

June 23

Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption

by Laura Hillenbrand

The story is that of Louie Zamperini - a track and field star of the 1930's, who participated in the Berlin Olympics, was part of the US air force in WWII, was shot down over the ocean, was adrift in the Pacific for over a month, was held as a POW by the Japanese forces and finally made it back to his life and has had the courage to live it to its fullest. It is a tale of daring, defiance, persistence, ingenuity, and the ferocious will. In telling Louie's story, Hillenbrand restores to our collective memory this tale of heroism, cruelty, life, death, joy, suffering, remorselessness, and redemption... of a man who refused to be broken.

July 21

***The Help* by Kathryn Stockett**

Kathryn Stockett creates three extraordinary women whose determination to start a movement of their own forever changes a town, and the way women--mothers, daughters, caregivers, friends--view one another. A deeply moving novel filled with poignancy, humor, and hope, *The Help* is a timeless and universal story about the lines we abide by, and the ones we don't.

August 18 (off-site)

***Wish You Well* by David Balducci**

Precocious twelve-year-old Louisa Mae Cardinal lives in the hectic New York City of 1940 with her family. Then tragedy strikes -- and Lou and her younger brother, Oz, must go with their invalid mother to live on their great-grandmother's farm in the Virginia mountains. Suddenly Lou finds herself coming of age in a new landscape, making her first true friend, and experiencing adventures tragic, comic, and audacious. *Wish You Well* is a tale laced with touching passages evoking the charms of rural Virginia, imbued with graceful humor, and enriched by unforgettable characters. The novel is a heart-wrenching yet triumphant story about family and adversity from times past that resounds forcefully today.



This group is a ministry of the Adult Education Program of Normandale Lutheran Church.

We look forward to your participation.

Please contact the church for further information about any of these opportunities.

Normandale Lutheran Church
6100 Normandale Road
Edina, MN 55436
952-929-1697
www.normluth.org

Book



Bagel

& Brew

As People of Faith we are called to use the eyes of faith as we engage our world.

Led by Pastor Nancy Windels, this group engages popular fiction and some non-fiction through the lens of faith.

Discussion will explore the theological dynamics of salvation, redemption, grace, hope, and love as they are expressed by their presence or absence in the plot line of the novels.

This fellowship meets one Saturday each month at 9:00 am in the Library.

Book completion is not required for participation.



Book Selections for 2011-2012

September 17

Storycatcher: Making Sense of Our Lives Through the Power and Practice of Story
by Christina Baldwin

Story is the heart of language. Story moves us to love and hate and can motivate us to change the whole course of our lives. Story can lift us beyond our individual borders to imagine the realities of other people, times, and places. Storytelling—both oral tradition and written word—is the foundation of being human. Christina's book encourages us all to become storycatchers — and shows us how new stories lay the framework for a new world.

Fall Retreat: October 21-23 (WomanWell) ***Night Road*** by Kristin Hannah

On a hot summer's night, a mother's worst fears come true. In the blink of an eye, her family will be torn apart and she will lose everything. In the years that follow, each must face the consequences of that single night and find a way to forget...or the courage to forgive. Vivid, universal, and emotionally complex, *Night Road* raises profound questions about mother-hood, identity, love, and forgiveness.

November 19

Caleb's Crossing by Geraldine Brooks

The narrator of *Caleb's Crossing* is Bethia Mayfield, growing up in the tiny settlement of Great Harbor amid a small band of pioneers and Puritans. Restless and curious, she yearns after an education that is closed to her by her sex. At twelve, she encounters Caleb, the young son of a chieftain, and the two forge a tentative, secret friendship that draws each into the alien world of the other. Bethia's minister father tries to convert the Wampanoag, awakening the wrath of the island's strongest pawaaw, against whose ritual magic he must test his own beliefs. Geraldine Brooks has created a luminous tale of love and faith, magic and adventure.

December Hiatus

January 14-22

Book Club Cruise to Western Caribbean
An Altar in the World
by Barbara Brown Taylor

January 28

I Still Dream About You by Fannie Flagg

Flagg's whimsical heartstring tugger follows the continually interrupted suicide attempt of Maggie Fortenberry, a former Birmingham, Ala., beauty queen, now 60 and a realtor. Maggie feels like a failure: the business is in decline, and she's lamenting a lifetime's worth of chances missed, including turning down her one true love. In fact, she's come up with 16 "perfectly good reasons to jump in the river" and only two reasons not to. Of course, there is hope to be found--professionally, personally, perhaps romantically--even in Maggie's darkest hours. Maggie has heartbreaking secrets in her past, but through a strange turn of events, she soon discovers, quite by accident, that everybody, it seems—dead or alive—has at least one little secret.

February 25 (Change in date)

Not My Daughter by Barbara Delinsky

In this compelling, ripped-from-the-headline offering from bestselling author Barbara Delinsky, three high school seniors make a pregnancy pact. Heightening the stakes, these aren't just any seniors--these are three popular, college-bound girls from good families. Set in an insular, tightly knit community in Maine, *Not My Daughter* explores the consequences of pact behavior on a small town, as well as the strain placed on mothers and daughters who find themselves in unfamiliar terrain. *Not My Daughter* is a timely exploration of teen motherhood and the hard choices that sometimes have to be made in life.

March 24

Freedom by Jonathan Franzen

A wrenching, funny, and forgiving portrait of a Midwestern family from St. Paul. Patty and Walter Berglund find each other early: a pretty jock, focused on the court and a little lost off it, and a stolid budding lawyer, besotted with her and almost burdened by his integrity. They make a family and a life together, and, over time, slowly lose track of each other. This excavation of the cracks in the nuclear family's facade is pitted against a backdrop of all-American faults and fissures as Franzen tries to account for his often stridently unlikable characters and find where they (and we) went wrong, arriving at--incredibly--genuine hope.

April 21

The Middle Place by Kelly Corrigan

Newspaper columnist Corrigan was a happily married mother of two young daughters when she discovered a cancerous lump in her breast. She was still undergoing treatment when she learned that her beloved father, who'd already survived prostate cancer, now had bladder cancer. Funny yet heart-wrenching, *The Middle Place* is about being a parent and a child at the same time. It is about the special double-vision you get when you are standing with one foot in each place. It is about the family you make and the family you came from—and locating, navigating, and finally celebrating the place where they meet. It is about reaching for life with both hands— and finding it.

Spring Retreat: May 4-6 **Dunrovin (Marine by St. Croix)**

Sing You Home by Jodi Picoult

Music has set the tone for most of Zoe Baxter's life. In the aftermath of a series of personal tragedies, Zoe throws herself into her career as a music therapist. When an unexpected friendship slowly blossoms into love, she makes plans for a new life, but to her shock and inevitable rage, some people—even those she loves and trusts most—don't want that to happen. *Sing You Home* is about identity, love, marriage, and parenthood. And it's about what happens when the outside world brutally calls into question the very thing closest to our hearts: *family*.