

FAITH BOOK CLUB  
2026-27 PICKS SUMMARIES

**Fall 2026**

**September: Carnegie's Maid by Marie Benedict**

**From the bestselling author of *The Only Woman in the Room* comes a mesmerizing tale of historical fiction that asks what kind of woman could have inspired an American dynasty.**

Clara Kelley is not who they think she is. She's not the experienced Irish maid who was hired to work in one of Pittsburgh's grandest households. She's a poor farmer's daughter with nowhere to go and nothing in her pockets. But the woman who shares her name has vanished, and assuming her identity just might get Clara some money to send back home.

Clara must rely on resolve as strong as the steel Pittsburgh is becoming famous for and an uncanny understanding of business, attributes that quickly gain her Carnegie's trust. But she still can't let her guard down, not even when Andrew becomes something more than an employer. Revealing her past might ruin her future--and her family's.

With captivating insight and heart, *Carnegie's Maid* is a book of fascinating 19th century historical fiction. Discover the story of one brilliant woman who may have spurred Andrew Carnegie's transformation from ruthless industrialist to the world's first true philanthropist.

**October: *The Underground Railroad* by Colson Whitehead**

Cora is a slave on a cotton plantation in Georgia. An outcast even among her fellow Africans, she is on the cusp of womanhood--where greater pain awaits. And so, when Caesar, a slave who has recently arrived from Virginia, urges her to join him on the Underground Railroad, she seizes the opportunity and escapes with him. In Colson Whitehead's ingenious conception, *The Underground Railroad* is no mere metaphor: engineers and conductors operate a secret network of actual tracks and tunnels beneath the Southern soil. Cora embarks on a harrowing flight from one state to the next, encountering, like Gulliver, strange yet different worlds at each stage of her journey. As Whitehead brilliantly re-creates the terrors of the antebellum era, he weaves in the saga of our nation, from the brutal abduction of Africans to the unfulfilled promises of the present day. *The Underground Railroad* is both the gripping tale of one woman's will to escape the horrors of bondage--and a powerful meditation on the history we all share.

**November: *The Little Old Lady Who Broke All the Rules* by Catharina Ingelman-Sundberg**

A witty and insightful comedy of errors about a group of delinquent seniors whose desire for a better quality of life leads them to rob and ransom priceless artwork. Martha Andersson may be seventy-nine-years-old and live in a retirement home, but that doesn't mean she's ready to stop enjoying life. So, when the new management of Diamond House starts cutting corners to save money, Martha and her four closest friends--Brains, The Rake, Christina and Anna-Gretta (a.k.a.

The League of Pensioners) won't stand for it. Fed up with early bedtimes and overcooked veggies, this group of feisty seniors sets about to regain their independence, improve their lot, and stand up for seniors everywhere.

Their solution? White collar crime. What begins as a relatively straightforward robbery of a nearby luxury hotel quickly escalates into an unsolvable heist at the National Museum. With police baffled and the Mafia hot on their trail, the League of Pensioners has to stay one walker's length ahead if it's going to succeed.

Told with all the insight and humor of *A Man Called Ove* or *Where'd You Go Bernadette?*, *The Little Old Lady Who Broke All the Rules* is a delightful and heartwarming novel that goes to prove the adage that it's not the years in your life that count, it's the life in your years.

**December: Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year**

**Winter and Spring 2027**

**January: Death of an Expert Witness by P.D. James**

In this page-turning installment in the bestselling Adam Dalgliesh mystery series from "the reigning mistress of murder" (Time), the Inspector must investigate the murder of a twisted forensic scientist and explore the dark secrets within his laboratory. When a brilliant forensic scientist is found murdered in his own laboratory, Scotland Yard is called to the scene. The victim, a well-respected, authoritative member of the scientific community, was unpleasant to and greatly disliked by those who worked closest to him, leaving detectives with a wealth of suspects and murderous motives. Inspector Adam Dalgliesh, an investigator with a poetic soul, is the one man who can sort through the lies, chasing down the truth behind the cover-ups, hidden agendas, and institutional secrecy. P.D. James deftly weaves another character-driven tale of intrigue in *Death of an Expert Witness*. Engaging and thrilling, she takes readers along with her troubled detective on a case rife with psychological thrills.

**February: This Other Eden by Paul Harding**

In 1792, formerly enslaved Benjamin Honey and his Irish wife, Patience, discover an island where they can make a life together. Over a century later, the Honeys' descendants and a diverse group of neighbors are desperately poor, isolated, and often hungry, but nevertheless protected from the hostility awaiting them on the mainland.

During the tumultuous summer of 1912, Matthew Diamond, a retired, idealistic but prejudiced schoolteacher-turned-missionary, disrupts the community's fragile balance through his efforts to educate its children. His presence attracts the attention of authorities on the mainland who, under the influence of the eugenics-thinking popular among progressives of the day, decide to forcibly evacuate the island, institutionalize its residents, and develop the island as a vacation destination. Beginning with a hurricane flood reminiscent of the story of Noah's Ark, the novel ends with yet another Ark.

In prose of breathtaking beauty and power, Paul Harding brings to life an unforgettable cast of characters: Iris and Violet McDermott, sisters raising three orphaned Penobscot children; Theophilus and Candace Larks and their brood of vagabond children; the prophetic Zachary Hand to God Proverbs, a Civil War veteran who lives in a hollow tree; and more. A spellbinding story of resistance and survival, *This Other Eden* is an enduring testament to the struggle to preserve human dignity in the face of intolerance and injustice.

**March: *The Sweetness of Water* by Nathan Harris**

In the waning days of the Civil War, brothers Prentiss and Landry--freed by the Emancipation Proclamation--seek refuge on the homestead of George Walker and his wife, Isabelle. The Walkers, wracked by the loss of their only son to the war, hire the brothers to work their farm, hoping through an unexpected friendship to stanch their grief. Prentiss and Landry, meanwhile, plan to save money for the journey north and a chance to reunite with their mother, who was sold away when they were boys.

Parallel to their story runs a forbidden romance between two Confederate soldiers. The young men, recently returned from the war to the town of Old Ox, hold their trysts in the woods. But when their secret is discovered, the resulting chaos, including a murder, unleashes convulsive repercussions on the entire community. In the aftermath of so much turmoil, it is Isabelle who emerges as an unlikely leader, proffering a healing vision for the land and for the newly free citizens of Old Ox.

With candor and sympathy, debut novelist Nathan Harris creates an unforgettable cast of characters, depicting Georgia in the violent crucible of Reconstruction. Equal parts beauty and terror, as gripping as it is moving, *The Sweetness of Water* is an epic whose grandeur locates humanity and love amid the most harrowing circumstances.

**April: *My Sister's Keeper* by Jodi Picoult**

Jodi Picoult is widely acclaimed for her keen insights into the hearts and minds of real people. Now she tells the emotionally powerful story of a family torn apart by conflicting needs and a passionate love that triumphs over human weakness.

Anna is not sick, but she might as well be. By age thirteen, she has undergone countless surgeries, transfusions, and shots so that her older sister, Kate, can somehow fight the leukemia that has plagued her since childhood. The product of preimplantation genetic diagnosis, Anna was conceived as a bone marrow match for Kate--a life and a role that she has never challenged...until now. Like most teenagers, Anna is beginning to question who she truly is. But unlike most teenagers, she has always been defined in terms of her sister--and so Anna makes a decision that for most would be unthinkable, a decision that will tear her family apart and have perhaps fatal consequences for the sister she loves.

*My Sister's Keeper* examines what it means to be a good parent, a good sister, a good person. Is it morally correct to do whatever it takes to save a child's life, even if that means infringing upon the rights of another? Is it worth trying to discover who you really are, if that quest makes you like yourself less? Should you follow your own heart, or let others lead you? Once again, in *My Sister's Keeper*, Jodi Picoult tackles a controversial real-life subject with grace, wisdom, and sensitivity.