

Updated February 2021

Answers to Your Questions about the Reading Program 2020–2021

Reading Program participants have contacted us asking for some clarifications about how a two-year Reading Program plan will work. Since many of you have raised the same questions and concerns, we've decided to share our answers with the entire membership at once in the following update letter from Operations Officer Andris Salter.

Dear Members,

This is an unusual year, as we find ourselves living through a pandemic of a virus that has impacted millions of people; many have lost jobs, family members, friends, homes. We are working remotely, worshiping online; we've postponed or canceled many events. Annual Meetings and Conferences are virtual. General and Jurisdictional Conferences have been delayed.

United Methodist Women has developed new ways to continue the work remotely while COVID-19 keeps all of us social-distanced and so many quarantined. Delayed elections meant naming committees were delayed, including the Assembly, Editorial and Reading Program Committees. With the National Office closed, potential Reading Program books could not be sent to evaluators in the usual manner. We determined that enlarging the 2021 list and combining the 2021 and 2022 Reading Lists would be a better way to handle the situation for now.

The 2020 Reading Program Committee selected new offerings to encourage more reading during these challenging times. We realize this is a lot of change, but changes are needed to continue the work remotely.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, more persons have participated in the Reading Program, many books have been recommended, and we are determining ways to involve evaluators differently. Publishers have also suggested books and ways to help send books to evaluators.

Many of you have asked how a two-year Reading Program plan will work. This is new for us as well so I would like to offer the following recommendations. But I also encourage you to be creative in your work: Think of new ways to enjoy the books, such as Zoom book clubs or by sharing book reports. Invite book authors to join you for discussions time, programs, etc.

- A. Reading Book List:** The reading forms should be sent to your Conference or District Secretary of Program Resources, in alignment with their schedule.
- B. Participation:** Anyone can participate in the Reading Program and all can receive a certificate for participating. See unitedmethodistwomen.org/download-resources/reading-program-2021-reporting-form.
- C. Recognitions:** Be creative in recognizing persons who are not UMW/UM.

D. Another list of books will be shared by April 2021 to serve as an addition to the books featured here in the 2021–2022 catalog.

1. Award certificates as you would yearly recognitions. Or you can add another award for books read in 2021 and 2022.
2. Mix it up by recognizing books in 2021 and the FaithTalks podcasts, movies and books in 2022. Think of other creative ways to promote the Reading Program—and share what works by posting about it on your personal social media accounts and tagging UMW's.
3. For 2021–2022, participants can read books from the 2015 through the 2022 reading lists

E. Faith Talks: FaithTalk podcasts can now be counted in the category of Spiritual Growth. You must participate or listen to two FaithTalks podcasts. If you participate/listen to three, it will be counted as a Bonus Book in the Spiritual Growth category.

F. Movies: Watching these movies and documentaries will also count toward the Reading Program:

1. *Just Mercy*
2. *The Hate U Give*
3. *Pushout*

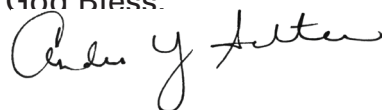
G. Children and youth books can be found within each of the categories.

H. Bonus books: These count as two books in different categories.

I. The Mission studies also count as Bonus Books.

We hope this information answers your most pressing questions about the Reading Program in this unique time. Most of the information provided here can also be found on the Reading Program website, but this update addresses some additional concerns that have been called to our attention.

God Bless.



Andris Salter
Operations Officer
United Methodist Women

