

Ann's Book and Film Study

2009-10 Schedule

We will be enjoying our 11th year together this fall! Please join us for discussion of good books and films on Wednesdays at 9:30am in the library of Christ Our King Presbyterian Church.
Dues are \$25.00 for the year and can be paid at the September meeting.

Sept. 23rd

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society –

by Mary Ann Shaffer.

Led by Colleen Webster, HCC

The letters comprising this small charming novel begin in 1946, when single, 30-something author Juliet Ashton (nom de plume Izzy Bickerstaff) writes to her publisher to say she is tired of covering the sunny side of war and its aftermath. When Guernsey farmer Dawsey Adams finds Juliet's name in a used book and invites articulate—and not-so-articulate—neighbors to write Juliet with their stories, the book's epistolary circle widens, putting Juliet back in the path of war stories.

Oct. 21st

Song Yet Sung - by James McBride.

Led by Jamie Watson, HCPL

*Set on Maryland's Eastern Shore in the 1850s, Song Yet Sung weaves an intricate and gripping tale of escaped slaves, free blacks, and slave catchers. The protagonist is an enslaved woman called The Dreamer, whose gift for visions of the future quickly reaches mythic proportions following her escape from a local plantation. **The One Maryland One Book for 2009.***

Nov. 18th

Film: "The Visitor" – 2007.

Led by Colleen Webster

Hailed as "one of the year's most intriguing dramas", The Visitor stars Richard Jenkins, a disaffected college professor who has been drifting aimlessly through his life. When, in a chance encounter on a trip into New York, Walter discovers a couple has taken up residence in his apartment in the city, he develops an unexpected and profound connection to them that will change his life forever. As challenges arise for his tenants, Walter finds himself compelled to help his new friends, and rediscovers a passion he thought he had lost long ago.

Jan. 20th

A Tree Grows in Brooklyn – by Betty Smith.

Led by Colleen Webster

*Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and adroit observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. She grows up with a sweet, tragic father, a severely realistic mother, and an aunt who gives her love too freely--to men, and to a brother who will always be the favored child. Francie learns early the meaning of hunger and the value of a penny. She is her father's child--romantic and hungry for beauty. But she is her mother's child, too--deeply practical and in constant need of truth. Like the Tree of Heaven that grows out of cement or through cellar gratings, resourceful Francie struggles against all odds to survive and thrive. **Our Classics Selection.***

Feb. 17th

Still Alice – by Lisa Genova.

Led by Dr. Nan Greene Cerio

This is a beautifully written, heartbreaking novel about the devastating affect Alzheimer's has on its victims and their families. Alice - young, in shape, and intelligent (she's a Psychiatry Professor at Harvard) - shows that Alzheimer's can strike anyone, not just the elderly. The book is written from Alice's viewpoint, and does a good job of showing the affect of Alzheimer's not only on Alice, but how her family's struggle with the changes in Alice. Genova does an excellent job of describing what is going on in Alice's head as the dementia increases, that is it easy to forget that the book is fiction and not about a real person.

Mar. 17th

Film: "Taking Chance" – 2008 (HBO movie)

Led by Pastor Linda Nepstad, COK Presbyterian Church

Taking Chance is based on perhaps the single most moving artifact to come out of the Second Gulf War, Lt. Col. Mike Strobl's first-person narrative of his voluntary mission escorting the body of a fellow Marine killed in Iraq. Strobl (played in the film by Kevin Bacon) hadn't known Lance Cpl. Chance Phelps but, noticing they'd been born in the same western town, he requested temporary leave from his duties as a manpower-deployment analyst at Quantico in order to accompany the 20-year-old's body home. The journey would take Strobl deep into the heart of his nation, and his own heart as well. The picture's decency is unimpeachable, and Strobl's story, transcending pro-war and anti-war politics, is itself an act of healing.

Apr. 21st

Olive Kitteridge - by Elizabeth Stout.

Led by Jean Fry

*Elizabeth Strout's new "novel in stories" brings to life a hardscrabble community on the coast of Maine, a quintessentially New England town. These thirteen linked tales present a heart-wrenching, penetrating portrait of ordinary coastal Mainers living lives of quiet grief intermingled with flashes of human connection. Olive Kitteridge is a reoccurring figure in each story. **Winner of 2009 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.***

If you have questions: Lois Fisher – 410-836-2885 or lolofisher@yahoo.com

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What Makes a Good Member?

*Interested, Willing & Enthusiastic – don't twist arms to join
Conscientious Reader – read the book, see the film
Committed – attend regularly & be prompt – pretty obvious
Good Listener/Good Participant/Sense of Humor – comic relief
Focused – stay on track*