

Reading List

Acts of Faith: The Story of an American Muslim. The Struggle for the Soul of a Generation by Eboo Patel.

Founder/director of Interfaith Youth Care, Patel believes rejecting religious intolerance and working for the common good is the only way the world can avoid fanaticism and violence.

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind: Creating Currents of Electricity and Hope by William Kamkwamba.

After barely surviving a famine, 14-year-old William wanted to make life better for his village. Using books he found in a library as a guide he cobbled together a crude windmill and changed the life of his African village forever.

Brother, I'm Dying by Edwidge Danticat.

Danticat vividly describes Haiti's history and the volatile Port-au-Prince neighborhood she called home after her parents emigrated to America and left her with her uncle. She chronicles her uncle's experiences in Haiti, as well as her parents' lives in New York.

Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

An ancient Chinese proverb says, "Women hold up half the sky." The authors believe the global struggle for women's equality is "the paramount moral challenge" of our era. They tell stories of struggling women in Asia and Africa.

A People's History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story by Diane Butler Bass.

This book is about the way Christian history connects contemporary faith to ancient wisdom. Bass searches the Christian tradition for a path to a vital, hopeful, hospitable and open faith – a faith that can heal, reconcile and bring peace.

Stones Into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs, in Afghanistan and Pakistan by Greg Mortenson.

Beginning where *Three Cups of Tea* left off, he tells of his ongoing efforts to establish schools for girls in remote areas of Afghanistan and of how he has built relationships with Islamic clerics, militia commanders and tribal leaders.

The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation by Barbara R. Rossing.

Arguing against the dispensational theology of the Left Behind novels, Rossing reveals an alternative view of Revelation. She believes it has less to do with violence or prediction than with a vision of peace and justice.

Rediscovering Values: On Wall Street, Main Street and Your Street: A Moral Compass for the New Economy by Jim Wallis.

Paying for things we don't need with money we don't have needs to be replaced with remembering it is a gift to be simple. He believes budgets are moral documents for a family, a church, a city, state or country.

Strength In What Remains by Tracy Kidder.

Deo was a young medical student who fled civil war in Burundi. He arrived in New York City with little money and less English and slept in Central Park. He attended Columbia University, medical school and became an American citizen. He then returned to Burundi to build a medical clinic.

Zeitoun by Dave Eggers.

When Zeitoun's family left after Katrina hit, he remained in New Orleans checking on client's homes and his rental properties. He canoed the deserted city assisting stranded people and feeding abandoned dogs. He was arrested and accused of being a member of al-Qaeda and was thrown into prison.

Fiction:

Half Broke Horses by Jeanette Walls.

Drawing on stories handed down by her family through the years, she tells the story of her grandmother who became a teacher at age 15 in a remote Arizona town after riding 500 miles all alone on her pony. A spirited heroine, she is fiercely outspoken against hypocrisy and prejudice.

The Help by Kathryn Stockett.

Set in 1962 segregated Mississippi, Skeeter is a young white woman eager to become a writer. She befriends a group of black maids who are sometimes treated badly by the women for whom they work. The book Skeeter writes with the help of these black women brings hope to the black community

Journey Home by Toni Eubanks – local author.

Jessica, a modern-day eleventh grader, learns about her African-American heritage by reading the journal of Tamara, a young African-American girl who lives in the Black West in the 1880's.

Remnants by Kiki Swanson – local author.

Daisy McDuff, widowed and lonely, reaches out to former friends scattered across the country. She invites nine of them to join her in a new retirement community, LaVentura in Scottsdale, Arizona. The five who accept her invitation live a full and happy life at LaVentura.

Still Alice by Lisa Genova.

When Dr. Alice Howland, psychology professor at Harvard, gets disoriented while jogging near her house, on a route she has taken many times, she knows something is wrong and seeks medical help. Not quite fifty, she is unprepared for the diagnosis – early onset Alzheimer's.