

2016 Australian Christian Book of the Year

Child, Arise!
The Courage to Stand:
A Spiritual Handbook for
Survivors of Sexual Abuse

Jane N Dowling

David Lovell Publishing

ISBN 9781863551533

Knowing that God speaks to us when we read the Bible, Jane Dowling prayerfully applies God's Word to the experience of living with the long-term effects of sexual abuse, including abuse by clergy. Her reflections are gentle, almost tremulous. Jesus shows her the way from ruin and despair to healing and hope. This is a handbook for survivors of sexual abuse and those who seek to understand and support them. But because Dowling engages with the Scriptures in their original context, her book has application for all Christians who are living with painful experiences. This is a courageous and historic book. For a church yearning for healing and wholeness, Jane Dowling has performed a great service.

Judging criteria

The **Australian Christian Book of the Year Award** is given annually to a book written by an Australian citizen normally resident in Australia. The award recognises and celebrates excellence in Australian Christian writing. A shortlist is announced in July and the award is presented during August. The award carries a prize of \$3,000. Supplementary awards may be made. Entries are judged with an eye to the following:

Original nature of the work.

Literary style, including suitability for the target audience.

Competence and expertise displayed by the author in writing the book and examining the underlying thesis.

Design, layout, cover, text and illustrations.

Contribution that the book makes in meeting a need for Christian writing for the Australian situation and in the Australian market.

Judges

Mark Conner is the Senior Minister at CityLife Church, a diverse community meeting in locations across Melbourne. He has a doctor of ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary and is passionate about seeing people change and grow. Mark is married to Nicole and they have three adult children. He loves basketball, music, reading and cooking. He is an avid Geelong Cats supporter.

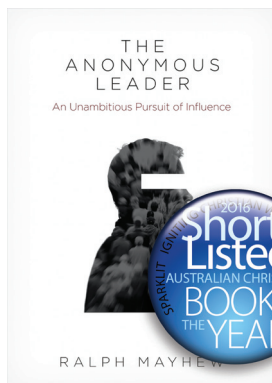
Alex Crawford holds degrees in arts, law and theology. He is a practising barrister in Brisbane. Outside the law, he is interested in books, music and the Brisbane Lions. Alex is married to Penny. They have three adult children and attend St Mark's Anglican Church, Clayfield. He is the secretary of the Mathew Hale Public Library.

Judith Nichols is married to Tony. They have four children and thirteen grandchildren. She has a doctorate in classics and ancient history and qualifications in theology, missiology,

education and linguistics. Judith and Tony have ministered together in Indonesia, with Indigenous Australians at Nungalinga College and trained missionary candidates. She currently coordinates women's ministry at Dalkeith Anglican Church, Perth.

Coordinator

Michael Collie
National Director
SparkLit

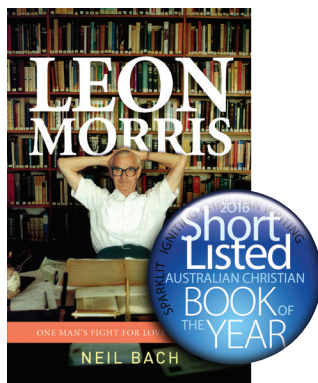


Shortlisted

The Anonymous Leader: An Unambitious Pursuit of Influence

Ralph Mayhew
Ralph Mayhew
ISBN 9780994405593

What does Christ-like leadership look like in the age of entitlement? *The Anonymous Leader* challenges us to make Jesus both our king and our cause. Ralph Mayhew draws on the work of Dallas Willard, Richard Foster and Bill Hybels, as well as his own experience. His style is winsome and his reasoning is supported by anecdotes and biblical illustrations. There is wisdom, insight and encouragement here for both emerging and experienced leaders. A timely call to humility and service.



Shortlisted

Leon Morris: One Man's Fight for Love and Truth

Neil Bach
Authentic Media
ISBN 9781842279861

This is the first comprehensive biography of Australia's most acclaimed and influential New Testament scholar. Neil Bach makes good use of Morris' extensive correspondence and meticulous records, and writes with enthusiasm. The reader is introduced to an original thinker and prodigious author. From unlikely beginnings, he emerged on the international scene to reassert the centrality of the atoning death of Jesus on the cross for Christian faith. Yet Morris was a humble and generous man whose door was always open to students and his heart to fellow disciples.

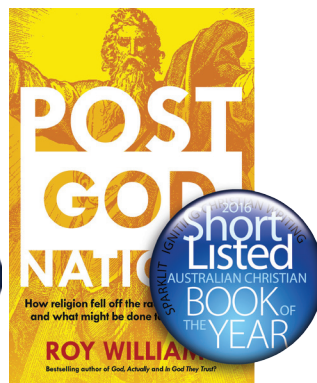


Shortlisted

Maralinga's Long Shadow: Yvonne's Story

Christobel Mattingley
Allen and Unwin
ISBN 9781760290177

This lavishly illustrated biography records the lasting costs of nuclear tests in Central Australia to an Aboriginal community. Displaced from their country, Yvonne Edwards and her people were moved from the soft sands of the desert to the hard stones of a strange land. Her firstborn was taken away and her life was dogged by tragedy. Christobel Mattingley tells the story of her friend Yvonne and how her warm Christian faith delivered her from bitterness and enabled her to inspire her community to maintain both their connection to the land through painting and to pursue justice and compensation for the effects of radioactive contamination of their country. A gem.



Shortlisted

Post-God Nation? How Religion Fell Off the Radar in Australia and What Might Be Done to Get It Back On

Roy Williams
ABC Books
ISBN 9780733333583

In this accessible yet rigorous exploration of the real and perceived influence of Christianity in Australia, Roy Williams engages with both historical and contemporary culture and thinking. He demonstrates the impact of Christianity on the culture and values of all Australians, whether Christian or not. Williams imagines a frightening and convincing picture of an Australia where the Christian voice has been forever silenced. He does not shrink from identifying ways that Christians have undermined their own credibility. His list of causes where the churches should be at the forefront deserves serious consideration.

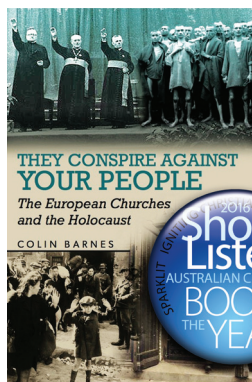


Shortlisted

Resilient: Your Invitation to a Jesus-Shaped Life

Sheridan Voysse
Discovery House
ISBN 9781627073560

While recovering from a personal crisis, a communicator of the Gospel, Sheridan Voysse's life is elegant, imaginative and playful. It is rich with stories that move the mind. These memories provide fresh insights into Jesus' most demanding words, powerfully fulfilling promises. We are drawn into God's intimate life. We learn that grace comes not from ourselves but from Jesus at his word accordingly.



Shortlisted

They Conspire Against Your People: The European Churches and the Holocaust

Colin Barnes

King's Divinity Press and the
Centre for Jewish-Christian
Studies
ISBN 9780956200624

The story of the complicity of the Christian church during the Holocaust, particularly in Poland, Hungary and Germany, is a powerful indictment which commands our attention. This profoundly disturbing book demonstrates the danger of adapting religious beliefs to the prevailing political and philosophical currents and prejudices. *They Conspire Against Your People* is a timely reminder that we will be judged by our response to the suffering of others.

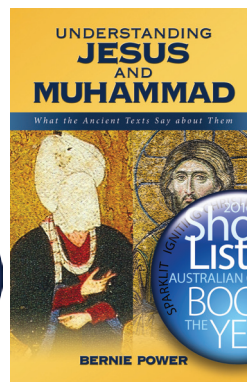


Shortlisted

Trumped By Grace **Peter Stiles**

Poetica Christi Press
ISBN 9780994164025

Peter Stiles delights in Jesus, creation, people and language. His writing is disciplined and masterful and the poems are vivid and beautiful. By revealing the sacred in the ordinary, *Trumped by Grace* reminds us how to be still and know God in a chaotic world. This is poetry for everyone. Buy it. Read it. Anywhere. Aloud.



Shortlisted

Understanding Jesus and Muhammad: What the Ancient Texts Say About Them **Bernie Power**

Acorn Press
ISBN 9780994254450

Drawing on his considerable scholarship and experience in Asia and the Middle East, Bernie Power helps us to understand history's two most influential individuals and the tension between the faiths and civilisations they inspired. To real-life encounters and conversations the author brings the texts and doctrines that each faith holds as authoritative. Readers are able to compare the teachings of Jesus and Muhammad on violence, miracles, attitudes to women and the end of the age. This is a practical and concise reference work for Christians eager to engage respectfully with Muslims.



Shortlisted

Zechariah: The Lord Returns **Michael R Stead**

Aquila Press
ISBN 9781925041644

Michael Stead has served Christians well by filling a gap in contemporary Bible commentary with this lucid and accessible study of one of the more difficult books in the Old Testament. Stead highlights Zechariah's message to hang on to God's promises amid struggle and discouragement. Among a confusing array of books on the end-times, this down-to-earth commentary provides helpful tools for understanding apocalyptic writing. Each chapter concludes with an explanation of how the visions of Zechariah relate to Jesus and apply to our lives today.



2016 Young Australian Christian Writer Award

Winner



Miriam Dale ***The Weight of Hope***

This collection of poetry and prose is profound and insightful. Miriam Dale's enviable honesty and warmth make her

a welcome companion. Her writing is candid and raw but above all hopeful.

An extract from *The Weight of Hope*

*Bearing down the length of history
Like a freaking freight train
The feet-first dive of God towards humanity
The Divine barrelling through time and space
Headed straight for us.*

*But He is pounding towards a curtain
Building speed, He sprints towards a wall
More impenetrable than the Iron Curtain
More heart-breaking than the Berlin Wall
More separating than death itself.*

*And the angels are beginning to cringe now
And the demons are starting to laugh
As the inevitable collision approaches
Of the Divine with the Unbreakable dark.*

*The angels curl their wings over their eyes
As the moment of truth arrives.
But just before catastrophic impact happens
There is the shocking glimpse of a spark.*

*Two hands have reached through from
the human side
Two hands with massive nail scars
Gripping the two sides of the impenetrable
curtain
And ripping it apart.
The Divine bursts through the barrier
Flings through the broken wall
An open door where once there was darkness
A walkway once and for all ...*

*But now,
With good, even the best of intentions
(And all that the old maxim implies)
Our shaking hands are busily trying to stitch
the curtain
Shut again.*

Second Prize

Rebecca Lang ***The Sprinkling of Unforced Rhythms***

The journey of a young woman recovering from a traumatic experience is told in a lyrical, poetic style. Classy writing with a clear promise of restoration for a broken world.

An extract from *The Sprinkling of Unforced Rhythms*

*Experimenting with movement, a figure
started to form on Rita's page. The bulbous
waist and faceless head did not provide the
most flattering of self-portraits but, like all
great art, its simple lines reflected an intense
emotion towards her subject matter: her life
in lines. Weak, squiggly lines were scribbled
over the top, Nkalubbo's presence adding a
vulnerable joy to her existence.*

Third Prize

Jim Schirmer ***The Way of the Rabbi***



2016 Australian Christian Teen Writer Award

Winner



Annie-Jo Vogler ***All the Ways We Are***

A beautiful and absorbing story dealing with the uncertainties of life. The teenage protagonists struggle with

unexpected events and the challenges and complexities of living in an extended family. The writing is polished and the characters and Christian themes develop logically and naturally.

An extract from *All the Ways We Are*

'What's the point of rules, of someone making up laws, when it takes away from freedom?'

'Depends on what you think freedom is, I suppose.'

'I'm not sure what it is.'

She asks tentatively, thinking of a verse on Dad's paper, 'What about God?'

'Nothing's changed, Audrie. God isn't anything magical.'

'No, He's God. He's different.'

He stares at her sarcastically with an eyebrow raised. 'Why doesn't He make my stupid family function again?'

'My dad says people have to want to change.'

'Your dad's a good bloke, but he doesn't have all the answers.'

She lets her hands drop into her lap and laces her fingers together. 'Chester, I'm trying to help you.'

'I never asked for help. For once, I wanted someone to understand me.' His glare, meant to wither her, brings tears to her eyes and anger to her soul.

'I don't know how to understand you, okay? I wish I could, but I can't.' She blinks furiously and takes a deep breath, trying to think clearly. 'As for understanding, I have problems, too! You never bothered to care!'

'It's not my fault. You think I wanted any of this to happen?'

Second Prize

Elizabeth Stinton *Meeting*

The reader is a reluctant witness to life in the trenches in the aftermath of a devastating battle. The language is as sparse and bare as the prospects facing the protagonists. The fight is far from over. It is dark and cold and God seems more remote than ever.

An extract from *Meeting*

SNAP.

The hush rippled.

Arms tensed. Fingers twitched. The figure began to pivot, slow and measured, towards the sound.

CRACK.

The figure whirled around. There. A shadow, no, an animal. Large and gaunt. Dirty brown mane. Pointed, yellow teeth. Frigid eyes. Eyes that reflected the figure.

A breath shuddered out. Legs pulled taut. A slow step back.

A snarl. The animal stalked forward.

The figure jolted, then scrabbled wildly backwards, eyes transfixed on the creature. But the animal did not follow. Rather, it slunk to one side.

Snap. Crack. Crunch. Toward the clump of rocks.

The figure stopped, made an aborted movement back toward the rocks, stopped again. The face contorted and the lips pulled back in a mirror of the beast's snarl.

Third Prize

Obed Wallis *Bellum Ex Animo*

A mature and sophisticated exploration of the connection between the psychological and spiritual, and the healing power of Christ's love.

An extract from *Bellum Ex Animo*

Like a virus, this anxiety has the ability to infect and root itself within the marrow of our bones—making what was strong, brittle and weak and what could be heaven's manifestation on earth, a piece of shrinking and abominable flesh. In truth, worry is the unreasonable and often uncontainable antagonist of our very being, constantly trying to wrench from us the joy we have yet to merely step into. Yet when we acknowledge the Father of heaven and earth this repulsive creature is outshone and so undone.

Judging criteria

The **Australian Christian Teen Writer Award** carries a prize of \$1,000 and is offered annually for the best unpublished manuscript written by an Australian citizen under 18 years of age.

The **Young Australian Christian Writer Award** carries a prize of \$2,500 and is given annually for the best unpublished manuscript written by an Australian citizen under 30 years of age.

Supplementary awards may be made.

The winning works will explore a Christian perspective or theme and incorporate, explain or encourage Christian life and values. Entries are judged with an eye to the following:

Original nature and content of the work.

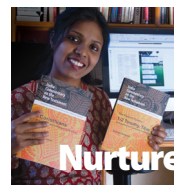
Literary style, including suitability for the target audience.

Contribution that the work makes in meeting a need for Christian writing in Australia.

You can fan the flames of faith



Christian writers, publishers and book-sellers around the world.



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SparkLit nurtures emerging publishers by directing funds, expertise and energy where Christian writing is needed most.

SparkLit equips publishing professionals. We invest in the training and development of promising Christian writers, editors and

SparkLit makes Christian books available, accessible and affordable where commitment is strong but support and

Titles submitted for the 2016 Australian Christian Book of the Year Award

ABC Books

Post-God Nation? How Religion Fell Off the Radar in Australia and What Might Be Done to Get It Back On
Roy Williams

Acorn Press

Dancing with Angels: The Life Story of Stephen Than, Archbishop of Myanmar
Alan Nichols

Live Peace: Joy Balazo and Young Ambassadors for Peace
Margaret Reeson

Standing on Their Shoulders: Heroes of the Faith for Today
Rhys S Bezzant

Understanding Jesus and Muhammad: What the Ancient Texts Say About Them
Bernie Power

Allen and Unwin

Maralinga's Long Shadow: Yvonne's Story
Christobel Mattingley

Andrew Turner

Fruitful Church
Andrew Turner

Aquila Press

A Short Book About Jesus: The Man from Heaven
Paul Barnett
Zechariah: The Lord Returns
Michael R Stead

Ark House Press

Cleopatra's Granddaughter
Michael Hammond

Australian Scholarly Publishing

From Strength to Strength: A Life of Marcus Loane
Allan M Blanch

Authentic Media

Leon Morris: One Man's Fight for Love and Truth
Neil Bach

The Plum Tree in the Desert: Ten Stories of Faith and Mission to Inspire You
Naomi Reed

Bloomsbury

Vulnerability and Care: Christian Reflections on the Philosophy of Medicine
Andrew Sloane

Book Pal

Night Journeys
Raylene Pearce

Boolarong Press

The Good Bishop: The Story of Mathew Hale
Michael Gourlay

Chi-Books

Islam Rising: The Middle East and Us
Stuart Robinson

Crossway

The Son of God and the New Creation
Graeme Goldsworthy

Judges and Ruth: God in Chaos
Barry G Webb

Dave Price

Turning the World Upside Down: Learning from the Primitive Methodist Movement
Dave Price

David Lovell Publishing

Child Arise! The Courage to Stand: A Spiritual Handbook for Survivors of Sexual Abuse
Jane N Dowling

Discovery House

Resilient: Your Invitation to a Jesus-Shaped Life
Sheridan Voysey

Eider Books

More Valuable than Gold: The Philanthropy of John and Ann Goodlet
Paul F Cooper

Elk Lake Publishing

I Only Want to Dance with You
Zillah Williams

Fervr

The Spirit: Giver of Life
Edward Surrey

Firewheel Press

Meditations: Beautiful Bible Verses for Colouring
Lorien Atwood

IVP

Global Church: Reshaping Our Conversations, Renewing Our Mission, Revitalizing Our Churches
Graham Hill

John Garratt Publishing

Heroes of the Faith: 55 Men and Women Whose Lives Have Proclaimed Christ and Inspired the Lives of Others
Edited by Roland Ashby

King's Divinity Press and the Centre for Jewish-Christian Studies

They Conspire Against Your People: The European Churches and the Holocaust
Colin Barnes

Langham Global Library

From Genocide to Generosity: Hatreds Heal on Rwanda's Hills
John Steward

Monarch Books

Who Ordered the Universe? Evidence for God in Unexpected Places
Nick Hawkes

Moody Press

Disappearing Church: From Cultural Relevance to Gospel Resilience
Mark Sayers

Morning Star Publishing

Testing Tradition and Liberating Theology: Finding Your Own Voice
Val Webb

Things that Jesus Said: Parables of the Kingdom and Eternal Life
Doug Rowston

Coming Back to Earth: Essays on the Church, Climate Change, Cities, Agriculture and Eating
Jonathan Cornford

MST Press

The Corinth Letters
Ben Chenoweth

Nick & Yvette Wynne

Heaven Can't Wait
Nick and Yvette Wynne

Pickwick Publications

Raised from Obscurity: A Narratival and Theological Study of the Characterization of Women in Luke-Acts
Greg W Forbes & Scott Harrower

Poetica Christi Press

Patches of Godlight: Poems, Prayers, Contemplations
Janette Fernando

Trumped by Grace
Peter Stiles

Ralph Mayhew

The Anonymous Leader: An Unambitious Pursuit of Influence
Ralph Mayhew

Signs Publishing

Summer Fades
Amanda Bews

Silver Springs Publishing

The Hiddenness
Eve Lynne Hooper

Strand Publishing

The Floating Corpse
Kel Richards

The Bible Society

Their Sacrifice: The Brave and Their Bibles
Edited by John Harris

University of Queensland Press

Opening Hearts and Minds: Reflections on School Chaplaincy
Ronald Noone

Wakefield Press

Bystanders: Echoes of Stories Past
Valerie Volk

Watto Books

Champion Blokes 'Shed' Their Shame!
Ian Watson

Wipf & Stock

Atheism for Christians: Are There Lessons for the Religious World from Secular Tradition?
Benjamin T Jones
Knowing Who You Are: Eight Surprising Images of Christian Identity
Malcolm Gill

Zondervan

The Story of God Bible Commentary: Romans
Michael F Bird

The 2016 Australian Christian Literature Awards were announced and prizes presented in Melbourne on Thursday 18 August 2016.

The Australian Christian Literature Awards are administered by SparkLit (The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia Incorporated and the Australian Christian Literature Society)

SparkLit

PO Box 198, Forest Hill, Victoria 3131, Australia. Telephone 1300 13 7725
www.SparkLit.org