

All Souls Community Church 2010 Lenten Book Series

February 21

Sermon: “**The Jefferson Bible and Why He Wrote It**” by Dr. Brent Smith

Book: “**Jefferson Bible**” by Thomas Jefferson - Paperback: 100 pages

The Gospels with all the miracles removed, primarily the sayings of Jesus.

Discussion Group: Immediately following service

February 28

No Lenten Series activities planned

March 7

Sermon: “**Two Old Women and the Tribe**” by Dr. Brent Smith

Book: “**Two Old Women**” by **Velma Wallis** - Paperback: 160 pages

Abandoned by their tribe during a brutal winter famine, two old women are left to perish on their own. Although they've grown used to complaining and letting others do for them, the two resolve not to wait passively for death but to fight against it. With trapping skills they haven't used for years and strengthened by their bond of friendship, the two women survive the winter to ultimately come face to face with the members of their tribe, none of whom has fared as well as they. Utterly convincing in its details and resolution, this will offer listeners vivid insight into a Native American culture. At the same time, it rises above the particulars of time and place to become a metaphor with a message or inspiration not only for women or the elderly, but for all members of the human race.

Discussion Group: Immediately following service

March 14

Sermon: “**The Life of Pi and other Creatures**” by Dr. Brent Smith

Book: “**Life of Pi**” by Yann Martel - Paperback: **326** pages (Note length of book)

A fabulous romp through an imagination by turns ecstatic, cunning, despairing and resilient, this novel is an impressive achievement "a story that will make you believe in God," as one character says. The peripatetic Pi Patel spends a beguiling boyhood in Pondicherry, India, as the son of a zookeeper. Growing up beside the wild beasts, Pi gathers an encyclopedic knowledge of the animal world. His curious mind also makes the leap from his native Hinduism to Christianity and Islam, all three of which he practices with joyous abandon. In his 16th year, Pi sets sail with his family and some of their menagerie to start a new life in Canada. Halfway to Midway Island, the ship sinks into the Pacific, leaving Pi stranded on a life raft with a hyena, an orangutan, an injured zebra and a 450-pound Bengal tiger named Richard Parker. After the beast dispatches the others, Pi is left to survive for 227 days with his large feline companion on the 26-foot-long raft, using all his knowledge, wits and faith to keep himself alive. The scenes flow together effortlessly, and the sharp observations of the young narrator keep the tale brisk and engaging. Martel's potentially unbelievable plot line soon demolishes the reader's defenses, cleverly set up by events of young Pi's life that almost naturally lead to his biggest ordeal.

Discussion Group: Immediately following service

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March 21

Music Sunday – No Lenten Series sermon

Discussion Group: Immediately following service - "The Shack" - See April 4th for book details

As no discussion group will be scheduled for Easter Sunday, the group will discuss the book scheduled for Easter, this Sunday instead.

March 28

Sermon: "**The Book Thief and the Thief**" by Dr. Brent Smith

Book: "**The Book Thief**" by Marcus Zuzak - Paperback: **576** pages (Note length of book)

Death himself narrates the World War II-era story of Liesel Meminger from the time she is taken, at age nine, to live in Molching, Germany, with a foster family in a working-class neighborhood of tough kids, acid-tongued mothers, and loving fathers who earn their living by the work of their hands. The child arrives having just stolen her first book—although she has not yet learned how to read—and her foster father uses it, *The Gravediggers Handbook*, to lull her to sleep when she's roused by regular nightmares about her younger brother's death. Across the ensuing years of the late 1930s and into the 1940s, Liesel collects more stolen books as well as a peculiar set of friends: the boy Rudy, the Jewish refugee Max, the mayor's reclusive wife (who has a whole library from which she allows Liesel to steal), and especially her foster parents. Zusak not only creates a mesmerizing and original story but also writes with poetic syntax, causing readers to deliberate over phrases and lines, even as the action impels them forward. Death is not a sentimental storyteller, but he does attend to an array of satisfying details, giving Liesel's story all the nuances of chance, folly, and fulfilled expectation that it deserves.

Discussion Group: Immediately following service

April 4 – Easter Sunday

Sermon: "**The Shack and the Tomb**" by Dr. Brent Smith

Book: "**The Shack**" by William P. Young – Paperback: 256 pages

Mackenzie Allen Philips' youngest daughter, Missy, has been abducted during a family vacation and evidence that she may have been brutally murdered is found in an abandoned shack deep in the Oregon wilderness. Four years later in the midst of his Great Sadness, Mack receives a suspicious note, apparently from God, inviting him back to that shack for a weekend. Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change Mack's world forever. In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant "The Shack" wrestles with the timeless question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?" The answers Mack gets will astound you and perhaps transform you as much as it did him.

Discussion Group: No discussion group scheduled. This book will be discussed March 21.