

2024 – 2019 Spiritual Growth

Selections may be from the 2019-2024 Reading lists if not included in previous reports, children and youth titles can be read for credit in all plans of the Reading Program.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Abuelita Faith: What Women on the Margins Teach Us About Wisdom, Persistence, and Strength.

Kat Armas. Brazos Press. 2021.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 4 print copies.

Kat Armas, a second-generation Cuban American, grew up on the outskirts of Miami's famed Little Havana neighborhood. Her earliest theological formation came from her grandmother, her abuelita, who fled Cuba during the height of political unrest and raised three children alone after her husband passed away. Combining personal storytelling with biblical reflection, Armas shows us how voices on the margins—those often dismissed, isolated, and oppressed because of their gender, socioeconomic status, or lack of education— have more to teach us about following God than we realize. This book is a Christianity Today 2022 Book Award finalist.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Bipolar Faith: A Black Woman's Journey with Depression and Faith.

Monica Coleman. Fortress Press. 2016.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 2 HTML, Adobe EPub. 4 print copies.

Coleman examines the ways the legacies of slavery, war, sharecropping, poverty, and alcoholism mask a family history of mental illness. Those same forces accompanied her into the Black religious traditions and Christian ministry. All the while, she wrestled with her own bipolar disorder. *Bipolar Faith* is both a spiritual autobiography and a memoir of mental illness. Citing serendipitous encounters with Black intellectuals like Henry Louis Gates Jr., Angela Davis, and Renita Weems, Coleman offers a rare account of how the modulated highs of Bipolar II can lead to professional success, while hiding a depression that even her doctors rarely believed.

2023 Spiritual Growth – Bonus Book [two books in Spiritual Growth]

*Note: For the Spiritual Growth Bonus Book: **Braiding Sweetgrass**, you must participate in or lead one of the studies in order to receive Reading Program credit. You may attend or lead the eight-part Mission u study either in a conference/district Mission u context, or in your own local context (church, unit, otherwise) to receive Bonus Book credit. If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only 1 credit.*

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants,

Robin Wall Kimmerer. Milkweed Editions. 2020.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 25 print copies. 1 Audio disc. 1 HTML, Adobe EPub. 1MP3, Overdrive Listen.

As a botanist, Kimmerer is trained to ask questions of nature with the tools of science. As a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, she embraces the notion that plants and animals are our oldest teachers. Here, she brings these two lenses together. Drawing on her life as an Indigenous scientist and a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. She circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Church of the Wild: How Nature Invites Us Into the Sacred.

Victoria Loorz. Broadleaf Books 2021. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 1 print copy.

Whether disillusioned by the church or unfulfilled by traditional expressions of faith, many of us long for a deeper spirituality. Coping with an unraveling vocation, identity, and planet, Loorz turned to the wanderings of spiritual leaders and the sanctuary of the natural world, eventually co-founding the Wild Church Network and Seminary of the Wild. With an ecospiritual lens on biblical narratives and a fresh look at a community larger than our own species, Church of the Wild uncovers the roots of faith and helps us deepen our commitment to a suffering earth by falling in love with it.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Colors of Hope: A Devotional Journal from LGBTQIA + Christians.

Melissa G. Loy, Editor, Chalice Press. 2022.

From the Rev. Melissa Lynn Guthrie, director and minister with AllianceQ, comes this much-needed faith-based resource for the LGBTQ+ community, Colors of Hope uses the iconic Pride Flag as the core of a nine-week-long reflection and devotional journal. The flag's eight colors are each tied to a specific symbolic theme, inspiring the book's contributors to craft a short essay and a set of several common themes that carry over to each week and invite readers to reflect on the week's theme in different ways.

2024 Spiritual Growth

The Cure for Sorrow: A Book of Blessings for Times of Grief.

Jan Richardson. Wanton Gospeller Press. 2016.

When Jan Richardson unexpectedly lost her husband and creative partner, she did what she had long known how to do: She wrote blessings. These were no sugar-coated blessings. They minimized none of the pain and bewilderment that came in the wake of a wrenching death. With these blessings, she entered into the depths of the shock, anger, and sorrow. From those depths, she has brought forth words that, with heartbreaking honesty, offer surprising comfort and stunning grace. Those who know loss will find kinship among these pages.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week.

Amy-Jill Levine. Abingdon Press. 2018.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 2 HTML, Adobe EPub, Kindle. 1 print copy.

Jesus' final days were full of risk. Every move he made was filled with anticipation, danger, and the potential for great loss or great reward. In Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-Jill Levine explores the biblical texts surrounding the Passion story. She shows us how the text raises ethical and spiritual questions for the reader, and how we all face risk in our Christian experience. The book is part of a larger six-week study that is perfect for Lent.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Glory in the Margins: Sunday Poems.

Nikki Grimes. Iron Pen. 2021. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 8 print copies.

This collection of poetry from New York Times bestselling author and poet Nikki Grimes explores the many hours Jesus spent with people in the margins. In the book of Job, a suffering man pours out his anguish to his Maker. From the depths of his pain, he reveals a trust in God's goodness stronger than his despair, giving humanity some of the most beautiful and poetic verses of all time. Grimes' poetry reflects a spirit of unvarnished honesty and tenacious hope. Her collection is a gentle, beautiful and provocative collection that opens up Scripture in a fresh and welcome way.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Land of Silence.

Tessa Afshar. Tyndale House Publishers. 2016.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 1 HTML, Adobe EPub, Kindle. 1 MP3 Overdrive Listen. 14 print copies. 1 Large print copy.

Before she stole healing by touching the hem of his garment, Elianna was a young girl crushed by guilt. After her only brother is killed in her care, Elianna tries to earn forgiveness by working for her father's textile trade and caring for her family. When another tragedy places Elianna in sole charge of the business, her talent for design brings enormous success, but never absolution. Then illness strikes, isolating Elianna from everyone and stripping everything she has left. No physician can cure her—until she hears whispers of a man whose mere touch can heal.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Red Lip Theology: For Church Girls Who've Considered Tithing to the Beauty Supply Store When Sunday Morning Isn't Enough.

Candace Marie Benbow. Convergent Books. 2022.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 1 MP3, Overdrive Listen. 8 print copies.

Benbow's essays explore universal themes like heartache, loss, forgiveness, and sexuality, and she unflinchingly empowers women who struggle with feeling loved and nurtured by church culture. Honoring her single mother's love and triumphs—and mourning her unexpected passing—she finds herself forced to shed restrictions she'd been taught to place on her faith practice. And by embracing alternative spirituality and womanist theology, and confronting staid attitudes on body positivity and LGBTQ+ rights, Benbow challenges religious institutions, faith leaders, and communities to reimagine how faith can be a tool of liberation and transformation.

2024 Spiritual Growth

The Seeker and The Monk: Everyday Conversations with Thomas Merton.

Sophronia Scott. Broadleaf Books, 2021. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 4 print copies.

What if we truly belong to each other? What if we are all walking around shining like the sun? Mystic, monk, and activist Thomas Merton asked those questions in the 20th century. Writer Sophronia Scott asks them today. Here, Scott mines the extensive private journals of one of the most influential contemplative thinkers of the past for guidance on how to live in these fraught times. As a Black woman who is not Catholic, Scott holds spirited, and intimate conversations on race, ambition, faith, activism, nature, prayer, friendship, and love.

2024 Spiritual Growth

This Here Flesh: Spirituality, Liberation and the Stories That Make Us.

Cole Arthur Riley. Convergent Books. 2022.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 1 MP3, Overdrive Listen. 9 print copies.

In her stunning debut, the creator of Black Liturgies weaves stories from three generations of her family alongside reflections to discover necessary rituals that connect us with belonging, dignity, and liberation. Here, Arthur Riley reflects on stories of her grandmother and father and how they revealed an embodied, dignity-affirming spirituality, not only in what they believed but in the act of living itself. Writing of her own childhood and coming to self, she boldly explores some of the most urgent questions of life and faith. This Here Flesh speaks to anyone who suspects our stories might have something to say to us.

2024 Spiritual Growth

We Go On: Finding Purpose in All of Life's Sorrows and Joys.

John Onwuchekwa. Zondervan. 2022. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 2 print copies.

Rich with black-and-white photography, powerful stories, and life-changing reflections from the book of Ecclesiastes, *We Go On* calls you to find the true answer to the question: Why am I here? This hope-filled exploration of this biblical book of wisdom turns our attention to what our true purpose is and how to let that purpose shape our relationships, career, and life choices. Along with biblical insights, Onwuchekwa weaves together meaningful challenges that, even from difficult beginnings, we can continue to trust God's path.

2024 Spiritual Growth

The Wisdom of Your Body: Embodiment as the Road to Healing, Wholeness, and Connection

Hillary L McBride. Brazos Press. 2021.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 1 MP3, Overdrive Listen. 1 HTML, Adobe EPub, Kindle. 1 print copy.

Psychologist and award-winning researcher Hillary McBride explores the broken and unhealthy ideas we have inherited about our body. Embodiment is the way we are in the world, and our embodiment is heavily influenced by who we have been allowed to be. McBride shows that many of us feel disembodied due to colonization, racism, sexism, and patriarchy—destructive systems that rank certain bodies as less valuable, beautiful, or human than others. Embracing our embodiment can liberate us from these systems. *The Wisdom of Your Body* offers a compassionate, healthy, and holistic perspective on embodied living.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Womanist Midrash: A Reintroduction to the Women of Torah and the Throne.

Wilda C Gafney. Westminster John Knox Press. 2017.

From Hebrew biblical scholar, professor, and Episcopal priest Wilda Gafney comes this 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.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Worth It: Overcome Your Fears and Embrace the Life You Were Made For,

Britt Baron. Broadleaf Books. 2020.

Growing up in an evangelical megachurch, trying to fit neatly inside the boundaries of her faith, and wrestling with her true self caused Barron to feel boxed in by her fears and unable to realize her full potential. All that changed when she met a girl named Sami, fell in love, and chose to break free from the judgement of others in favor of a full and vibrant life. In *Worth It*, Barron tells her story to inspire readers, encouraging us all to consider other perspectives surrounding race, religion, and sexuality, including fears that keep us from evolving toward acceptance.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Why Do I Feel Like This? Understand Your Difficult Emotions and Find Grace to Move Through.

Peace Amadi. Intervarsity Press. 2021. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 6 print copies.

Sometimes life is a mess and we get overwhelmed by all sorts of conflicting, difficult emotions. In this book, psychology professor and personal development coach Dr. Peace Amadi helps readers navigate the complexity of their emotions, from discouragement and hurt to trauma and depression. She explains the dynamics underlying what they feel and gives practical resources for living through their emotions in healthy ways. With insights from both psychology and Scripture, this book offers a clear plan to get peace and freedom back and find joy again.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults.

Robin Wall Kimmerer. Zest Books. 2022.

Wayne County Library clevnet: 1 HTML, Adobe EPub. 1 MP3, Overdrive Listen. 28 print copies.

In this companion book for youth, botanist Robin Wall Kimmerer draws from her experiences as an Indigenous scientist to demonstrate how all living things—from strawberries and witch hazel to water lilies and lichen—provide us with gifts and lessons every day. Adapted for young adults by Monique Gray Smith, this new edition reinforces how wider ecological understanding stems from listening to the earth's oldest teachers: the plants around us. With informative sidebars, reflection questions, and art from illustrator Nicole Neidhardt, *Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults* brings Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge, and the lessons of plant life to a new generation.

2024 Spiritual Growth

All Will Be Well: Learning to Trust God's Love.

Lacy Finn Borgo. Illustrations by Rebecca Evans. IVP Kids 202. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 3 print
Mima is very sick, and just thinking about it makes Julian sad and angry. Julian is worried about Mima and wonders if God can hear her or if God cares. Mima explains to Julian that God loves us and God can be trusted— even when we are sad or angry. This gentle story of a grandmother's love for her granddaughter incorporates the timeless wisdom of Julian of Norwich: Because of God's great love for us, all will be well. *All Will Be Well* tackles the sensitive subjects of death and grief in a way understood by children when adults read thoughtfully with them.

2024 Spiritual Growth

The Good for Nothing Tree.

Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. Flyaway Books. 2022. Children.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 5 print copies.

A tiny fig tree needs time to grow. But how much time? Is the fig tree good for nothing? Inspired by the parable of the barren fig tree, *The Good for Nothing Tree* reminds us readers that the sweetest figs, like many other things, are worth waiting for. Not every tree—and not every child—grows at the same pace. Yet patience, care, and love can change everything, making what may appear “good for nothing” very good. A note about the parable’s New Testament origins and a recipe are included.

2024 Spiritual Growth

I Am You: A Book About Ubuntu.

Refiloe Moahioli. Amazon Crossing Kids. 2022. Children. Wayne Co. Library clevnet: 34 print copies

In southern Africa, there is a belief called ubuntu—the idea that all are connected. No matter where we’re from or who we are, a person is a person through their connections to other people. With simple, lyrical text and charming artwork, this lively picture book, first published in South Africa, is the perfect introduction to the concept of ubuntu for young kids. A celebration of friendship and kindness, the book shows children the many ways that we are all one. Previously published as *We Are One*, this edition of *I Am You* includes editorial revisions.

2024 Spiritual Growth

Wonder Awaits!

Caroline Hamilton-Arnold. Chalice Press. 2022. Children.

Have you ever noticed that children are always listening, seeing, touching, smelling, tasting—and thinking? *Wonder Awaits!* Encourages children of all ages to use those senses and everyday activities to see the miracles of creation. Kids are encouraged to get close, get dirty, look carefully, look up, make art, make friends, be brave, be curious, be present, and be amazed, all activities adults should do too. Accompanying the words are dozens of photos portraying children from two to six years of age representing the practices encouraged by the text.

2023 Spiritual Growth

The Big Deal of Taking Small Steps to Move Closer to God. Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie.

Faithwords. 2017.

This book by Bishop Vashti Murphy McKenzie, a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, uncovers how to develop a stronger relationship with God and more effective spiritual lifestyle by taking small steps that lead to big changes. McKenzie prescribes small changes that lead to radical closeness to God, and the “big deal” result is a greater ability to biblically address life challenges

2023 Spiritual Growth – Bonus Book - If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only one book.

Community in the Midst of Challenging Times: A Biblical Exploration of Luke 13. Kenya Cummings. (Mission U Youth Study) United Women in Faith (2022).

In this Mission u Youth Study, organizer and minister Kenya Cummings brings participants on a journey through stories that have anchored Christian communities for millennia, through times of stability and times of turmoil and tragedy. Using study, prayer, reflection, and sharing, participants examine the meanings of the kin-dom of God, also exploring the dynamics of power and empire in light of the gospel. Suitable for youth.

2023 Spiritual Growth

Daughter of Cana (Jerusalem Road, Book 1). Angela Hunt. Bethany House Publishers. 2020.

Thomas and Tasmin, twin siblings hired to oversee a wedding feast in Cana, worry when the host runs out of wine—until a guest tells Tasmin to have the servants fill the pitchers by the gate with water from the cistern. Reluctantly, she obeys and is amazed when rainwater turns into the finest wine ever tasted in Cana. When Thomas impulsively decides to follow the teacher from Nazareth, he and Tasmin argue. Tasmin can't accept losing her brother to some magician-prophet. She decides to follow the Nazarene's group, do whatever she must to mend the fractured relationship with her brother, and bring him home.

Wayne Co. Library Clevnet – 1 HTML, Adobe EPUB, Kindle. 16 print copies.

2023 Spiritual Growth

Freedom, We Sing. Amyra Leon and Illustrated by Molly Mendoza. Flying Eye Books. 2020.

As powerful as it is beautiful, *Freedom, We Sing* is a lyrical picture book designed to inspire and give hope to readers around the world. Molly Mendoza's immersive, lush illustrations invite kids to ponder singer-songwriter Amyra León's poem about what it means to be free.

Suitable for children.

Wayne Co. Library Clevnet – 6 print copies.

2023 Spiritual Growth

I'm Still Here: Black Dignity in a World Made For Whiteness. Austin Channing Brown. Convergent Books. 2018.

Austin Channing Brown's first encounter with a racialized America came at age seven, when she discovered her parents named her Austin to deceive future employers into thinking she was a White man. Growing up in majority-White schools and churches, Austin writes, "I had to learn what it means to love blackness," a journey that led to a lifetime spent navigating America's racial divide as a writer, speaker, and expert helping organizations practice genuine inclusion. She writes in incisive detail about her journey to self-worth and the pitfalls that kill our attempts at racial justice. Her stories bear witness to the complexity of America's social fabric—from Black neighborhoods to private schools in the middle-class suburbs, from prison walls to boardrooms at majority-White organizations.

Wayne Co. Library Clevnet – 1 HTML, Adobe EPUB, Kindle. 12 MP3 Overdrive Listen.

2023 Spiritual Growth

Isaiah & The Worry Pack: Learning to Trust God With All Our Fears. Ruth Goring and Illustrated by Pamela C. Rice IVP Kids. 2021.

It's bedtime again, but Isaiah can't sleep. It seems he's got too many things on his mind—things he's worried about. So Mom helps Isaiah imagine what it would be like if each of his worries were a block that he could stash in his backpack. As Isaiah imagines hiking through the woods carrying his worry pack, he discovers the joy and relief of trusting Jesus with everything, especially those worries. This tender story written by poet, visual artist, and children's author Ruth Goring is paired with Pamela C. Rice's warm illustrations. Suitable for children.

Wayne Co Library Clevnet – 1 print copy.

2023 Spiritual Growth - Bonus book – If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only one book.

Our Growing Tree- From Self-Love to the Beloved Community And All of God's Creation: A Biblical Exploration of Luke 13. Ilka Vega. (Mission u Children's Study) United Woman in Faith. 2022.

In this Mission u Children's Study by social justice advocate and educator Ilka Vega, participants take a journey of spiritual growth and community building that helps children recognize the diversity of their capacities, spiritual gifts, and talents as well as their responsibilities to care for one another and for all of God's creation. Through Bible study and reflection, transformative activities, and spiritual practices, participants focus on growing their spiritual gifts and talents and find support in their journeys of self-love, community building, and stewardship of God's creation. Suitable for children.

2023 Spiritual Growth

Until Unity. Rev. Francis Chan. David C. Cook. 2021.

If unity is so important to the heart of God, why is the church one of the most divided groups on earth? New York Times bestselling author Francis Chan calls for believers and churches everywhere to align hearts with God and start taking seriously God's numerous commands to unify. While many believe doctrine is at the root of the problem, Chan argues that the real problem is the shallowness or non-existence of our love for each other—rooted in a shallowness in our understanding of the gospel. This is what desperately needs to change.

Wayne Co. Library Clevnet – 1 MP3, Overdrive Listen. 1 HTML, Adobe EPUB, Kindle. 2 print copies.

2023 Spiritual Growth

What is God Like? Rachel Held Evans and Matthew Paul Turner, Illustrated by Ying Hui Tan. Convergent Books. 2021.

This picture book by the late Rachel Held Evans and her friend, Matthew Paul Turner, answers what is for many children their first question about God: What is God like? Through pictures from the Bible, children see God is like a shepherd, like a star, like a gardener, like the wind, and more. God is a comforter and support. And whenever a child is unsure, What Is God Like? encourages young hearts to "think about what makes you feel safe, what makes you feel loved, and what makes you feel brave. That's what God is like." Suitable for children.

Wayne Co. Library Clevnet – 1 HTML, Kindle. 14 print copies.

2023 Spiritual Growth - Bonus Book - If you read the study but do not lead/participate in a group, it counts as only one book.

Who Can We Be Together? A Biblical Exploration of Luke 13. Candace Simpson (Mission u Adult Study). United Women in Faith. 2022.

In this Mission u Adult Study, Candace Simpson brings participants deeper into Jesus' teachings in Luke 13 to explore what it means to be in community. As Simpson notes, "For followers of Christ 2,000 years later, it's important for us to sit with the range of emotions we have in response to these words. It's not easy to build and sustain communities, especially when there are forces that drain us, exhaust us, and even push us to act uncharacteristically. And yet, we are called to act on the most ethical principles of our faith so we can witness the kingdom of God on earth."

2022 Spiritual Growth

Glimpses of Heaven: God's Gifts of Grace in Daily Life. Roela Victoria Rivera. Creative. 2017.

Life is amazingly full of God's grace both as a mystery and a miracle! The Scripture timelessly reveals that God's abiding grace is infinite and sufficient for all His creation from the beginning to the end of time! God's grace is present often in the most unexpected times and places through people and events in simple and spectacular ways!

2022 Spiritual Growth

Love Is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times. Bishop Michael Curry with Sara Grace. Avery Publishing. 2020.

The way of love is essential for addressing the seemingly insurmountable challenges facing the world today: poverty, racism, selfishness, deep ideological divisions, competing claims to speak for God. This book will lead readers to discover the gifts they need in order to live the way of love: deep reservoirs of hope and resilience, simple wisdom, the discipline of nonviolence, and unshakable regard for human dignity

Wayne Co. Library clevnet – 25 Print copies. Electronic Format: HTML, Adobe EPUB, Kindle.

2022 Spiritual Growth

The Time is Now: A Call to Uncommon Courage. Joan Chittister. Convergent Books. 2019.

Beloved nun and social activist Joan Chittister offers a soul-stirring and inspiring guide that speaks to all who feel disillusioned and dissatisfied with the power-hungry institutions and systems of this world. Pairing scriptural insights with stirring narratives of the truth-tellers that came before us, Sister Joan offers a compelling vision for readers to combat complacency and to propel ourselves toward creating a world of justice, freedom, peace, and empowerment.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet – 12 Print copies. 1 Electronic Format: MP3, Overdrive Listen.

2022 Spiritual Growth

When God Made the World. Matthew Paul Turner; Illustrated by Gillian Gamble. Convergent Books. 2020.

For spiritual parents who are looking for a different kind of creation book, Matthew Paul Turner's *When God Made the World* focuses on the complex way that God created our vast and scientifically operating universe, including the biodiversity of life on our planet and the intricacies of a vast solar system.

Wayne Co. Library clevnet – 6 Print copies. 1 Electronic Format: HTML, Adobe EPUB, Kindle.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Adamant: Finding Truth in a Universe of Opinions. Lisa Bevere. Baker Publishing Group. 2018.

What is truth? This has become the defining question of our time. But while everyone has an opinion, truth, it seems, is getting harder to find. Theologically deep yet intimately accessible, this book will anchor your soul in a raging sea of opinions, giving you a clear sense of direction in a wandering world.

Wayne County Library Clevnet – 6 print copies. 1 ebook [HTML, Adobe EPub, Kindle.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Beyond Loneliness: The Gift of God's Friendship. Trevor Hudson. Upper Room Books.. 2016. Loneliness touches everyone, and it can be one of the most painful experiences of life. People long for relationship with others, but what may surprise them is that God longs to be friends with them. This book provides guidance for building a close friendship with God and easing the ache of loneliness.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Dinner By Candlelight: Comfort and Joy for Advent. Kevin Louise Schaner. Xulon Press. 2017. Christmas is coming! Feeling anxious? Expect hope, love, joy and peace this Advent. Rekindle your anticipation of Christ's birth with comforting conversation.
Wayne County Library Clevnet – 2 print copies

2021 Spiritual Growth

Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home. Traci Smith. Chalice Press. 2017. Add family faith moments to your daily routine with little or no prep and share meaningful spiritual experiences with your children. The author, a pastor and mother of three, offers creative ways to discover and develop new spiritual practices as a family, whether you're a new seeker or a lifelong follower.

2021 Spiritual Growth – Bonus Book (counts at two books in Spiritual Growth)

Finding Peace in an Anxious World. Edited by Erin James-Brown. United Methodist Women. 2020. This mission study uses the book of Proverbs and “The Serenity Prayer” as a guide to help Christians find their way through anxiety, worry and fear and move towards God's peace, which surpasses all understanding

2021 Spiritual Growth

The Journey Between Us: My Faith Walk: Overcoming Grief to Finding Joy in the Journey. Lisa McGrath. Westbow Press 2018. The JOurneY Between Us tells the inspiring story of how the author's faith guided her through several unthinkable events that shook her world to its core. That same faith allowed her to grow as she learned to trust God's plan and perfect timing. In their darkest hours, she and her family turned to God, and that has made all the difference on their path together.

2021 Spiritual Growth

One Day I Wrote Back: interacting with Scripture Through Creative Writing. Jane Herring. Upper Room Books. 2015. Do you struggle to relate the Bible to your daily life? This guide will help you talk back to those scripture passages you don't understand. Ask questions, explore your life, plead, praise and ponder—you'll find simple, practical tools for beginning and experienced writers. A perfect resource for individuals, small groups and retreats.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Right Here Right Now: The Practice of Christian Mindfulness. Amy G. Oden. Abingdon Press. 2017. Many Christians practice mindfulness outside of church and believe it does not belong to our faith tradition. However, Christians have always practiced mindfulness. This book reveals the Christian roots of mindfulness and the actual practices that, when reclaimed, deepen the life of faith and the power of our mission of love in the world.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Sleep, Pray, Heal: A Path to Wholeness and Well-being (Healing Memoir Book 1)

Donna Fado Ivery. Adventures in Healing. 2019.

A 200-pound glass partition fell on Donna Fado Ivery's head, resulting in brain injury, disability and chronic pain. How would she care for her infant, her preschooler, her husband and herself? How would she continue to serve as pastor? With humor and humility, this inspirational memoir speaks to Donna's struggle and the abiding support of family and the Holy Spirit.

2021 Spiritual Growth

They Call Me Güero: A Border Kid's Poems. David Bowles. Cinco Puntos Press. 2018.

Güero is Mexican American, at home on both sides of the river. He's starting seventh grade with a woke English teacher who knows how to make poetry cool. In Spanish, "Güero" is a nickname for guys with pale skin. But make no mistake: our red-headed, freckled hero is puro Mexicano. Güero is also a nerd—reader, gamer, musician. Trusting in his family's traditions, his accordion and his bookworm squad, he faces seventh grade with book smarts and a big heart.

Boys – Juvenile poetry. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 18 print copies.

2021 Spiritual Growth

Note: Listen to three Faith Talks podcasts and the trio will count as two books in the Spiritual Growth category.

Faith Talks are monthly conversations with United Methodist Women.

Each conversation explores themes and resources that empower us to put faith, hope and love into action. Check out interviews with United Methodist Women mission studies' authors and more at: unitedmethodistwomen.org/faithtalks

2020 Spiritual Growth

Writings of John Wesley. Keith Beasley-Topliff. Upper Room Books. 1997. p80.

John Wesley was an eighteenth-century preacher, writer, and one of the founders of the Methodist movement. This book includes selections from Wesley's journals, sermons, and books, giving a clear picture not only of Wesley but also of the spiritual vitality that ignited a movement and continues to transform lives today. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 2 print.

2020 Spiritual Growth

Raising World Changers in a Changing World. Kristen Welch. BakerBooks. 2018. p209

In this inspiring book, Welch shows parents how to discover for themselves and instill in their kids the profound joy that comes from sharing what we have been given--our time, our talents, and even what's in our wallets--with those who have less. Through powerful personal stories as well as stories from Scripture, Welch offers a tantalizing alternative to status quo parenting that has the power to impact not only our own families but the entire world. At the end of each chapter, one of the author's kids offers their perspective on what it's like to be raised as a world changer. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 ebook [Adobe EPub, HTML, Kindle].

2020 Spiritual Growth

We Pray With Her: Encouragement for All Women Who Lead

Emily Peck-McClain, Danyelle Trexler, Jen Tyler, J. Paige Boyer, Shannon Sullivan
Abingdon Press. 2018. p256.

As female leaders, our journeys are littered with obstacles and pitfalls unique to our gender. But we do not need to walk through life alone; we need to support and encourage our fellow women as we forge ahead in our work to leave a positive mark on the world. *We Pray with Her*, is a collection of 100 inspiring devotionals written by the women who formed the grassroots movement of the same name. Whether you're a woman leader or an aspiring leader looking for personal inspiration, in a supportive role to a leader, or a woman who wants to support her sisters in Christ, you'll find a home within these pages.

Wayne County Library Clevnet- 2 print copies

2020 Spiritual Growth

If I should Die Before I Live: Senior Meditation. Richard Renwick Smyth. Logos Books. 2017. p240, These Meditations focus on spiritual vitality—especially for seniors. They reach beyond a biological birth-death time-frame. They touch on continuity beyond earth-time. God's initiatives enrich the spiritual self—grace energizes faith. This generates and motivates people to offer acts of love. Love fosters grander character and perspective, wholesome relationships, healing for the heart-hungry/heart-broken. The outcome: a healthier self-experiencing joy and peace—wholeness for life beyond death. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 2 print copies

2020 Spiritual Growth

Resist and Persist. Erin Wathen. Westminster John Knox Press. 2018. p176

Erin Wathen navigates the complex layers of what it means to be a woman in our time and place--from the language we use to the clothes that we wear to the unseen and unspoken assumptions that challenge our full personhood at every turn. *Resist and Persist* reframes the challenges to women's equality in light of our current culture and political climate, providing a new language of resistance that can free women and men from the pernicious power of patriarchy.

Wayne County Library Clevnet – 7 print copies

2020 Spiritual Growth

Working Class Rage: A Field Guide to White Anger and Pain . Tex Sample. Abingdon Press. 2018. p144.

Cooperation strong enough to resist white supremacy and value everybody demands a richer understanding of white working-class pain and anger. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 2 print.

2020 Spiritual Growth

God Unbound: Wisdom From Galatians for the Anxious Church. Elaine Heath. Upper Room Books. 2016. p112.

Elaine Heath extends an invitation to broaden our view of God by moving beyond the walls of buildings and programs to become a more diverse church than we have ever imagined. While deeply honoring tradition, she calls the church to boldly follow the Holy Spirit's leadership beyond buildings and programs and to join what Jesus is doing in the world.

2020 Spiritual Growth

The Magnificent Story: Uncovering A Gospel of Beauty, Goodness and Truth. James Bryan Smith. IVP Books. 2017. p176

We need stories, or narratives, to make sense of our world. And those stories shape our lives. What is the story you have been told about God? About the gospel? About the Christian life? About Jesus? About the cross? About yourself? About heaven? Your answers to these questions will form a story that will determine how your life will go. The answers reveal your ability to trust, to love, to hope--and even your capacity for joy. Any story worth giving the power to shape our lives must pass a simple test: is it beautiful, good, and true? If it is, then it is a Magnificent Story--and that is where transformation takes place. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 2 print copies

2020 Spiritual Growth

40 Days with Wesley: A Daily Devotional Journey. Rueben P. Job. Abingdon Press. 2017. p208.

This engaging daily devotional weaves quotes and excerpts from John Wesley, the father of Methodism, with inspirational readings on faith and prayer from Rueben P. Job, well-known leader in spiritual formation. Each selection offers a simple daily pattern of reflection with a prayer, Scripture, and short readings that make this daily devotional an easy read. You'll also find that this book makes a wonderful gift or award for anyone who needs reassurance and inspiration.

2020 Spiritual Growth

Easter Stories: Classic Tales for the Holy Season. Multi-authors including: C. S. Lewis, Leo Tolstoy, Oscar Wilde, etc.. Plough. 2015. p386

Everyone who believes Easter is about more than Easter egg hunts will be grateful for this new anthology of short stories that illumine the true meaning of the season. Selected for their spiritual value and literary quality, these classic tales capture the spirit of Holy Week and Easter in a way that will captivate readers of all ages. Parents and grandparents will find that children love to hear these stories read aloud, year after year. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy

2020 Spiritual Growth

The Watcher. Nikki Grimes and Bryan Collier, illustrator. Eerdmans Books for Young Readers. 2017. Jordan lives in fear of Tanya, the class bully. But Tanya has worries of her own. It seems impossible that Jordan and Tanya could be anything other than enemies, but the Lord guides them along a path that might just help them to understand one another. Nikki Grimes masterfully transforms the words of a Psalm 121 into a poem of compassion, friendship and faith.

Juvenile poetry. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 37 print copies

2020 Spiritual Growth – Bonus [two books in Spiritual Growth]

Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipline. Janet Wolf.

This well-known gospel is presented through voices and experiences that are often relegated to the margins. Where we stand, what we see, whom we listen to or dismiss shape the way we understand the world and the Bible. This study incorporates the stories of those on the margins to uncover how the gospel is alive and well today—how God is, and always has been, calling us to live out the Word in a radical way.

2019 Spiritual Growth

Be Still – Departure from Collective Madness. Gordon C. Stewart and Eric Ringham. Wipf & Stock. 2017. +

Echoes the call of the Navajo sage and the psalmist who invited their hearers to stop. These essays zoom in on singular moments of time where the world is making headlines, drawing attention to the sin of exceptionalism in its national, racial, religious, cultural, and species manifestations. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy

2019 Spiritual Growth –

Lessons to Nourish: Favorites (Volume 6) Rev. Marjorie E. Palmer. Create Space. 2016. +

This is the 6th book in the series: Lessons to Nourish the Soul. It consists of Favorite sermons given by the author.

2019 Spiritual Growth

Spoken Into Being – Divine Encounters through Story. Michael W. Williams. Upper Room Books. 2017. +

In this book on storytelling as spiritual exploration, Williams shares stories from his life and offers practical prompts that guide us to tell our own stories. He reminds us that we have been spoken into being as part of a much larger story. Using poetry, personal narrative, and retellings of biblical stories, Williams leads us to a deeper knowledge of the power of narrative.

Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy

2019 Spiritual Growth

The Soulmaking Room. Dee Dee Risher. Abingdon Press. 2017. +

The woman from Shunem extends radical hospitality to the prophet, expecting no reward. But when disaster strikes, she does not hesitate to hold Elisha accountable or talk back. Her book encourages each of us to find a holy room in which we are in community with others and where we can shape our souls into their unique dimensions. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print

2019 Spiritual Growth

The Wesley Challenge – 21 Days to a More Authentic Faith – Leader Guide. Chris Folmsbee. Abingdon Press. 2017. +

The Wesley Challenge introduces our denomination's father in a practical and accessible way through twenty-one questions. This series is a great way for your entire church to renew its passion and discover a deeper commitment to God—one that is more authentic, vulnerable, and soul-shaping.

Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy

2019 Spiritual Growth

The Wesley Challenge – Participant Book. Chris Folmsbee. Abingdon Press. 2017. +

In The Wesley Challenge Participant Book small groups or whole churches will spend three weeks working through 21 questions that will engage their physical, spiritual and emotional lives and their relationship with God and others.

2019 Spiritual Growth

What We Need is Here – Practicing the Heart of Christian Spirituality. L. Roger Ownes. Upper Room Books, 2017. +

Did you know that God has given you everything you need to live and flourish in a life with God? You can stop your restless searching and rediscover the gifts God has already given you. Writing in a style that is honest, accessible, and at times humorous, Owens weaves his own stories of struggle with insights from the history of Christian spirituality to help you receive and open yourself to these 7 "givens." Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy

2019 Spiritual Growth – Children [credit for all reading plans]

All Around Us. Xelena Gonzalez. Cinco Puntos Press. 2017. + Picture book.

A girl and her grandfather contemplate circles, both physical and metaphorical, in this thought-provoking tale of family, community, and interconnection, a debut for both author and artist. As they walk through a suburban neighborhood of shingled houses and chain-link fences, the grandfather suggests that a rainbow overhead is actually a full circle: "The rest of it is down below, in the earth, where water and light feed new life." Soon, the girl is noticing circles everywhere. Wayne County Library Clevnet – 11 print copies. 3 DVD.

2019 Spiritual Growth - Youth [credit for all reading plans]

What's Your Story – Seeing Your Life Through God's Eyes. Sarah Heath. Abingdon Press. 2017.

This study explores Joseph's story. He accomplished great things in Egypt, but he didn't really understand his story's significance until he recognized what God was doing through him. Sarah Heath helps you explore your own life story in the same way. By doing so, you'll discover how to co-create with God the kind of life that will be a page-turner.

Wayne County Library Clevnet – 1 print copy