

# SPRING INTO READING!

**U**nitedforDartmouth Book Discussion Group is perfect for readers who like to explore a good book, and don't mind foregoing the cozy living room with the yummy snacks and general chit chat. Led by Sarah Reaburn, Minister at Stairs Memorial United Church, the group is open to the whole community and to all faiths. It is perfect for busy people who do not want the pressure of reading a book every month or two, or who already belong to one or more book clubs.

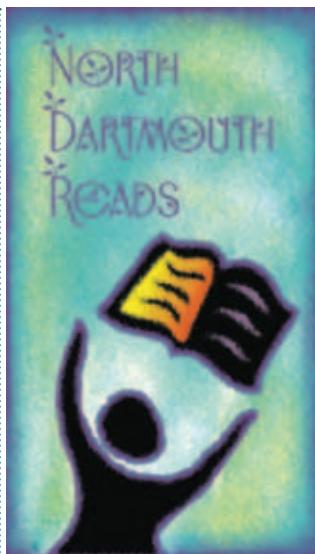
Meetings take place three times a year, in May, September and January, in the church parlor. Everyone is very welcoming and chatty upon arrival. But at 7 p.m., it's all about the book. Discussions usually run for a full hour—longer if it is going at a good clip.

Participants bring their own water, juice or coffee. There are no hostess stressors for this group, and no distractions from the discussion.

As with most book groups, there are regulars, occasionals, and those who prefer to just keep up with the reading list at home. All are welcome.

"I like the idea of using a book as a springboard," Sarah says. "You can jump off and talk about the ordinary, the unique and the spiritual aspects of life, using the stories and the characters."

She adds, "You can't do that with real people's lives, because that would be gossip. With a book, the pressure is off and you have total permis-



by Leigh Beauchamp Day

*"...you have total permission to explore someone else's life and how they handle the situations that come their way."*

sion to explore someone else's life and how they handle the situations that come their way."

With a minister leading the group one might expect the reading list to include only religious books. Not so. "Theology isn't where the rubber meets the road," Sarah says. "God and the spirit work through one's ordinary life."

The book that kicked off the group's first meeting last September

was *The Bishop's Man* by Linden MacIntyre. While set in the Catholic Church, it also spoke to the general state of many churches today, as well as to society and families in general.

The underlying theme was isolation. Each character was isolated in a different way—some by the power they held, others by the shame they guarded. The bishop's man, the main character, was isolated first by the job he was asked to do, and later by his doubts about the church, his work in it, and eventually, himself.

In some cases the pain of isolation led to suicide. The importance of getting to know and trust others as a real community became very clear, although that point may not have been intentional by the author.

The second book choice was *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet* by Jamie Ford. Religion and faith are not mentioned in this book. To Sarah, however, the issues it deals with, such as loyalty, death, racism, bullying, love and hope, all scream out, "where is God in all this?"

This historical novel is set in Seattle, Washington, during the WWII internment of American citizens of Japanese heritage. Henry, the main character, is Chinese.

*UnitedforDartmouth Book Discussion Group (back l-r): Betty Franklin, Betty Sheena Hall, Kitty Colpitts, Reverend Laird Stirling. (front l-r): Francie Fraser, Reverend Sarah Reaburn and Caroline Stirling.*

Throughout the book, he moves between middle age and his childhood, between being a father and a son, a devoted married man and, following the death of his wife, searching for his childhood love, a gentle Japanese girl. Henry was adept at finding the sweet among the bitter.

The next book is *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver. A Baptist preacher, with a pretty thin connection to God, moves his family to the Congo. His wife and four daughters each see him, the people of the Congo, and their situation, in vastly different ways.

Sarah says she doesn't like to read a book twice, but this one is an exception. Everyone is looking forward to discussing how these very different people adapt to a tough situation, and triumph in the end.

This is an open group, and everyone is welcome. Just come to the church parlor on May 16 at 7 p.m. and have a great time discussing this intriguing book.

## Book Clubs of North Dartmouth (and what they are currently reading)

### UnitedforDartmouth Book Discussion Group

*The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver

**May 16, 7:00 pm**

Contact Rev. Sarah Reaburn at 466-4389 or stairsmemorial@eastlink.ca.

### Lakeview Avenue Book Club

*The Forgotten Garden* by Kate Morton

### Forest Road Book Club

*Her Candle Burns at Both Ends* by Ann Costello

### BOOK CLUBS AT CHAPTERS, MIC MAC MALL

#### Romance Book Club

*Sold to the Highest Bidder* by Donna Alward OR *Captured Highlander* by Julianne MacLean

#### For the Love of Books Book Club

*Black Snow* by John Tattrie

#### Who Dunit Book Club

*And on the Surface Die* by Lou Allin

#### Young Adult/Paranormal Book Club

*White Cat* by Holly Black OR *The Girl Who Chased the Moon* by Sarah Addison Allen

All Chapters clubs are open. Call 466-1640 for dates and times.

To have your book club included in this list, send the name and what you are reading to: [bookclubs@eastlink.ca](mailto:bookclubs@eastlink.ca). If it is open to new members, add an e-mail address and/or telephone number.



photo: Leigh Beauchamp Day



## Fish & Chips Special

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