

CGS Library

New Books – February 2019

Aslan, Reza. **Zealot : the life and times of Jesus of Nazareth.** 2014. **232.9 Aslan**

“Riveting . . . Aslan synthesizes Scripture and scholarship to create an original account.”—*The New Yorker*

“A lucid, intelligent page-turner.”—*Los Angeles Times*

“Aslan’s insistence on human and historical actuality turns out to be far more interesting than dogmatic theology. . . . This tough-minded, deeply political book does full justice to the real Jesus, and honors him in the process.”—*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Aslan brings a fine popular style, shorn of all jargon, to bear on the presentation of Jesus of Nazareth. . . . He isn’t interested in attacking religion or even the church, much less in comparing Christianity unfavorably to another religion. He would have us admire Jesus as one of the many would-be messiahs who sprang up during Rome’s occupation of Palestine, animated by zeal for ‘strict adherence to the Torah and the Law,’ refusal to serve a human master, and devotion to God, and therefore dedicated to throwing off Rome and repudiating Roman religion. . . . You don’t have to lose your religion to learn much that’s vitally germane to its history from Aslan’s absorbing, reader-friendly book.”—*Booklist (starred review)*

Bolz-Weber, Nadia. **Shameless : a sexual reformation.** 2019 **261.8 Bol**

“*Shameless* is a triumph. Nadia Bolz-Weber returns to readers the gift toxic religion and consumer culture stole: the gift of sexuality. Her wisdom is unparalleled, her vulnerability touching, her storytelling masterful, and her perspective both ancient and fresh. *Shameless* will give its readers their joy, relationships, and freedom back.”—**Glennon Doyle, author of #1 New York Times Bestseller LOVE WARRIOR, founder and president of Together Rising**

“*Shameless* is one of the most important, life-changing books I’ve ever read. Expertly-crafted and lovingly delivered, it serves as both a bomb and a balm—blowing up the lies religion teaches about sex and tenderly healing the wounds those messages have inflicted. Pastoral and prophetic, *Shameless* weaves together history, theology, biblical studies, personal narrative, and sex ed, without ever losing sight of its most important aim—honoring the dignity of actual human beings living actual, messy and beautiful lives. It’s Nadia Bolz-Weber’s best book yet. And that’s saying something”—**Rachel Held Evans, author of Searching for Sunday and Inspired**

“If the conversation around sex in the Church has felt like a small, cramped room to you, brace yourself: Nadia Bolz-Weber is about to kick in the door, hustle you outside, and burn down the room as you march out into the fresh air. This irreverent, bold, and authentic book is deeply centered in love and the transforming goodness of God. If ever there was a time for the Church to disrupt the world’s broken notions around sex, gender, masculinity, and power with this sort of a shameless reformation, it is now. And Nadia is the loving, hopeful, wise, take-no-prisoners disruptor we’ve been waiting for”—**Sarah Bessey, author of Jesus Feminist and Out of Sorts**

“Nadia has an amazingly faith-filled way to say good things in a hard way and hard things in a good way. She does it again with one of our most wounding, dangerous, and needed subjects—Christian gender and sexual teaching! This will heal many”—**Fr. Richard Rohr, O.F.M., Center for Action and Contemplation, author of Falling**

Upward

"Nadia Bolz Weber returns with her page-turning, vulnerable storytelling, this time with her sights set squarely on purity culture. She unravels the problematic, toxic frameworks around sexuality – the burden of which many of us still carry today – and offers us the freedom we need to say no to shame. If you know Nadia's work, you know that she is fearless. In *Shameless*, we all benefit from her bravery"— **Austin Channing Brown, author of *I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness***

Brown, Camille Lewis. ***African saints, African stories : 40 holy men and women.*** 2008

276.0092 Br

From the continent of Africa come a wealth of saints and other inspirational people included in the Catholic tradition. Some are well-known, like Saints Augustine, a doctor of the church, and his mother, Monica, while others may be unknown to us, such as Blessed Daudi Okelo and Blessed Jildo Irwa, twentieth-century Ugandan martyrs. Regardless of popularity, each holy person included in *African Saints, African Stories* displays perseverance in faith and can inspire us all.

These holy people exemplify the universality of the church. Their stories need to be told. We are blessed that Camille Brown has done so, and with such love and affection. Her book belongs on every Catholic educator's shelf. --Carmina Magnusen Chapp, Ph.D., academic dean, religious studies division, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary.

Bussie, Jacqueline. ***Love without limits : Jesus' radical vision for love with no exceptions.***

2018 **248.4 Bus**

"If you believe, as I do, that love is the heart of Jesus' message and should be the point of the Christian life, then you'll be surprised to see how few books there are that aim specifically to help you become a better practitioner of love. And you'll be thrilled when a book like this comes along--super well-written, really inspiring and practical, deeply engaged with scripture, and joyfully celebrating the primacy of love." --Brian D. McLaren, author of *The Great Spiritual Migration*

"A must-read for all Christians interested in inclusivity for their communities." --Publishers Weekly

Capon, Robert Farrer. ***Kingdom, grace, judgment : paradox, outrage and vindication in the parables of Jesus.*** 2002. **226.95 Cap**

Here in one volume is Robert Farrar Capon's widely praised trilogy on Jesus' parables — *The Parables of the Kingdom, The Parables of Grace, and The Parables of Judgment*. These studies offer a fresh, adventurous look at all of Jesus' parables, treated according to their major themes. With the same authorial flair and daring insight that have earned him a wide readership, Capon admirably bridges the gap between the biblical world and our own, making clear both the original meaning of the parables and their continuing relevance today.

Foer, Joshua. ***Atlas obscura : an explorer's guide to the world's hidden wonders.***

2016. **910.41 Foer**

It's time to get off the beaten path. Inspiring equal parts wonder and wanderlust, *Atlas Obscura*

celebrates over 700 of the strangest and most curious places in the world. Talk about a bucket list: here are natural wonders—the dazzling glowworm caves in New Zealand, or a baobob tree in South Africa that's so large it has a pub inside where 15 people can drink comfortably. Architectural marvels, including the M.C. Escher-like stepwells in India. Mind-boggling events, like the Baby Jumping Festival in Spain, where men dressed as devils literally vault over rows of squirming infants. Not to mention the Great Stalacpipe Organ in Virginia, Turkmenistan's 40-year hole of fire called the Gates of Hell, a graveyard for decommissioned ships on the coast of Bangladesh, eccentric bone museums in Italy, or a weather-forecasting invention that was powered by leeches, still on display in Devon, England.

Gafney, Wilda C. **Womanist midrash : a reintroduction to the women of the Torah and the throne.**

2017

221.9 Gaf

Womanist Midrash is an in-depth and creative exploration of the well- and lesser-known women of the Hebrew Scriptures. Using her own translations, Gafney offers a midrashic interpretation of the biblical text that is rooted in the African American preaching tradition to tell the stories of a variety of female characters, many of whom are often overlooked and nameless. Gafney employs a solid understanding of womanist and feminist approaches to biblical interpretation and the sociohistorical culture of the ancient Near East. This unique and imaginative work is grounded in serious scholarship and will expand conversations about feminist and womanist biblical interpretation.

"I am afraid to write a review for this book simply because I fear no words I put together will do it justice. On every page, this book blew my mind or melted my heart.

"I learned so much from this book. While Gafney is a Hebrew and Bible scholar and incredibly knowledgeable in translation and interpretation, she never makes the reader feel like they can not understand the text as well. Each time she would define and explain the text in Hebrew, it would open my eyes to a whole new world.

"While the book is extensive in academic interpretation and information of the text, my heart was more touched than my mind. Gafney's Midrash of the verses often left me in tears. I was suddenly there, in the text, living, feeling, and breathing each word. She would repeat the phrase "When I use my sanctified imagination..." when she would begin her Midrash. By the middle of the book, my body would have a visceral reaction to this little phrase, knowing that something holy and profound and inspired was about to come my way. I am looking forward to reading so much of this book again and again"—Staci Kennelly, Amazon contributor.

Guest, Deryn. **The Queer Bible commentary.** 2015 **220.7 Que**

This book has been instrumental in unpacking my trauma as a queer person raised in a fundamentalist Christian household. I love how it incorporates Christian, Jewish, and even sometimes Islamic modes of exegesis. I am still in the First Testament, so I cannot speak for the handling of the Second, but the first is highly nuanced and thought provoking. I find that the incorporation of the Jewish midrash form lends itself very well to queer analysis. Chapters very in personal resonance, but I can't say that some are "worse" simply because they don't speak to my personal experience as directly. However, transgender issues seem to take a backseat to LGB issues, as is the case with a lot of queer theory and criticism.

I question if the person who gave the book one star read past the introduction, because, while that section did advance the argument that the context of ancient Mesopotamia was different than it is today so we should shift our views, it didn't pull the intellectually dishonest argument of many progressive Christians that the Bible doesn't actually condemn homoerotic intimacy. Other authors do not argue for the dismissal of the text. In fact, David Tabb Stewart begins his chapter on Leviticus by rebutting the argument that Leviticus should be dismissed because it is not relevant. He even calls it his "favourite biblical book" and acknowledges that it carries some "good news", some "neutral", as well as "bad news" for queer readers – E. Fly, Amazon reader.

Our culture is at a critical juncture; we are at a crossroad of fear and hope, welcoming or rejecting one another. "The Queer Bible Commentary" can be a healing balm for us today. As a Deacon in the United Methodist Church, I find it important to explore and use new theology, thought and practice in my ministry in order to (hopefully) move people toward God's Kingdom. "The Queer Bible Commentary" is a useful resource for that purpose. This book is not a typical commentary, as it does not provide verse by verse interpretation. In a perhaps unintended way this is a powerful and useful approach. Each contributor maintains the highest academic standards for their Biblical analysis. Contributors: I was pleased to see names I have happened upon before. The short bios were very useful and enlightening. A variety of church traditions is represented. A variety of theological approaches are used.

My congregation is entirely straight (as far as I know). I recently used "The Queer Bible Commentary" for my sermon -- more as a stepping off point, than directly quoting from it. I borrowed concepts. I did not couch these thoughts as either queer or straight in the sermon. One of my goals as a pastor is to help the congregation (and beyond) to "Love our neighbor". "The Queer Bible Commentary" is a terrific resource for that goal – D.L. Stoner.

Long, Siobhan. *The Bible in music*. 2018. 781.59 Long

There have been numerous publications in the last decades on the Bible in literature, film, and art. But until now, no reference work has yet appeared on the Bible as it appears in Western music. In *The Bible in Music: A Dictionary of Songs, Works, and More*, scholars Siobhán Dowling Long and John F. A. Sawyer correct this gap in Biblical reference literature, providing for the first time a convenient guide to musical interpretations of the Bible. Alongside examples of classical music from the Middle Ages through modern times, Dowling Long and Sawyer also bring attention to the Bible's impact on popular culture with numerous entries on hymns, spirituals, musicals, film music, and contemporary popular music.

Each entry contains essential information about the original context of the work (date, composer, etc.) and, where relevant, its afterlife in literature, film, politics, and liturgy. It includes an index of biblical references and an index of biblical names, as well as a detailed timeline that brings to the fore key events, works, and publications, placing them in their historical context. There is also a bibliography, a glossary of technical terms, and an index of artists, authors, and composers.

The Bible in Music will fascinate anyone familiar with the Bible, but it is also designed to encourage choirs, musicians, musicologists, lecturers, teachers, and students of music and religious education to discover and perform some less well-known pieces, as well as helping them to listen to familiar music with a fresh awareness of what it is about.

"The volume is so rich and offers so much that is of tremendous value – especially to a professor who is teaching on the intersection of the Bible and music – that I can recommend it as not merely worthwhile but essential to anyone interested in this subject area"-- (*Review of Biblical Literature*)

Martin, James. Between heaven and mirth : why joy, humor, and laughter are at the heart of the spiritual life. 2011. 242.4 Mar

"Winsome and comical but also provocative and thoughtful, Martin's book is a breath of fresh air for those who would take religion—and themselves—too seriously." (Publishers Weekly (starred review))

"Martin's book suggests numerous ways to foster the strength of gracious good humor and makes a wonderful case for replacing suffering and sadness with an abundance of levity and joy." (Booklist)

"Between Heaven and Mirth couldn't come at a better time since both individuals and religious institutions are feeling the pressure of hard times. Joy and a playful sense of humor are great antidotes to hopelessness and helplessness." (Spirituality & Practice)

"*Between Heaven and Mirth* is delicious, well-crafted and well-paced. Martin draws on his own experience as a priest and demonstrates both a light touch and an impressive command of his subject." (Harvey Cox, *the Washington Post Book World*)

Norris, Herbert. **Church vestments : their origin and development.** Reprint. 247 Nor 2017

This is a wonderful little book that explains how vestments came about, with chapters that cover everything from the alb, to the chasuble and even the mitre (the hats bishops wear). For example, why do priests wear stoles? As it turns out, that's from Roman and Greek times during the first century when nobles wore stolas that were used as wear-all-day napkins of a sort - who would have thought? Or when did chasubles come about? Apparently all the common folk used to wear these in the first century, and then later priests continued to wear them as a sign of humility and simplicity, and later as a uniform of sorts so others would recognize them. Although there is no specific information about modern vestments - i.e. how they are made, fabrics they are made out of, etc. - this is still a great book if you're wondering how all those parts of a vestment set came about. Very easy to read, I thought, and quite interesting – Lynne Green, Amazon contributor.

Obama, Michelle. **Becoming.** 2018. 973.932 Obama

In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her—from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world's most famous address. With unerring honesty and lively wit, she describes her triumphs and her disappointments, both public and private, telling her full story as she has lived it—in her own words and on her own terms. Warm, wise, and revelatory, *Becoming* is the deeply personal reckoning of a woman of soul and substance who has steadily defied expectations—and whose story inspires us to do the same – Amazon.

Prothero, Stephen. **American Jesus : how the Son of God became a national icon.** 2004.
232.0973 Pro

No religious personality has captivated so many Americans for so long as Jesus. Indeed, as Boston University historian Prothero demonstrates in this sparkling and engrossing book, Jesus is the one religious figure nearly every American, whether Christian or not, past and present, has embraced. From Thomas Jefferson's cut-and-paste Bible to Jesus Christ Superstar, from the feminized Christ of the Victorians to the "manly redeemer" of Teddy Roosevelt's era, from Buddhist bodhisattva to Black Moses, Prothero surveys the myriad ways Americans have remade Jesus in their own image. He usefully divides these American Jesuses into "resurrections"-revivals of Jesus within mainstream Christianity-and "reincarnations"-appropriations of Jesus by outsiders. This scheme allows Prothero to range widely, and if he sometimes drifts from his primary focus, the digressions are fascinating in their own right. Nearly every page offers a fresh portrait of some corner of American religious history. A work of this breadth must depend heavily on other writers, but Prothero almost always has a judicious interpretation of his own to add-most of all, his contention that Jesus' enduring appeal confirms America's essentially Christian character even as it also demonstrates America's growing religious diversity – Publishers' Weekly.

Rogers, Thomas. **Turning ink into blood [dvd] : resources for the public reading of scripture.** 2001.
DVD 220.6 Rog

Thomas G. Rogers is Professor of Homiletics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, who, with the help of Seraphim Communications has produced a very helpful video training course for studying, discussing and talking about the Bible.

Winner, Lauren. **Wearing God : laughter, fire, and other overlooked ways of meeting God.** 2016.

Lauren F. Winner—a leading writer at the crossroads of culture and spirituality and author of *Still* and *Girl Meets God*—joins the ranks of luminaries such as Anne Lamott and Barbara Brown Taylor with this exploration of little known—and, so, little used—biblical metaphors for God, metaphors which can open new doorways for our lives and spiritualities.

There are hundreds of metaphors for God, but the church only uses a few familiar images: creator, judge, savior, father. In *Wearing God*, Lauren Winner gathers a number of lesser-known tropes, reflecting on how they work biblically and culturally, and reveals how they can deepen our spiritual lives.

Exploring the notion of God as clothing, Winner reflects on how we are “clothed with Christ” or how “God fits us like a garment.” She then analyzes how clothing functions culturally to shape our ideals and identify our community, and ruminates on how this new metaphor can function to create new possibilities for our lives. For each biblical metaphor—God as the vine/vintner who

animates life; the lactation consultant; and the comedian, showing us our follies, for example—Winner surveys the historical, literary, and cultural landscapes in order to revive and heal our souls.

“A gorgeously written and compelling investigation into what it means to strike up a friendship with the Living God.” (**James Martin, SJ**, author of *Jesus: A Pilgrimage*)

“The images Lauren introduces me to in *Wearing God* have stayed with me, enriching my prayers and broadening my view of God. I love her writing, and this book is no exception.” (**Shauna Niequist**, author of *Bread & Wine*)

“In *Wearing God*—a book both winsome and erudite—Winner convenes a salon of saints and biblical writers to reveal that God is much more than just Shepherd or King and far more interesting than we thought.” (**Fred Bahnson**, Wake Forest University School of Divinity, author of *Soil and Sacrament: A Spiritual Memoir of Food and Faith*)

“Lauren’s curiosity about the life of faith is so compelling—and her intelligence so engaging—that there is nothing more satisfying than settling down with a new book from her. The only problem is that it is impossible to read her without being changed; so advance at your own risk.” (**Barbara Brown Taylor**, author of *Learning to Walk in the Dark*)

Children's and young people's books

Byers, Grace. ***I am enough***. 2018 J 242.66 Byers

I Am Enough is the picture book everyone needs, and it's now a *New York Times* bestseller and the picture book winner in the Goodreads Choice Awards. This is a gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another—from *Empire* actor and activist Grace Byers and talented newcomer artist Keturah A. Bobo. *We are all here for a purpose. We are more than enough. We just need to believe it* – Amazon review

Garcia, Gabi. ***Listening with my heart : a story of kindness and self-compassion***. 2017.
J 242.66 Gar

"This delightful book gets at the essence of how to help children be more self-compassionate - by teaching them to be a good friend to themselves. With beautiful illustrations, an engaging story, and a few simple self-compassion practices for children, this book is a must for anyone wanting to help children cope with their difficult emotions in a kind, connected and mindful manner." --Kristin Neff, Ph.D, author of *Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself*

Listening with My Heart is a Mom's Choice Awards® Gold Recipient.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. ***Home by another way : a Christmas story.*** 2018 J 232.97 Tay

"The transformation that the child effects in each of the wise men is tender, and the illustrations are equally gentle...adults who are fans of Taylor may find it as edifying as children do." -- Christian Century

"A perfect holiday gift, *Home by Another Way: A Christmas Story* beautifully retells the three wise men's journey to readers of all ages." — San Francisco Book Review

"Truly lovely illustrations in soft tones capture the reverent atmosphere and the sense of an ancient time and place." -- *Kirkus Reviews*

"Barbara Brown Taylor has a way with words. She has long been known for the eloquence of her sermons and books for adults, her ability to delve into a biblical text and to carefully examine and uncover the deeper meaning, layer by layer. In *Home by Another Way*, Taylor brings her skills to the world of children's literature. This delightfully fresh and creative story follows the journey of the wise men as they follow the light of a mysterious star that leads them to a small town town in the Middle East, and to an unlikely newborn king. The wise men bring the child their expensive gifts, but they are the ones who leave all the richer with gifts they could never have foreseen. Their lives are forever changed by the holy baby who will end up upending the world." --**Kathleen Long Bostrom**, award-winning children's book writer of *What Is God Like?* and *Stories from the Bible*