

2019 MPC Book Club Selections

January 28

Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret by Howard and Geraldine Taylor – 256 pages

James Hudson Taylor is the "father of modern missions" and a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, completely sold out to God. He is a man of high energy, who denies self and is known for his humility, organizational skills and even more for his life of prayer. He lives from 1832-1905 and is credited for touching hundreds of thousands of lives for Christ throughout his lifetime and beyond. Today, many missions still emulate the principles Hudson Taylor set forth in his outreach to China, still seeking to follow his successful patterns.

February 25

The Alice Network by Kate Quinn – 532 pages

It is a notable historical fiction novel that brings the readers back to the Great War. Author Kate Quinn tells a story of two women in wartime Europe. One is an American socialite Charlie St. Clair. Her pregnancy forces her to leave her country and move to Europe in search of a cousin who disappeared in France during the Nazi occupation. The second is a female spy Eve Gardiner who became a part of France's Alice Network during the Great War. Their stories intertwine in this exciting tale by Kate Quinn.

March 25

The Tattooist of Auschwitz by Heather Morris – 288 pages

In April 1942, Lale Sokolov, a Slovakian Jew, is forcibly transported to the concentration camps at Auschwitz-Birkenau. When his captors discover that he speaks several languages, he is put to work as a Tätowierer (the German word for tattooist), tasked with permanently marking his fellow prisoners.

Imprisoned for over two and a half years, Lale witnesses horrific atrocities and barbarism—but also incredible acts of bravery and compassion. Risking his own life, he uses his privileged position to exchange jewels and money from murdered Jews for food to keep his fellow prisoners alive.

One day in July 1942, Lale, prisoner 32407, comforts a trembling young woman waiting in line to have the number 34902 tattooed onto her arm. Her name is Gita, and in that first encounter, Lale vows to somehow survive the camp and marry her.

April 22

As Bright as Heaven by Susan Meissner – 387 pages

From the acclaimed author of *Secrets of a Charmed Life* and *A Bridge Across the Ocean* comes a new novel set in Philadelphia during the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918, which tells the story of a family reborn through loss and love.

In 1918, Philadelphia was a city teeming with promise. Even as its young men went off to fight in the Great War, there were opportunities for a fresh start on its cobblestone streets. Into this bustling

town, came Pauline Bright and her husband, filled with hope that they could now give their three daughters--Evelyn, Maggie, and Willa--a chance at a better life.

But just months after they arrive, the Spanish Flu reaches the shores of America. As the pandemic claims more than twelve thousand victims in their adopted city, they find their lives left with a world that looks nothing like the one they knew. But even as they lose loved ones, they take in a baby orphaned by the disease who becomes their single source of hope. Amidst the tragedy and challenges, they learn what they cannot live without--and what they are willing to do about it.

As Bright as Heaven is the compelling story of a mother and her daughters who find themselves in a harsh world, not of their making, which will either crush their resolve to survive or purify it.

May 20

Black Klansman by Ron Stallworth – 208 pages

In 1978 the community of Colorado Springs, Colorado experienced a growth of Ku Klux Klan (KKK) membership. One man dared to challenge their effort and thwart attempts to take over the city, Police Detective Ron Stallworth. He launched an undercover investigation into the Klan, gained membership into the organization, briefly served as Duke's bodyguard, and was eventually asked to be the leader of the Colorado Springs chapter. The irony of this investigation was that Stallworth is... A Black man. In the process he battled internal departmental politics to successfully pull off this "sting." *Black Klansman* explains how he overcame these obstacles and accomplished this almost unbelievable unique achievement.

June 24

The Glory Over Everything by Kathleen Grissom - 365 pages

The latest *New York Times* bestseller from the author of the beloved book club favorite *The Kitchen House* is a heart racing story about a man's treacherous journey through the twists and turns of the Underground Railroad on a mission to save the boy he swore to protect. *Glory Over Everything* is "gripping...breathless until the end"

September 23

The Great Alone by Kristin Hannah – 435 pages

Kristin Hannah's historical fiction novel *The Great Alone* tells the story of the Allbright family from 1974 to 1986. The family moves to Alaska to start a new life, but the extremity of the landscape tests each of them in different ways: father Ernt battles his Vietnam trauma, his alcoholism, and his paranoia; mother Cora struggles between her love for Ernt and her desire to protect her daughter; and daughter Leni struggles to chart a safe path to adulthood despite the violence and secrets of her family home. The novel explores diverse themes, including domestic violence, PTSD, the human search for belonging, loneliness, freedom, personal strength, community, grief, hope, and female strength. Above all, *The Great Alone* examines the many types of love, whether toxic or nurturing, familial or romantic, doomed or hopeful.

October 28

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson – 336 pages

Bryan Stevenson was a young lawyer when he founded the Equal Justice Initiative, a legal practice dedicated to defending those most desperate and in need: the poor, the wrongly condemned, and

women and children trapped in the farthest reaches of our criminal justice system. One of his first cases was that of Walter McMillian, a young man who was sentenced to die for a notorious murder he insisted he didn't commit. The case drew Bryan into a tangle of conspiracy, political machination, and legal brinkmanship—and transformed his understanding of mercy and justice forever.

Just Mercy is at once an unforgettable account of an idealistic, gifted young lawyer's coming of age, a moving window into the lives of those he has defended, and an inspiring argument for compassion in the pursuit of true justice.

November 25

The Kingdom of God is Within You (352 pages) - Banned in Russia, Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* was deemed a threat to church and state. The culmination of a lifetime's thought, it espouses a commitment to Jesus's message of turning the other cheek. In a bold and original manner, Tolstoy shows his readers clearly why they must reject violence of any sort—even that sanctioned by the state or the church—and urges them to look within themselves to find the answers to questions of morality.

In 1894, one of the first English translations of this book found its way into the hands of a young Gandhi. Inspired by its message of nonresistance to evil, the Mahatma declared it a source of "independent thinking, profound morality, and truthfulness." Much of this work's emotional and moral appeal lies in its emphasis on fair treatment of the poor and working class. Its view of Christianity, not as a mystic religion but as a workable philosophy originating from the words of a remarkable teacher, extends its appeal to secular and religious readers alike.