

ALUMNI BOOKS

by Marie Dalby '08 M.A.R.

THIS IS NOT THE LIFE I PLANNED or the life I recommend to others," writes **BARBARA BROWN TAYLOR '76 M.DIV.**, in her new memoir, *Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith*. "But it is the life that has turned out to be mine, and the central revelation in it for me—that the call to serve God is first and last the call to be fully human—seems important enough to witness to on paper."

What Taylor describes is her evolving faith identity—from a child who felt the Divine Presence in a sunlit field to a searching student at Yale Divinity



School to a woman fitting the plastic collar around her neck. And though the plan was to settle into that collared identity for the rest of her life, Taylor found that as hard as that identity was to achieve, moving

away from it was her only possible next step. This memoir recounts her journey to distinguish between the life of the church and the life of faith.

Simple Truths: On Values, Civility, and Our Common Good, by **STEPHEN BAUMAN '79 M.DIV.** As a radio commentator, Bauman knows he has about one minute to convey an inspirational thought or question before a listener changes the station or becomes distracted by something else. In this same concise format, *Simple Truths* presents one-page ideas and queries that challenge readers.

Shalom, Salaam, Peace, by **ALLISON STOKES '81 M.DIV., '81 PH.D.**

Written by the founding director of the Women's Interfaith Institute, this "study book" explores the concept of peace in Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Through the extensive lists of resources and accompanying study guide, it offers practical ways to discuss interreligious understanding and peacemaking.

Reclaiming a Plundered Past: Archaeology and Nation Building in Modern Iraq, by **MAGNUS T. BERNHARDSSON '92 M.A.R., '96 M.A., '96 M.PHIL., '99 PH.D.** Bernhardsson, an assistant professor of Middle Eastern history at Williams College, examines the ways in which the riches of Iraq's archaeological heritage are inextricably linked to the politics of emerging nationhood. Starting with European excavations in the nineteenth century, this book asks who has excavated what and for what reasons beyond historical curiosity.

Through Mark's Eyes: A Portrait of Jesus Based on the Gospel of Mark, by **PUCK PURNELL '93 M.A.R.** With specific and lively descriptions, this ornamentation of the Gospel of Mark is a creative narrative written to inspire readers into imagining life with Jesus in ancient Palestine. Purnell uses this "recapitulation" format to emphasize Christ as human being and to imagine His actions in real settings and terms.

Beautiful Bottom, Beautiful Shame: Where "Black" Meets "Queer", by **KATHRYN BOND STOCKTON '82 M.DIV.** Using numerous lenses—from queer theory and psychoanalysis, to photography, semiotics and African American studies—Stockton examines the concept of shame for both African Americans and homosexuals.

Darkness Is My Only Companion: A Christian Response to Mental Illness, by **KATHRYN GREENE-MCCREIGHT '89 S.T.M., '91 M.A., '92 M.PHIL., '94 PH.D.**, a sufferer of bipolar disorder, Greene-McCreight writes about the questions she faced as a Christian battling mental illness. Using her own experiences of trying to free herself from crippling depression and mania, she offers her story and suggests ways for others to help those who are likewise suffering.

Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary Series: *Ezekiel*, by **MARGARET S. ODELL '79 M.A.R.** Odell's study of the text of the prophetic book of Ezekiel is an addition to the Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary Series. Designed to be both genuinely scholarly as well as user-friendly, the book reproduces all of its text on the accompanying CD-ROM (which allows it to be comprehensively searched).

Red and Blue God, Black and Blue Church: Eyewitness Accounts of How American Churches are Hijacking Jesus, Bagging the Beatitudes, and Worshiping the Almighty Dollar, by **BECKY GARRISON '92 M.DIV.** This collection of satirical essays touches on nearly every controversy that uses Christianity to support polemical argumentation. Written in snappy, colloquial op-ed column style, Garrison repeatedly demonstrates the hypocrisy of using Christ's message to justify everything from bigotry and violence to greed and carelessness.

All of these books are available from the Yale Divinity School Student Book Supply. For more information, see www.yale.edu/divinity/sbs.