

[Godric](#) by Frederick Buechner (a novel)

Frederick Buechner's *Godric* "retells the life of Godric of Finchale, a twelfth-century English holy man whose projects late in life included that of purifying his moral ambition of pride...Sin, spiritual yearning, rebirth, fierce asceticism--these hagiographic staples aren't easy to revitalize but Frederick Buechner goes at the task with intelligent intensity and a fine readiness to invent what history doesn't supply. He contrives a style of speech for his narrator--Godric himself--that's brisk and tough-sinewed...He avoids metaphysical fiddle, embedding his narrative in domestic reality--familiar affection, responsibilities, disasters...All on his own, Mr. Buechner has managed to reinvent projects of self-purification and of faith as piquant matter for contemporary fiction [in a book] notable for literary finish...Frederick Buechner is a very good writer indeed." – Benjamin DeMott, *The New York Times Book Review*

[Gilead](#) by Marilynne Robinson (a novel)

Nearly 25 years after *Housekeeping*, Marilynne Robinson returns with an intimate tale of three generations, from the Civil War to the 20th century: a story about fathers and sons and the spiritual battles that still rage at America's heart. In the words of *Kirkus*, it is a novel "as big as a nation, as quiet as thought, and moving as prayer. Matchless and towering."

[Materiality as Resistance](#) by Walter Brueggemann

(essays by Old Testament scholar and member of the UCC)

Jesus practiced materiality when he healed the bodies of the sick, proclaimed Jubilee to the poor, and fed the five thousand. He practiced materiality over materialism. In *Materiality as Resistance*, Walter Brueggemann defines *materiality* as the *use* of the material aspects of the Christian faith, as opposed to *materialism*, which places possessions and physical comfort *over* spiritual values. In this concise volume, Brueggemann lays out how we as Christians may reengage our materiality for the common good. How does materiality inform our faith when it comes to food, money, the body, time, and place? How does it force us to act? Likewise, how is the church obligated to use its time, money, abundance of food, the care and use of our bodies, observance of Sabbath, and stewardship of our world and those with whom we share it? With a foreword from Jim Wallis, *Materiality as Resistance* serves as a manifesto of Walter Brueggemann's most important work and as an engaging call to action. It is suited for group or individual study.

[Naming Neoliberalism: Exposing the Spirit of Our Age](#) by Rodney Clapp

Neoliberalism is the reigning, overarching spirit of our age. It consists of a panoply of cultural, political, and economic practices that set marketized competition at the center of social life. But in neoliberalism's train have come extreme inequality, economic precariousness, and a harmful distortion of both the individual and society. With *Naming Neoliberalism*, Clapp aims to expose the order to a wider range of readers--pastors, thoughtful laypersons, and students. His theological base for this intervention is apocalyptic--not in the sense of impending doom and gloom, but in the sense of centering on Christ's life, death, and resurrection as itself the creation of a new and truer, more hopeful, and more humane order that sees the principalities and powers (like neoliberalism) unmasked and disarmed at the cross. The book carefully lays out what neoliberalism is, where it has come from, its religious or theological pretensions, and how it can be confronted through and in the church.