

The OBC Library 2015 Summer Reading Booklist

List compiled by Carolyn Copenhaver, member, OBC Library Committee

Fiction

A Dangerous Place: A Maisie Dobbs Novel by Jacqueline Winspear
All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr.
Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Baking Cakes in Kigali: A Novel by Gaile Parkin
Between the Lines by Jodi Picoult and Samantha Van Leer (YA)
Epitaph by Mary Doria Russell
Life After Life by Kate Atkinson
The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan Phillipp-Sendker
The Buried Giant by Kazuo Ishiguro
The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt
The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson
The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd
The Light Between Oceans: A Novel by M.L. Steadman
The Paying Guests by Sarah Waters
The Sparrow by Mary Doria Russell
The Storyteller by Jodi Picoult
Station Eleven: A Novel by Emily St. John Mandel
Snuff (Diskworld) by Terry Pratchett
Sweet Water by Christina Baker Kline
Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher (YA)

Religion/Spirituality/Inspirational

Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most by Marcus J. Borg
God's Problem: How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question—Why We Suffer by Bart Ehrman
If Grace is True by Philip Gulley and James Mulholland
Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead by Sarah Miles
Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories that Heal by Rachel Naomi Remen.
Man's Search for Meaning by Victor E. Frankle
Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint by Nadia Bolz-Weber
Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes: Finding Religion in Everyday Life by Nancy Ammerman
Sight in the Sandstorm: Jesus in His World and Mine by Ann J. Temkin

Non-Fiction

A Fighting Chance by Elizabeth Warren
Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania by Erik Larsen
Eternity as a Sunrise: The Life of Hugo H. Culpepper by R. Alan Culpepper
ISIS: The State of Terror by Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger
Loving Someone Who Has Dementia: How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief by Pauline Boss, Ph.D.
Mindwise: How We Understand What Others Think, Believe, Feel and Want by Nicholas Epley
The 36 Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementias, and Memory Loss
 by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins.
The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics by Daniel James Brown
The Class of 1965: A Student, a Divided Town, and the Long Road to Forgiveness by Jim Auchmutey
The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander
Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison by Piper Kerman

About These Books: By Contributor's First Name

Becky Drysdale

All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr. A great read and winner of the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.

Buddy Gill

Eternity as a Sunrise: The Life Of Hugo H. Culpepper by R. Alan Culpepper, Mercer University Press, 2002. The life and thought of a remarkable Baptist foreign missionary, seminary professor, and Home Mission Board executive who was well known by a good many OBC folks. Excellently written by his son, who is vice president at MacAfee Theological Seminary, the biography recounts Culpepper's life of dedicated service, as well as his wrestling with issues of his pacifism (after 3 1/2 years in a Japanese prison camp), his vocational struggles, defining missions, and his lifelong effort to perfect his understanding of the nature of God. This is a man who read a chapter of his Greek New Testament every day, even in prison. Well written, well researched, made rich by citing personal letters and his writing and speaking.

The 36 Hour Day: A Family Guide to Caring for People Who Have Alzheimer Disease, Related Dementias, and Memory Loss by Nancy Mace and Peter Rabins, Johns Hopkins U. Press, 2011. The book to begin with--a basic resource that will be revisited again and again. Valuable for caregivers, family, friends, clergy.

Loving Someone Who Has Dementia; How to Find Hope While Coping with Stress and Grief by Pauline Boss, Ph.D., Jossey-Bass, 2011. One of the few resources with a focus only on the caregiver. A fresh approach that lives up to its title. Very helpful.

[Note: The last two books are included in an excellent two-page annotated bibliography that Buddy prepared for his local library: "**Dementia—Bibliography Resources**" featuring two sections, "Basic Resources" and "For Caregivers." Please contact Buddy at [e-rgill2@Juno.com](mailto:rgill2@Juno.com) for a copy.

Carolyn Copenhaver

Here are three books I've enjoyed recently.

Mindwise: How We Understand What Others Think, Believe, Feel and Want by Nicholas Epley. What this remarkable and readable book is *really* about despite its hyped title is best expressed by Steven Pinker: "[A] fascinating tour of the latest science on how we figure out (*and all too often fail to figure out* [italics mine]) what everyone else is thinking." Lots of worthy surprises are in store for the reader.

Then, in sorrowful honor of the late Terry Pratchett (Death: March 12, 2015) I downloaded his latest book to my Kindle: **Snuff** (Diskworld). I am now rereading one of his great masterpieces of comic fantasy/satire, chuckling over and over again: **The Wee Three Men: The Beginning**. How wondrous and humbling to be in the presence of genius.

Donna Goddard

The best were **All the Light We Cannot See** by Anthony Doerr and **Americanah** by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. **A Dangerous Place: A Maisie Dobbs Novel** by Jacqueline Winspear. I also liked **Baking Cakes in Kigali** by Gaile Parkin. After the genocide in Rwanda a woman bakes cakes for people who have something to celebrate. Her clients begin to heal as they share their stories over tea in her home. Everyone needs a neighbor like this cake baker.

Donna Woolf

I have found myself reading a lot of novels since I got my Kindle. I never thought I would enjoy reading this way, but it makes my books so portable. Here are some favorites:

The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd. An exquisitely written novel of storytelling set in early nineteenth century Charleston which following the lives of an eleven year old girl and her ten year old slave. The stories are harsh, full of loss, sorrow and courage.

Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher. A young adult book that deals with teen suicide. The message about how we treat one another, although sometimes heavy, makes for compelling reading. I saw many reviews of this by teens that said it "changed" their lives.

Orange is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison by Piper Kerman. Suggested to me by Lou Clymore. An enlightening look at the prison system and the people that are incarcerated there. It really makes you see the real people that are locked up and calls into question the value of such a system.

Between the Lines by Jodi Picoult and Samantha Van Leer. Another Young Adult novel written by Picoult and her daughter. It is a fantasy about a fifteen year old girl who falls in love with the fictional character in her favorite book...or is he really fictional? It is clever and engaging.

The Storyteller by Jodi Picoult. In this searingly honest novel, Jodi Picoult gracefully explores the lengths we will go in order to protect our families and to keep the past from dictating the future.

The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt. Won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction- Very dark but beautifully written. The story of a 13 year old who survives a bomb that blows up while he and his mother are in an art museum. The story of his fate is full of dark twists and turns. Be aware that it is almost 800 pages long. Since I read it on my Kindle, I could not figure why it kept telling me I had read only a fraction of the book only to realize that it is REALLY long.

The Art of Hearing Heartbeats by Jan Phillipp-Sendker. A poignant and inspirational love story set in Burma. A successful New York lawyer suddenly disappears without a trace, neither his wife nor his daughter Julia has any idea where he might be. They find a love letter he wrote many years before that sends his daughter on a quest to find out why her father left.

The Light Between Oceans: A Novel by M.L. Steadman. A well-told story about a couple who live on an Australian island keeping the lighthouse. One review described it as "An extraordinary and heart-rending book about good people, tragic decisions, and the beauty found in each of them."

The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared by Jonas Jonasson. Of all my recent books, this one was the most fascinating. It starts as a man in a nursing home decides he really does not want to attend his 100th birthday party, so escapes through the nursing home window (on foot with his walker in his slippers). The story tells the quite ridiculous tale of what happened next alternating with the story of his life. He started out in munitions including working with Stalin, Churchill, Truman, Mao, Franco, and de Gaulle. It is so wonderfully far-fetched that I laughed out loud at the outlandish tale.

Elaine Hoffman

The Class of 1965: A Student, a Divided Town, and the Long Road to Forgiveness by Jim Auchmutey. Fascinating story of a man who grew up at Kiononia Farms outside of Plains GA in the 1950's and 60's. How he was despised for accepting befriending and protecting African Americans in high school and what happened 40 years later at his high school reunion.

Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes: Finding Religion in Everyday Life by Nancy Ammerman. This is a book my Dad would love. I recommend getting a copy for the library and putting it on the Author's Rack. Dr. Ammerman is Professor of Sociology of Religion at Boston University's School of Theology and Chair of the Department of Sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences. [Lanny's Note: Nancy was active along with her husband Jackie and daughter Abby at Oakhurst for a number of years. In fact, she was the chair of the Search Committee that recommended me to Oakhurst.]

Jennifer Hornbuckle

I am reading a wonderful book right now, **Sweet Water** by Christina Baker Kline. It is the story of a family, that begins with a woman whose mother died when she was very young inheriting a home and land from her mother's father. After not seeing them for about thirty years, she is getting to know them, learning the truth about her mother's life and death, and getting to know her mother as well. Donna Goddard loaned this one to me, highly recommending it. I am looking forward to reading Sue Monk Kidd's **The Invention of Wings** this summer as well.

Jim Holmes

A Fighting Chance by Elizabeth Warren (2014). This book takes you through Warren's personal history as a housewife, law teacher and eventually Senator from Massachusetts. Recently, many liberals wanted her to run for President based on her straightforward criticism of our banking system and the fact that many middle class people are driven to bankruptcy--not by poor management, but by job loss, medical bills and other circumstances that are driven by banking policies that deliberately target poorer individuals with loans that compound and drive them deeper and deeper into debt. Clearly written with a passion for the average working person, this book helped me understand some of the key issues of our broken banking system.

ISIS: The State of Terror by Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger (2015) This book helps to explain the evolution and development of the modern terrorist organization that grew out of the Iraq occupation, Syrian civil war, and US attempts to destroy Al Qaeda into a much more brutal and determined organization to form a separate Islamic State in current Iraq and Syria. The authors are two of the leading experts on terrorism and the recent developments in Southwest Asia.

The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander (2011). Alexander's book is an important one for all of us who are interested in racial justice in an era of controversial police shootings and mass incarceration of people of color. She basically asserts that racial prejudice did not go away in the civil rights movement--it merely was reinvented and redesigned through legal structures like the "War on Drugs", mandatory minimum sentences, and a privatized penal and parole system. This book is also an excellent background resource for our current discussions with other Decatur Communities on "Black Lives Matter". I highly recommend this book for those wishing to engage in the discussion of racial justice in the 21st century. Among the many comments praising the book, here is one from Sojourners: "A call to action for everyone concerned with racial justice and an important tool for anyone concerned with understanding and dismantling this oppressive system."

Karla Nelson

Man's Search for Meaning by Victor E. Frankle.

Leon Clymore

I recommend *all* books by **Marcus Borg**, **John Dominic Crossan** and **Bart Ehrman**. All are/were professors of the New Testament in universities. Ehrman's book, **God's Problem**, deals with believing in an all-powerful and loving God and the problem of suffering in the world. Ehrman went from fundamentalist to agnostic/atheist mainly over the problem of suffering.

Mark Reeve

Sight in the Sandstorm: Jesus in His World and Mine, by Ann J. Temkin. Ann is half Jewish, half Gentile, a former nun, and trained as a psychotherapist. She retells Bible stories and weaves in her own story, resulting in interesting and insightful reading. (Ann is a member of nearby Episcopal Church of the Epiphany.)

Martha England

If Grace is True by Philip Gulley and James Mulholland. Two pastors present their controversial belief in eternal salvation for all through God's perfect grace. Long disturbed by the Church's struggle between offering both love and rejection, they discover what God wants from us and for us: grace for everyone. I found this book to be thought provoking.

Paul Ficklin-Alred

Here are a few books I enjoyed recently:

Station Eleven by Emily St. John Mandel: <http://www.emilymandel.com/stationeleven.html>

The Boys in the Boat by Daniel James Brown: <http://www.danieljamesbrown.com/books/the-boys-in-the-boat/#.VWdsws9VjT8>

Dead Wake by Erik Larsen: <http://eriklarsonbooks.com/the-books/dead-wake/>

The Paying Guests by Sarah Waters: <http://www.npr.org/2014/09/23/347418535/a-historic-backdrop-frames-forbidden-love-in-the-paying-guests>

Paula Buford

I highly recommend **Patrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner & Saint** by Nadia Bolz-Weber. I've read this book twice.

I also enjoyed **Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead** by Sarah Miles. The author is a lesbian lay woman who was a journalist and converted to Christianity after having the Eucharist.

I just reread **Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories the Heal** by physician Rachel Naomi Remen. This inspiring book, first published in 1996, "has much to teach us about healing, loving, and living," says Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*. Her book has sold over 700,000 copies.

Sherrie Crow

Life After Life by Kate Atkinson. Extremely creative and interesting novel, one of the New York Times Top Ten Books for 2014. Explores the nature of life and death, and the question of whether people can get it right the second-- or third-- time around. Set in England and spanning both world wars-- a girl is born and lives her life over and over again. Hard to explain--hard to put down. I devoured it.

Steve Vellines

The Buried Giant by Kazuo Ishiguro. This is a great book. Somewhat like Tolken, but not as dense or lengthy. Ishiguro's compact prose is perfect. It is beautifully written and certainly very thought-provoking. From Goodreads: "The novel begins as a couple set off across a troubled land of mist and rain in the hope of finding a son they have not seen in years. Sometimes savage, often intensely moving, Kazuo Ishiguro's first novel in nearly a decade is about lost memories, love, revenge, and war."

The Book of Strange New Things by Michel Faber. At first, I thought this was going to be like **The Sparrow** by Mary Doria Russell (one of my favorite books). However, this book has a different focus and an important one for us all. Is your career / vocation / calling more important than your family and friends? In our noble efforts, do we neglect the ones that we most love around us? From Goodreads: "It begins with Peter, a devoted man of faith, as he is called to the mission of a lifetime, one that takes him galaxies away from his wife, Bea....His work introduces him to a seemingly friendly native population struggling with a dangerous illness and hungry for Peter's teachings—his Bible is their "book of strange new things." But Peter is rattled when Bea's letters from home become increasingly desperate: typhoons and earthquakes are devastating whole countries and governments are crumbling. Bea's faith, once the guiding light of their lives, begins to falter."

Epitaph by Mary Doria Russell. Another great book. Do not let the fact that this seems to be a western fool you. It is more about how events before and after an event (like the shootout at OK Corral) can shape the nation's narrative. Most historic events happened to real people who were not all good or bad. As they say, the winners write history. From Goodreads: "[This]richly detailed and meticulously researched historical novel continues the story [the author] began in **Doc**, following Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday to Tombstone, Arizona, and to the gunfight at the O.K. Corral A deeply divided nation....Smuggling and gang warfare along the Mexican border. Armed citizens willing to stand their ground and take law into their own hands...."

Dead Wake by Erik Larsen. Larson has a knack to writing non-fiction books that have the suspense of mystery novels. I knew what would ultimately going to happen but I was so swept away by the suspense of the book that I was literally startled when my wife, Karol came into the room to ask me a question. The most fascinating part to me was that some of the chapters are told from the perspective of the German U-boat captain. From Goodreads: "On May 1, 1915...a luxury ocean liner...sailed out of New York, bound for Liverpool, carrying a record number of children and infants....For months, German U-boats had brought terror to the North Atlantic....Erik Larson tells it thrillingly, switching between hunter and hunted while painting a larger portrait of America at the height of the Progressive Era...."

Walker Knight

Best fiction: **All the Light We Cannot See** by Anthony Doer—I read it before it won the Pulitzer.

Best religious: **Convictions: How I Learned What Matters Most** by Marcus J. Borg