

Do you love books and reading? If so, you are warmly invited to come and join us at Book Club this year. All church members and friends are welcome! We meet the fourth Monday of each month except for December and May this year where we meet on the third Monday, with the first meeting to be held September 22 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:15. We will be meeting as a mixture of both Zoom and in person attendance. You can choose whichever form you prefer and can of course change at any time from one to the other. We meet in Room 200. You do not have to commit to the whole year of reading; feel free to join us for any of the discussions. But once you come, you may find that all this year's selections sound good. Hope to see you there in September. All the reviews below are adapted from **Amazon Reviews**.

BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS for 2025-2026

September 22, 2025

The Redbreast : Jo Nesbo. 2012. 626p.

No disrespect meant to Henning Mankell and Stieg Larsson, but Jo Nesbø, the *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Snowman*, is the most exciting Scandinavian thriller writer in the crime fiction business. *The Redbreast* is a fabulous introduction to Nesbø's tough-as-nails series protagonist, Oslo police detective Harry Hole. A brilliant and epic novel, breathtaking in its scope and design—winner of The Glass Key for best Nordic crime novel and selected as the best Norwegian crime novel ever written by members of Norway's book clubs—*The Redbreast* is a chilling tale of murder and betrayal that ranges from the battlefields of World War Two to the streets of modern-day Oslo. Follow Hole as he races to stop a killer and disarm a ticking time-bomb from his nation's shadowy past.

October 27, 2025

The Tennis Partner : Abraham Verghese. 2023. 365p.

When Abraham Verghese, a physician whose marriage is unraveling, relocates to El Paso, Texas, he hopes to make a fresh start as a staff member at the county hospital. There he meets David Smith, a medical student recovering from drug addiction, and the two men begin a tennis ritual that allows them to shed their inhibitions and find security in the sport they love and with each other. This friendship between doctor and intern grows increasingly rich and complex, more intimate than two men usually allow. Just when it seems nothing can go wrong, the dark beast from David's past emerges once again—and almost everything Verghese has come to trust and believe in is threatened as David spirals out of control.

November 24, 2025

All the Broken Places : John Boyne. 2023. 400p.

Ninety-one-year-old Gretel Fernsby has lived in the same well-to-do mansion block in London for decades. She lives a quiet, comfortable life, despite her deeply disturbing, dark past. She doesn't talk about her escape from Nazi Germany at age twelve. She doesn't talk about the grim postwar years in France with her mother. Most of all, she doesn't talk about her father, who was the commandant of one of the Reich's most notorious extermination camps.

Then, a new family moves into the apartment below her. In spite of herself, Gretel can't

help but begin a friendship with the little boy, Henry, though his presence brings back memories she would rather forget. One night, she witnesses a disturbing, violent argument between Henry's beautiful mother and his arrogant father, one that threatens Gretel's hard-won, self-contained existence.

December 13, 2025

Hard Laughter : Anne Lamott. 1979. 304p.

Writer (and sometime housecleaner) Jennifer is twenty-three when her beloved father, Wallace, is diagnosed with a brain tumor. This catastrophic discovery sets off Anne Lamott's unexpectedly sweet and funny first novel, which is made dramatic not so much by Wallace's illness as by the emotional wake it sweeps under Jen and her brothers, self-contained Ben and feckless, lovable Randy. With characteristic affection and accuracy, Lamott sketches this offbeat family and their nearest and dearest as they draw ever closer in the intimacy Jen prizes "among the other estimable things: good music, good hard laughter, good sex, good industry, and good books.

January 26, 2026

Elephant Company : Vicki Croke. 2015. 368p.

In 1920, Billy Williams came to colonial Burma as a "forest man" for a British teak company. Mesmerized by the intelligence and character of the great animals who hauled logs through the jungle, he became a gifted "elephant wallah." In *Elephant Company*, Vicki Constantine Croke chronicles Williams's growing love for elephants as the animals provide him lessons in courage, trust, and gratitude.

Elephant Company is also a tale of war and daring. When Japanese forces invaded Burma in 1942, Williams joined the elite British Force 136 and operated behind enemy lines. His war elephants carried supplies, helped build bridges, and transported the sick and elderly over treacherous mountain terrain. As the occupying authorities put a price on his head, Williams and his elephants faced their most perilous test. *Elephant Company*, cornered by the enemy, attempted a desperate escape: a risky trek over the mountainous border to India, with a bedraggled group of refugees in tow.

February 23, 2026

The Puzzler : One Man's Quest to Solve the Most Baffling Puzzles Ever, from Crosswords to Jigsaws to the Meaning of Life : A.J. Jacobs. 2022. 479p.

What makes puzzles—jigsaws, mazes, riddles, sudokus—so satisfying? Be it the formation of new cerebral pathways, their close link to insight and humor, or their community-building properties, they're among the fundamental elements that make us human. Convinced that puzzles have made him a better person, A.J. Jacobs—four-time *New York Times* bestselling author, master of immersion journalism, and nightly crossword—set out to determine their myriad benefits. And maybe, in the process, solve the puzzle of our very existence. Well, almost.

March 23, 2026

The Girl with the Louding Voice : Abe Dare. 2020. 379p.

The unforgettable, inspiring story of a teenage girl growing up in a rural Nigerian village who longs to get an education so that she can find her "lounding voice" and speak up for

herself, *The Girl with the Louding Voice* is a simultaneously heartbreaking and triumphant tale about the power of fighting for your dreams. Despite the seemingly insurmountable obstacles in her path, Adunni never loses sight of her goal of escaping the life of poverty she was born into so that she can build the future she chooses for herself – and help other girls like her do the same. Her spirited determination to find joy and hope in even the most difficult circumstances imaginable will “break your heart and then put it back together again” even as Adunni shows us how one courageous young girl can inspire us all to reach for our dreams...and maybe even change the world.

April 27, 2026

Atmosphere : A Love Story : Taylor Jenkins Reid. 2025. 314p.

Joan Goodwin has been obsessed with the stars for as long as she can remember. Thoughtful and reserved, Joan is content with her life as a professor of physics and astronomy at Rice University and as aunt to her precocious niece, Frances. That is, until she comes across an advertisement seeking the first women scientists to join NASA’s space shuttle program. Suddenly, Joan burns to be one of the few people to go to space. Selected from a pool of thousands of applicants in the summer of 1980, Joan begins training at Houston’s Johnson Space Center, alongside an exceptional group of fellow candidates: Top Gun pilot Hank Redmond and scientist John Griffin, who are kind and easygoing even when the stakes are highest; mission specialist Lydia Danes, who has worked too hard to play nice; warmhearted Donna Fitzgerald, who is navigating her own secrets; and Vanessa Ford, the magnetic and mysterious aeronautical engineer, who can fix any engine and fly any plane.

May 18, 2026

The Women of Arlington Hall : Jane Healey. 2025. 329p.

1947: Adventurous Radcliffe graduate Catherine “Cat” Killeen cancels her wedding and upends a future that no longer suits her. At the behest of her professor and hungry for a challenge, Cat arrives in Virginia to work on a confidential military project. A student in cryptanalysis, Cat is already ahead of the game—to assist in rooting out Soviet spies who have infiltrated the US.

Joining the “government girls” of Arlington Hall, Cat gains the respect of her superiors and the friendship of her peers. Then, on a night out in DC, Cat runs into Jonathan Dardis, her arrogant and privileged Harvard rival and newly minted agent for the FBI. What Cat and Jonathan share is a competitive drive and an attraction that’s becoming just as spirited. They’re also united in the same critical goal for America. Together, they’re diving deep into the shadows of espionage.