

Florida United Church of Christ Women  
Reading for Renewal  
2017 – 2018

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“Honoring the Past – Celebrating the Present – Embracing the  
Future”

This year’s list contains a selection of books with content representing varying time periods -the past, present and/or future. Some are based on real events – factual or fictionalized, others are events/stories created by the writer.

My hope is that you will find a book or two that challenges you, entertains you, delights you, engages you and provides a common topic of conversation to share with others both in your home congregation as well as throughout the state of Florida.

~Terri Crawford, FL UCC Women/Reading for Renewal Chair

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Any number of books from this list that are read during the year should be reported. Reports are due in April 2018 to your local church’s Reading for Renewal contact.

A **Qualified Reader** must read **six (6)** books from this list, **including** one (1) Mission Study book,

In addition to retail bookstores, the books on the list may be available from your local public libraries and from online booksellers. Most are available in more than one format including large print, compact disc and various kinds of electronic media.

If you have questions or comments about this list, please contact FL UCC Reading for Renewal Chair, Terri Crawford at [terric57@yahoo.com](mailto:terric57@yahoo.com) or Barb Coons at [kayebarb3344@aol.com](mailto:kayebarb3344@aol.com). Please include “Reading for Renewal” in the email subject line.

You may also send titles of books to be considered for future lists\*. In general books to be considered should be:

- No more than 3 years old – based on release date
- Not a best seller or book from a best-seller list
- Available in multiple formats
- Not an author that has been the list in the past 2 years.

\*In most cases, books selected for the list must in some way tie to the selected annual conference theme. There are occasional exceptions.

\*\* MISSION STUDY VIDEO: "Untold Stories: The Unconquered Seminoles" from WGPU Public Media\*\*

Available for loan by contacting Barb Coons at [kayebarb3344@aol.com](mailto:kayebarb3344@aol.com)

## Reading for Renewal List for 2017 – 2018

Books are listed alphabetically by title. F = Fiction, NF = Non-Fiction, B = Biography/Memoir, SS = Short Stories

1. ***Alive, Alive Oh! And other things that matter*** – Diana Athill (B). A pure joy to read, *Alive, Alive Oh!* sparkles with wise and often very funny reflections on the condition of being old. Athill reminds us of the joy and richness of every stage of life—and what it means to live life fully, without regrets
2. ***Arrival/ Stories of Your Life and Others*** – Ted Chiang (SS) These stories deliver dual delights of the very, very strange and the heartbreakingly familiar, often presenting characters who must confront sudden change, the inevitable rise of automatons or the appearance of aliens with some sense of normalcy. With sharp intelligence and humor, Chiang examines what it means to be alive in a world marked by uncertainty, but also by beauty and wonder.
3. ***Behave*** – Andromeda Romano-Lax (F) A provocative fictional biography of Rosalie Rayner Watson, a woman whose work influenced generations of Americans, and whose legacy has been lost in the shadow of her husband's. In turns moving and horrifying, *Behave* is a richly nuanced and disturbing novel about science, progress, love, marriage, motherhood, and what all those things cost a passionate, promising young woman.
4. ***Behold the Dreamers*** – Imbolo Mbue (F) A compulsively readable debut novel about marriage, immigration, class, race, and the trapdoors in the American Dream. The unforgettable story of a young Cameroonian couple making a new life in New York just as the Great Recession upends the economy
5. ***The City Baker's Guide to Country Living*** – Louise Miller (F) Can a purple-haired big city pastry chef with a whisk and spatula tattoo on her derriere find happiness baking in rustic Vermont? A full-hearted novel about a big city baker who discovers the true meaning of home and that sometimes the best things are found when you don't even know you are looking.
6. ***The Dollhouse*** – Fiona Davis (F) Enter the lush world of New York City's glamorous Barbizon Hotel for Women, where in the 1950s a generation of aspiring models, secretaries, and editors lived side by side while attempting to claw their way to fairy-tale success, and where a present-day journalist becomes consumed with uncovering a dark secret buried deep within the Barbizon's glitzy past.

7. ***Don't Tell Me You're Afraid*** – Giuseppe Catozzella (F) A novel of a courageous young woman - based on a remarkable true story. An unforgettable Somali girl risks her life on the migrant journey to Europe to run in the 2012 Olympic Games. Just like millions of refugees, Samia risks her life for the hope of a better future.
8. ***Falling: a love story*** – Jane Green (F) A novel of changing seasons, shifting lives, and selfless love—of one woman's far-reaching journey to discover who she is truly meant to be.
9. ***Fate and Traitors: a novel of John Wilkes Booth*** – Jennifer Chiaverini (F) John Wilkes Booth committed one of the most notorious acts in American history—the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. Lost to history until now is the story of the four women whom he loved and who loved him in return: Mary Ann, the steadfast matriarch of the Booth family; Asia, his loyal sister and confidante; Lucy Lambert Hale, the senator's daughter who adored Booth yet tragically misunderstood the intensity of his wrath; and Mary Surratt, the Confederate widow entrusted with the secrets of his vengeful plot
10. ***A Few of the Girls: Stories*** – Maeve Binchy (SS) A glorious collection of the very best of Binchy's short stories written over the decades. Her work is filled with wisdom, common sense and a sharp, often witty and insightful voice.
11. ***Gracious: a practical primer on charm, tact and unsinkable strength*** – Kelly Williams Brown (NF) Graciousness is practicing the arts of kindness, thoughtfulness, good manners, humanity, and basic decency. As a bonus, it makes your life and even the world (or at least the room you're in) much lovelier. A funny, charming guide to modern civility in these rather uncivil times.
12. ***Harmony*** -Carolyn Parkhurst (F) The Hammond family is living in DC, where everything seems to be going just fine, until it becomes clear that the oldest daughter, Tilly, is developing abnormally--a mix of off-the-charts genius and social incompetence. **How far will a mother go to save her family?** A taut, emotionally wrenching story of how a seemingly "normal" family could become desperate enough to leave everything behind and move to a "family camp" in New Hampshire--a life-changing experience that alters them forever
13. ***Homegoing*** – Yaa Gyasi (F) The story of two half-sisters, separated by forces beyond their control: one sold into slavery, the other married to a British slaver. Written with tremendous sweep and power, *Homegoing* traces the generations of family who follow, as their destinies lead them through two continents and three hundred years of history.

14. ***In the Unlikely Event*** – Judy Blume (F) A richly textured and moving story of three generations of families, friends and strangers, whose lives are profoundly changed by unexpected events. In 1987, Miri Ammerman returns to her hometown of Elizabeth, New Jersey, to attend a commemoration of the worst year of her life. Thirty-five years earlier, when Miri was fifteen, a succession of airplanes fell from the sky - leaving a community reeling.
15. ***The Last One*** – Alexandra Oliva (F) A novel that forces us to confront the role that media plays in our perception of what is real: how readily we cast our judgments, how easily we are manipulated. It begins with a reality TV show. Twelve contestants are sent into the woods to face challenges that will test the limits of their endurance. While they are out there, something terrible happens—but how widespread is the destruction, and has it occurred naturally or is it man-made?
16. ***Lilac Girls*** – Martha Hall Kelly (F) Inspired by the life of a real World War II heroine, this remarkable novel reveals the power of unsung women to change history in their quest for love, freedom, and second chances. The interwoven story of three women (Caroline, Kasis and Herta) set on a collision course, during World War II reveal the bravery, cowardice, and cruelty of those days.
17. ***Orchard House: how a neglected garden taught one family to grow*** – Tara Austen Weaver (B) A profoundly moving memoir of rediscovering, reinventing, and reconnecting, as an estranged mother and daughter come together to revive a long-abandoned garden and ultimately their relationship and themselves.
18. ***Rising Strong: how the ability to reset transforms the way we live, love, parent, and lead*** - Brene Brown (NF) Walking into our stories of hurt can feel dangerous. But the process of regaining our footing in the midst of struggle is where our courage is tested and our values are forged. Rising strong after a fall is how we cultivate wholeheartedness. It's the process, Brown writes, that teaches us the most about who we are
19. ***Room for Hope*** – Kim Vogel Sawyer (F) Neva Shilling has a heavy load of responsibility - running the Shilling Mercantile, working to keep their business strong as the Depression takes its toll, and caring for their twins - while her husband travels to neighboring communities and sells items from his wagon. When a wagon pulls up after supper, Neva and her children rush out—and into the presence of the deputy driving a wagon carrying three young children. The deputy shocks her with the news that Warren *and his wife* have died, insisting it was their last request that the three children go live with “Aunt Neva.”
20. ***Sisi: Empress on her own*** – Allison Pataki (f) *Sisi* tells the little-known story of Empress Elisabeth of Austria-Hungary, the Princess Diana of her time, in an enthralling work of historical fiction.

Married to Emperor Franz Joseph, Elisabeth—fondly known as Sisi—captures the hearts of her people as their “fairy queen,” but beneath that dazzling persona lives a far more complex figure.

21. ***Small Great Things*** – Jodi Picoult (F) A thought-provoking examination of racism in America today, both overt and subtle. During her shift, Ruth, a labor and delivery nurse, begins a routine checkup on a newborn, only to be told a few minutes later that she’s been reassigned to another patient. The parents are white supremacists and don’t want Ruth, who is African American, to touch their child. The next day, the baby goes into cardiac distress while Ruth is alone in the nursery. Does she obey orders or does she intervene – and what are the consequences of her decision?
  
22. ***A Touch of Stardust*** – Kate Alcott (F) When Julie Crawford leaves Fort Wayne, Indiana, for Hollywood, she never imagines she’ll cross paths with Carole Lombard, the dazzling actress from Julie’s provincial Midwestern hometown. The young woman has dreams of becoming a screenwriter, but the only job Julie’s able to find is one in the studio publicity office of the notoriously demanding producer David O. Selznick, who is busy burning through directors, writers, and money as he films *Gone with the Wind*. Beneath the shiny façade, things in Hollywood are never quite what they seem...
  
23. ***The Translation of Love*** – Lynne Kutsukake (F) Against the backdrop of occupied Tokyo, a young girl searches for her missing older sister, who has disappeared into the world of bars and dance halls. In the process, her story will become intertwined with those of others trying to make sense of their lives in a post-war world. An emotionally gripping portrait of a battered nation.
  
24. ***Valley of the Moon*** – Melanie Gideon (F) A gorgeous, original, and deeply moving novel about love and longing and the power that time holds over all of us. Lux has stumbled upon an idyllic community cut off not only from the rest of the world but from time itself. The residents of Greengage tell a stunned and disoriented Lux that they’ve somehow been marooned in the early twentieth century. Now that she has inexplicably stepped into the past, it is not long before Lux is drawn in by its peace and beauty
  
25. ***Victoria the Queen: an intimate biography of the woman who built an empire*** – Julia Baird (B) This biography reveals the real woman behind the myth: a bold, glamorous, unbreakable queen—a Victoria for our times. Drawing on previously unpublished papers, this stunning new portrait is a story of love and heartbreak, of devotion and grief, of strength and resilience.

## MISSION STUDY TITLES – SEMINOLE INDIANS

26. ***The Complete Book of Seminole Patchwork*** - Beverly Rush (NF) Seminole patchwork has become the hallmark and most visible art form of the Seminole culture. Profusely illustrated with complete instructions and diagrams.
27. ***The Enduring Seminoles: from alligator wrestling to casino gambling***- Patsy West (NF) Early in the 1900's the Florida Seminoles struggled to survive in an environment altered by the drainage of the Everglades and a dwindling demand for animal hides. This is a tale of their unbelievable success against all odds as the Seminoles went from abject poverty to striking the first major international deal by a tribe with the purchase of the Hard Rock Café in 2006.
28. ***Forever Island*** – Patrick D. Smith (F) The story of Charlie Jumper, an old Seminole Indian, who lives a simple life in a primitive chickee on the edge of the Everglades. He clings to the ancient ways and teaches them to his grandson. When their simple swamp existence is threatened by development, Charlie decides to fight back.
29. ***Healing Plants: medicine of the Florida Seminole Indians*** – Alice Micco Snow and Susan Enns Stans (NF) This is the first published record of Florida Seminole herbal medicine and ancient healing practices. Seminole elder Snow and anthropologist Stans capture the essence of Seminole ethnomedicine and ethnobotany, providing a glimpse of a fascinating past, as well as a view of the vibrant traditions that endure in contemporary Seminole communities.
30. ***Legends of the Seminole*** – Betty Mae Jumper (NF) Stories and legends told to Seminole children late at night around campfires and handed down through generations compiled for all to enjoy. These are rich tales that impart lessons about living in the natural world of Florida in harmony with its many inhabitants and explain why the world is the way it is.
31. ***A Seminole Legend: the life of Betty Mae Tiger Jumper*** – Betty Mae Tiger Jumper and Patsy West (B) Betty Mae Jumper joins the ranks of Native American women who are coming forward to tell their life experiences. This collaboration between Jumper and Patsy West, an ethnohistorian who contributes general tribal history, is a rare and authentic account of a pioneering Florida Seminole family.

\*\* MISSION STUDY VIDEO: "Untold Stories: The Unconquered Seminoles" from WGPU Public Media\*\*  
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## 2017 – 2018 Reading for Renewal Record Sheet

*Due to your local church's Reading for Renewal contact in April 2018.* Each reader is asked to record the books read from this list during the year. Please indicate the books you read by placing a check in front of the number of the book title listed below. Any number of books may be recorded. A **qualified reader** must read **six (6)** books from the list, **including** one (1) Mission Study.

1 Alive, Alive Oh! - Athill	14 In the Unlikely Event - Blume
2 Arrival - Chiang	15 The Last One- Oliva
3 Behave – Romano-Lax	16 Lilac Girls - Kelly
4 Behold the Dreamers - Mbue	17 Orchard House - Weaver
5 The City Baker's Guide to Country Living - Miller	18 Rising Strong - Brown
6 The Dollhouse - Davis	19 Room for Hope - Sawyer
7 Don't Tell Me You're Afraid - Catozzella	20 Sisi - Pataki
8 Falling - Green	21 Small Great Things - Picout
9 Fate and Traitors - Chiaverini	22 Touch of Stardust - Alcott
10 A Few of the Girls - Binchy	23 The Translation of Love - Kutsukake
11 Graciousness - Brown	24 Valley of the Moon - Gideon
12 Harmony - Parkhurst	25 Victoria the Queen - Baird
13 Homegoing - Gyasi	

### MISSION STUDY BOOKS on Seminole Indians

26 The Complete Book of Seminole Patchwork - Rush
27 The Enduring Seminoles: from alligator wrestling to casino gambling - West
28 Forever Island - Smith
29 Healing Plants: medicine of the Florida Seminole Indians – Snow / Stans
30 Legends of the Seminole - Jumper
31 A Seminole Legend: the life of Betty Mae Tiger Jumper – Jumper / west

Total number of 2017-2018 Reading for Renewal Books Read: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a **Qualified Reader**: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_