOGRAPHY about C.S. Lewis

### Sayer, George, *Jack: A Life of C.S. Lewis*

Paper, Crossway, 2005, \$19.99, 1581347391



## Correction

The information members received about NCLA's new discount program for church librarians should have read,

"Exclusive NCLA member discounts are valid through December 31, 2006."  
(not 2005, as printed)

We apologize for the error.



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## Library Basics

To help with basic library skills, Vernita Kennen has authored this helpful 5-part series:

### Part I

Writing your library's mission statement  
*Winter 2004-05*

### Part II

Designing a materials-selection policy  
*Spring 2005*

### Part III

A good donation policy—a church librarian's best defense  
*Summer 2005*

### Part IV

Weeding: your library will thrive on it  
*Fall 2005*

### Part V

Dealing with challenged materials  
*Winter 2005-06*

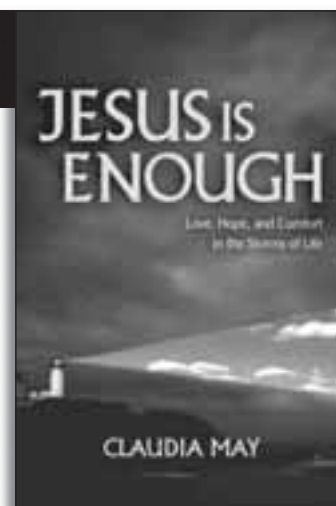
For access to text of these articles, visit NCLA's Web site, [www.churchlibraries.org](http://www.churchlibraries.org)



The discovery of true joy, says Joe Campeau, begins not by breaking out of the daily grind, but by learning to recognize a joy that is already at hand.

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—ELCA Bishop Dean W. Nelson  
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Fuller Theological Seminary  
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## Library Basics / Vernita Kennen

# Dealing with challenged materials



Sooner or later every library will have a patron who is unhappy with the materials that are available. They

may object to the author, the content, the language, the photographs, or any of a number of other things about the material. It is vital that every library be proactive and has a written policy that tells how challenged materials will be handled. Knowing that a challenge form must be filled out, (including a statement that the material has been read, viewed or listened to in its entirety) may be enough to nip a challenge in the bud!

Our church library has chosen to have a very specific form on which the challenge must be specified in detail. The request must be submitted to the pastor on staff who works with the library. He/she will then seek input from others on the staff and discuss the challenge and his/her recommendation with the members of our Library Action Group before a final decision is made. The decision shall be based on the selection policy of the library and the specifics of the challenge. The final decision is that of the pastor.

The pastor is the person who discusses the decision with the person(s) making the challenge or request for reconsideration. If the challenge is upheld, the item shall be



removed from the library collection, not just from circulation.

Don't be caught in the unfortunate situation of having something challenged without both a policy on challenged materials and a selection policy that spells out in detail the criteria on which the library chooses to add materials, both print and nonprint. We all hope that we never have to use these policies but it is far better to be proactive and prepared.

### Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

A form with the following information is requested by our library committee when someone wishes to file a challenge:

- Author, title, publisher, copyright date
- Name of person request is initiated by
- Telephone, street and e-mail address

- Do you represent others than yourself? If so, whom?
- What do you object to in the material?
- What of value is there in this material?
- For what age group would you recommend this work?
- Are you aware of the judgment of this book by critics?
- Are you aware of why this book was purchased?
- What do you believe is the theme or purpose of this material?
- What would you like the Library Action Committee to do about this material?
- In its place, what work of equal value would you recommend that convey as valuable a picture and perspective of society or set of values?
- The challenger is then asked to sign and date a statement reading, "I have read/listened to or viewed the entire material in question." ■



### Farewell, Una

Una Lamb, beloved librarian at St. James Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, MN, and long-time member and supporter of NCLA passed away in November.

Una served NCLA ably and enthusiastically for many years, most recently on our Board of Directors.

Beside being "faithful librarian" to her church, she was also, and more important, known to many of us as "dear friend."

Una, we thank you for your many years of service. We send our love and will see you again at the Great Feast!

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# Reviews

*“I believe in Christianity as I believe that the sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.”*

— C. S. Lewis,  
*Weight of Glory, “Is Theology Poetry?”*

## BIOGRAPHY

THE FANNY CROSBY DVD 264.2  
STORY, 46 min., DVD or VHS,  
Vision Video, 2004, 156-364-7338, \$19.99



“Blessed Assurance”, “To God Be the Glory”, and “A Wonderful Savior,” are among the well-known hymns written by Fanny Crosby and beloved by many Christians. Blinded in infancy by medical incompetence, this remarkable woman achieved success as a poet and is the author of nearly 10,000 hymns.

This documentary unfolds the amazing life of the girl who, in 1835, leaves home to attend the New York Institution for the Blind. Gifted with exceptional memory, she graduates and then teaches at the institution. Crosby befriends U.S. presidents and becomes the first woman to address a joint session of Congress. In later years she championed the New York City poor in the slums of the Bowery district.

The video uses photos, drama, and comments by professors and experts to bring Crosby’s story to life. *The Fanny Crosby Story* is the debut episode of a new series, *Testimony: Life Changing Stories About People of Faith*. Recommended for church libraries with growing video collections. ■  
—Beverly Stickley, Librarian, Christ Lutheran, Harrisburg PA

## CHRISTIAN LIVING

Baab, Lynne M. 263.3  
SABBATH KEEPING: Finding Freedom  
in the Rhythms of Rest, 130p, paper,  
InterVarsity, 2005, 0-8308-3258-0, \$12

With the phrase *24/7* coming into usage in our culture, *Sabbath Keeping* could not be more timely reading. This book serves as an excellent companion for anyone—individual or in a group—who wants to begin or is already engaged in this spiritual practice.

The writing is centered on the author’s spiritual journey and that of his family. This adds an important dimension to help readers relate to the rest of the text. Scripture quotes begin each chapter, and additional quotes are scattered throughout. Helpful questions for reflection, discussion and journaling conclude each chapter. Two appendices include Jewish Sabbath Prayers, a list of recommended reading, and source and Scripture indices. ■  
—Ann Potthoff, St Paul MN

## ETHICS

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich 241  
ETHICS, 593p, hardcover, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works (Vol. 6), Fortress Press, 2005, 0-8006-8306-4, \$55

In one of his letters from prison, Bonhoeffer wrote: “I for my part have been reproaching myself for not having finished the Ethics.” One can argue that he did finish it by living it rather than by writing. However, the fact remains that what he believed would be his crowning work was never completed.

This current work, *Ethics*, is volume six of the recently published series, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works*, and is comprised of manuscripts that have been reconstructed, so to speak, and put in a sequence that differs from previous compilations.



Book review



Video review



DVD review



Audio CD review

Given Bonhoeffer's involvement in a plot to assassinate Hitler, his thoughts about what it means to be a faithful Christian in the world are of special interest; the serious reader will be rewarded by this challenging work with its voluminous notes. However, if your budget is limited, I would suggest *Letters and Papers from Prison* and *The Cost of Discipleship* from this series as being more representative works. ■  
—The Rev. Dr. William Stickley,  
Linglestown PA

THE FOUR CHAPLAINS DVD 254.8  
Sacrifice at Sea—The True Story of Four  
World War II U. S. Army Chaplains Who  
Made the Ultimate Sacrifice so Others  
Could Live, DVD, 51 min., color, Vision  
Video, 2004, 156-364-8520, \$19.99



Although this documentary  
about faith aboard a sinking  
ship in the North Atlantic in

continued on page 12

*“What good is it to  
me if Mary  
gave birth to  
the Son of God  
fourteen hundred  
years ago, and  
I do not also give  
birth to the Son of  
God in my time  
and in my culture?”*

*We are all meant to  
be mothers of God.  
God is always  
needing to be born.”*

*— Meister Eckhart*

*“Whether you think  
that you can,  
or that you can't,  
you are usually  
right.”*

— Henry Ford


### *Reviews, continued from page 11*

1943 is relevant to chaplain ministry and special memorial observances, its greater role is to lift up the larger issues of ecumenical cooperation, self-sacrifice, and inclusiveness. This moving account of the USAT Dorchester's last voyage tells the stories of four chaplains— Jewish, Catholic, Methodist and Dutch-Reformed; historical context that contrasts their actions with those of their countrymen; dramatic film footage; personal interviews of survivors; and commentary by military chaplains. Despite the disturbing message, it reassures us that good exists. It gently prompts the viewer to consider the big questions: Could you give up your life jacket for another? Do you love your neighbor, regardless of faith or ethnic background? The DVD offers a downloadable pdf study guide with materials for several class discussions and Web sites for further information. VHS is available. ■

— Rose Wood Trenbeath, United Lutheran, Cavalier ND

### **FICTION**

Robinson, Marilynne 813.54  
GILEAD, 247p, hardcover, Farrar, 2004,  
0-374-15389-2, \$23.00 (or paper, Picador,  
2005, 0-312-42440-X, \$14.00)


 Marilynne Robinson is a brilliant writer who truly inhabits the soul of her fictitious, dying Midwest preacher in the 1950's small Iowa town of Gilead. Our preacher, John Ames, writes a letter, his legacy to his young son, and presents to us his external and internal life experiences. He writes his thoughts wherever they take him on the life journeys of his grandfather, his father, and his own before and after his recent marriage and fatherhood in old age. The Hebrew word for Gilead is “stronghold”, as this fictitious town so aptly represents to Ames, his family and his friends.

If you are looking for a beach book with action or steamy love, you may find this book boring. It's a contemplative work on the life of a pious old man that is not for everyone. As for me, I found it to be very moving, well-written, spiritual, quiet, tender, wise, profound, philosophical, amazing, awesome—a masterpiece! Even if you are somewhere in between in your own critique of *Gilead*, you surely will agree that it is a powerful testimony on the power and grace of faith. A book to be savored, shared and remembered, it begs to be discussed in book groups.

This book is a winner! It has earned the 2005 Pulitzer Prize, 2004 National Book Critics Circle, and 2005 Christianity Today Book Award. ■

— Berdine Mumper, Librarian, Christ the King Lutheran, Delafield WI

Grietz, Bo 833.914  
THE HAMMER OF GOD: Revised  
Edition, 335p, paper, Augsburg Books,  
2005, 0-8066-5130-X, \$17.99

 Swedish author Bo Grietz's classic novel has been republished with an additional translated chapter. Set within a Swedish parish, the book is comprised of a series of three novellas that take place in 1810, 1880, and 1940.

In each novella, the central character is a young Lutheran pastor trying to adjust to the parish and solidify his beliefs. Each wrestles with the theological concept of salvation, and whether it results from good behavior or God's grace. Throughout the stories, real-life events shape their views. Interestingly, each of the pastors learns as much if not more from his parishioners as from his more senior counterparts.

Although the story unfolds in a Lutheran setting, this novel successfully brings theology into everyday terms, making it a good addition for any church library. ■

—Jeannie Shands, Hope Lutheran,  
Frankfort KY

Rathbun, Russell 277.3083  
POST-RAPTURE RADIO: Lost  
Writings from a Failed Revolution, 179p,  
hardcover, Jossey-Bass, 2005, ISBN 0-  
7879-7393-9, \$21.95

What can a devout evangelical  
pastor do when he concludes  
that the mega-church he serves has misun-  
derstood the essence of Christianity?  
Pastor Lamblove comes across as a combi-  
nation of the prophet Hosea and reformer  
Martin Luther. He calls his fellow pastors  
and the congregation to a modern  
Reformation, to turn from a “me, me, me”  
focus to a communal focus—the realiza-  
tion that “God’s plan is not about you. It is  
about the whole world.” He is passionate

and blunt, bravely articulating an alterna-  
tive evangelical theology.

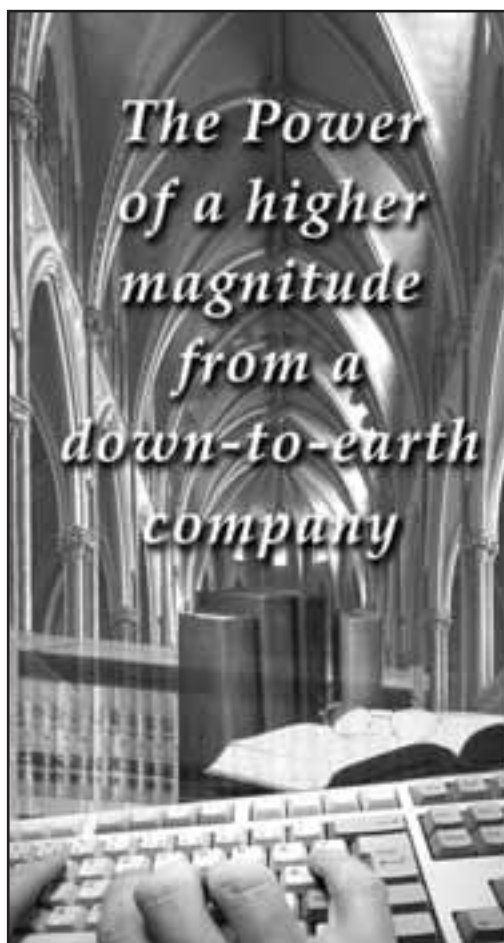
This entertaining, satiric novel also targets  
Christian entanglement with popular cul-  
ture and the end-time theology of the Left  
Behind series. Uproariously funny in  
places, it goes beyond amusing. The  
author frames the conflict that committed  
evangelical Christians face as they attempt  
to bridge the chasm between faith and cul-  
ture in order to spread the Gospel—and  
provides a startling interpretation of the  
Book of Revelation. ■

—Dolores Klinsky Walker, Pioneer  
United Methodist, Walla Walla WA

#### GRIEF

FIERCE GOODBYE: Living in the  
Shadow of Suicide, 44 min. + extras, color,  
Vision Video, 2004, DVD (156-364-8326;  
\$24.99) or VHS (156-364-8318; \$19.99)

continued on page 14



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*“A library  
should be like a  
pair of open arms.”*

—Roger Rosenblatt

## Libraries ALIVE

### Editor

Sandra Burrowes  
news@churchlibraries.org

### Circulation & Advertising

Contact Sue Benish for  
more information at  
651-430-0770 or  
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## Reviews, continued from p. 13



This documentary, hosted by folksinger Judy Collins, is a powerful portrayal of families who have lost a member to suicide. Dr. Kay Redfield

Jameson of Johns Hopkins University provides mental health expertise. Through a series of interviews, *Fierce Goodbye* explores both practical and profound questions. There are viewpoints from the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Greek Orthodox faiths. To the film's credit, it advances the idea that suicide is not a sin any more or less terrible than any other; therefore, God has already forgiven them. However, I found even this to be deeply disturbing. Suicide occurs as a result of unrelieved depression. People with other illnesses are not considered sinners. Those who take their own life should be viewed as persons who have run out of options. Despite this flaw, *Fierce Goodbye* serves as an excellent starting point for discussions within congregations not only among relatives of survivors, but for all in the supporting faith community. The DVD version includes a useful pdf study guide. ■  
— Ann Potthoff, St Paul MN

### NEW TESTAMENT

Sprague, Minka Shura 226.06  
*ONE TO WATCH, ONE TO PRAY*,  
70p, paper, Church Publishing, 2004,  
1-59628-005-0, \$11.00

*Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,*  
*Guard the bed I lie upon.*  
*Four pillars round my bed;*  
*Four angels round my head.*

*One to watch, one to pray,*  
*And two to keep me till the day. Amen*

By using her first childhood prayer as a guideline, Sprague succeeded in giving me a better understanding of the four gospels and of the

men who wrote them. *One to Watch, One to Pray* tells the story of how the Gospels came to be written and how they are related to each other. Sprague explains in layperson's terms how and why these stories of Jesus have always been at the heart of the faith of the Christian Church. A chapter is devoted to each Gospel author explaining which one is to watch, which one to pray, and which two to keep me till the day.

The short, 70-page book would make a great group study book. Recommended. ■  
— Rose Marie Sudhoff, Librarian, St. Paul's Lutheran, Richmond IN


Bankson, Marjory Zoet 222.3506  
*SEASONS OF FRIENDSHIP: Naomi and Ruth as a Model for Relationship*, Revised, 156p, paper, Women to Walk With, Augsburg Books, 2005,  
0-8066-5163-9, \$12.99

This insightful discussion of seasons of friendship among women of every culture, and their spiritual stages of life and community involvement is a beautifully balanced, readable account of the inner motivations and needs of two women of the Bible. Bankson's discussion of how women of all ages can blend friendship inspires hope and provides guidance.

This book is an excellent tool for women's groups or individual reading. Guides at the end of each chapter outline women's roles in community or in any balanced friendship. For a growing ministry seeking to engage mature women, this book would be a real asset. What is Bankson's view of the Gospel in action?: God is love; God's will is love; our obedience should be based on love. Recommended. ■  
— Evelyn Smith, St. Stephen's Lutheran, Wilmington DE

## SOCIAL JUSTICE


Ariarajah, S. Wesley 261.873  
**AXIS OF PEACE:** Christian Faith in Times of Violence and War, 144p, paper, World Council of Churches Publications, 2004, 2-8254-1394-1, \$15

 In a world permeated with violence and war, *Axis of Peace* comes to peace-makers as a sports drink to an athlete—refreshingly nutritious. Ariarajah is from Sri Lanka where he was a Methodist pastor. He is a former WCC staffer, and is presently a professor at Drew University.

From his global background, Ariarajah examines the roots of war and violence, and the symbiosis of culture, religion, and patriotism. He discusses the current Iraq war, other wars, even the wars of Bible times. He presents peace as a goal that God set for us, a goal that holy writings of many faiths affirm.

Peace is a surprisingly complex subject, and Ariarajah does a superlative job of unraveling the tangles while being clear, interesting, comprehensive, objective, and forthright. *Axis* is not a study guide, but could be used as such, and is an excellent addition to church libraries. ■  
—Dolores Klinsky Walker, Pioneer United Methodist, Walla Walla WA

Jim Wallis  
**GOD'S POLITICS:** 261.70973  
A New Vision for Faith and Politics in America, xxviii + 388p, cloth, Harper San Francisco, 2005, 0-06-055828-8, \$24.95

 Blessed are the peacemakers; if your neighbors are hungry, feed them; let justice roll down like waters. People who take the Bible seriously will want to live in a society organized around statements like these. But, as Jim Wallis points out in this challenging, informative,

troubling book, the policies that currently govern our lives in the United States are directly contrary to the teachings of Jesus and the Old Testament prophets.

There is no peace. The gap between rich and poor is increasing, racial and economic injustices abound—all in a nation that considers itself very religious! Don't look to the political parties for a solution for as the cover's tagline tells us "Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It."

But you *will* get it if you read this book and you *will* get it right. And you will learn what you can do to make God's politics the guiding influence in our nation. ■  
—Rod Olson, Westwood Lutheran Church Library, St. Louis Park MN

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National Church Library Association is a non-profit support organization serving church librarians of all backgrounds. Membership is open to individuals or churches of all Christian denominations who desire assistance with church library development. Contact NCLA at the address below if you are interested in receiving membership information.

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## Coming next issue

### Youth Watch:

What's new, what's hot,  
what's next



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Any church, parish library or synagogue damaged by hurricane will be eligible to receive money from this fund, regardless of denomination.

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# Church librarians reaching out

Have you ever needed help, *real* help? Maybe you can imagine, then, the depth of desperation our Southern church library colleagues feel after the recent devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita destroyed numerous library ministries. Ninette Speights shares a first-hand account of her library's fate in the letter below.

with us the creative ways your library or church is raising money—we'll use your story to inspire others.

To make a donation, please follow the instructions found at left. Thank you and may God, and we, richly bless our colleagues in the South. ■

NCLA, Church & Synagogue Library Association, and Catholic Library Association joined to form a relief fund to assist affected library ministries. To date, you have responded with donations in excess of \$900. *We thank you!*

Not surprisingly, so much more is needed. And while it seems unlikely that any one donation—large or small—could make a real difference, together our many contributions become a powerful force. We encourage, even *urge* you, to make a donation today. Share

*Dear NCLA,*

*My name is Ninette Speights, Library Director of Ingalls Avenue Baptist Church in Pascagoula, MS. Our church received much damage from Katrina and four feet of water swept through our buildings. We lost 95% of all the contents of the church. Our media library and teacher's resource rooms were a complete loss.*

*More than 3,000 books, videos, DVD, computer, TVs, VCRs, DVD players, furnishings, shelves and more were swept away and flooded. We are down to block walls and concrete floors.*

*We had a great library, which included a children's summer reading program (7 years running). This past summer 36 kids read over 1,700 books in 10 weeks. Our library has been funded in the past on mostly donations and memorial. Our church did not have flood insurance.*

*I am looking for information*



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