

2025 Australian Christian Book of the Year

Made in Our Image God, Artificial Intelligence and You

Stephen Driscoll
Matthias Media 9781922980199

This is a realistic and fearless assessment of the ways AI could change our world. Stephen Driscoll expertly explains AI technologies and how they evolve. Because it is made in our image, AI will make our lives better and worse. We know we can't rely on humans or market forces to make the right moral calls about the development and implementation of AI, but we can trust the promises of God. Because we are created in God's image, and recreated in the image of his Son, we occupy a place that is not determined by technology. Driscoll communicates with wit and gravity and the result is balanced and memorable. There is nothing like a revolution to test the foundations and scope of our hope.

Judging criteria

The **Australian Christian Book of the Year Award** is given annually for 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

Greg Clarke has a doctorate in modern literature and long experience in publishing, academia and Christian mission. He is the CEO of Leprosy Mission Australia and the author of the 2014 Australian Christian Book of the Year, *The Great Bible Swindle*. Greg and his family are members of St Mark's Anglican Church in Darling Point, Sydney.

Miriam Wei Wei Lo is a writer intrigued by the intersection

between faith, art and messy human lives. After eleven years in country ministry with her husband, she has worked as a creative writing academic for seven years and is now on the cusp of another change. Miriam and her family go to East Fremantle Baptist Church. Her latest poetry collection is *Who Comes Calling?*

Catherine Place started out as a secondary school teacher. Theological study added to the excitement of raising a family with her husband Dan. She has written

for a Catholic liturgical magazine, produced resources for teachers of Texts and Traditions and Religious Education in secondary schools and was a tutor at Corpus Christi Seminary and the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne.

Awards Coordinator

Bei-En Zou



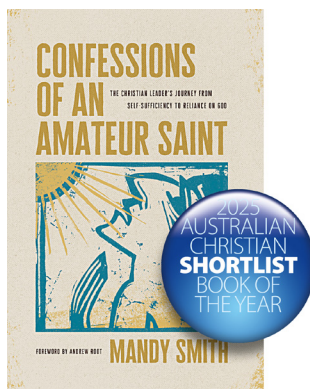


Shortlisted

The Body God Gives A Biblical Response to Transgender Theory

Robert S. Smith
Lexham Academic
9781683598121

This is an impressive scholarly response to a pressing social issue. Robert Smith engages at length with theorists who argue in favour of divorcing sex from gender. He then summarises biblical scholarship on the topic. Finally, he examines key Bible texts, carefully refuting other scholars with whom he disagrees. Smith is thorough and comprehensive. While critical, he is also compassionate and fair. A solid and insightful defence of the enduring created order and the idea that sex determines gender.

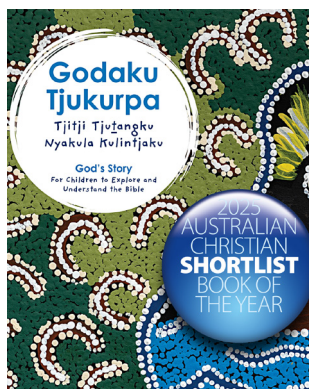


Shortlisted

Confessions of an Amateur Saint The Christian Leader's Journey from Self-Sufficiency to Reliance on God

Mandy Smith
NavPress
9781641588379

How does a Christian leader forsake formulas and self-reliance and learn to trust God? What does it mean to serve faithfully in a context where growth seems elusive and unlikely? What about the desire to control or the temptation to despair? These confessional devotions are warm and easy to read but traverse disturbing territory. The journey is uncomfortable because the destination is humility. Mandy Smith is personal and vulnerable, and her accessible and engaging manner and probing questions make the book interactive. This degree of transparency is rare in church leaders. And what is rare is valuable.



Shortlisted

Godaku Tjukurpa: Tjitji Tjutangku Nyakula Kulintjaku (God's Story: For Children to Explore and Understand the Bible)

Various artists
Bible Society
9780647533840

In their unique idiom, Pitjantjatjara artists tell God's story. Fifty-nine key Bible verses from Genesis to Revelation are rendered in the words and iconography of the Central Desert. While originally conceived as a Bible outline for local children, subtitles and a guide to the icons make the book accessible to English speakers. Each page glows with meaning and the reader's attention is rewarded with fresh insights into Scripture. This handsome volume is the fruit of the collaboration of numerous artists and linguists. It is a work of great generosity.

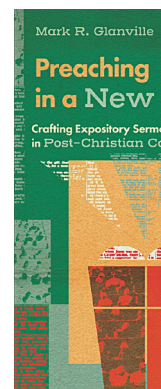


Shortlisted

Modern Genre Theory An Introduction for Biblical Studies

Andrew Judd
Zondervan Academic
9780310144694

Knowing what kind of book we are reading determines how we approach it and how we interpret and apply what we read. If the book of Revelation is not a road map to twenty-first-century Middle Eastern politics how should we read it? To this challenge, Andrew Judd brings recent developments in the field of genre studies (which incorporates literary, linguistic, and rhetorical analysis) and shows how problems of biblical interpretation can be clarified and solved by asking questions about genre. Despite the academic setting, this is a friendly, entertaining and useful book. It will change the way you read the Bible for the better.



Shortlisted

Preaching in a New World Crafting Expository Sermons in Post-Christian Communities

Mark Glanville
InterVarsity Press
9781514010990

A theologian and pianist helpfully explores expository teaching in a hungry and demanding modern and postmodern world. He explores an aspect of the task of preparation, exegesis of the text, consideration of our audience, and posture, application, and improvisation. He addresses the shifting sermon in contemporary culture and the timeless work of preaching which requires a commitment to understand our world and listen to what it says. This manual is a source of inspiration, wisdom, and great practical



New Key Stewarding the Past in an Ahistoric Age

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Shortlisted
Priests of History
Stewarding the Past in an Ahistoric Age
Sarah Irving-Stonebraker
Zondervan Reflective
9780310161134

Christianity is a historic faith: without the record of what God has done and continues to do, we are nothing. To overcome our preoccupation with the present, and individual autonomy and authenticity, Sarah Irving-Stonebraker urges Christians to recover, guide and keep our history. This will enable us to mature as disciples and navigate complexity and conflict with grace and humility. Irving-Stonebraker was an atheist who was drawn to Jesus by the beauty and promise in Christian customs, seasons, testimonies, liturgy and prayers. Her story is beautiful and her reasoning is elegant and compelling.



Shortlisted
Subjects and Citizens
The Politics of the Gospel
Michael P. Jensen
Matthias Media
9781922980182

“By declaring that Jesus is Lord, we make a fundamentally political statement about power and authority in human life.” In this refreshing book, Jensen offers a practical and pastoral reading of Romans chapters 12 to 15 for our fractured and fractious world. When we submit to the Lord Jesus and serve in the kingdom of heaven we become agents of mercy, peace, justice and encouragement. The church is to be an alternative society, not isolated, but characterised by respect, love, hospitality and sacrificial nonconformity. Self-rule is self-serving. How will we show the world that God is our boss?



Shortlisted
This Teeming Mess of Glory
Matthew Pullar
Resource Publications
9798385242252

In the inexplicable suffering of mental illness and the everyday glory of simply being alive, God’s mercies do not pass unnoticed. Matthew Pullar moves easily between praise, disillusion, wonder and doubt. He celebrates the joys and challenges of fatherhood. He voices the lament of an heir to stolen land. He displays his craft in wonderful bursts of wordplay and excels in his exploration of the sonnet form. In poems that connect the Covid sourdough craze to the resurrection (*Resurrection Bread*), or the constant intrusion of small children to God’s omnipresent gaze (*You Are Not Your Own*), Pullar reminds us that God is present in our mess. He is a tender and courageous companion.



Shortlisted
World Christianity
An Introduction
Graham Joseph Hill
Cascade Books
9798385201303

A big book with a big agenda. Graham Hill advocates for a decentralised and interdependent church in which Christians from every culture contribute and are mutually enriched. To achieve this, Christians everywhere bring their particular insights and sensitivities to the tasks of mission, governance, and the interpretation of Scripture. Hill’s contribution to this vision is to give majority world believers a voice. Interviews conducted with church leaders and theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America form the heart of his book. This is a wonderful opportunity to broaden and deepen our understanding of the world’s only truly global religion.



2025 Australian Christian Teen Writer Award

Winner



Hannah Leigh *In Bloom*

This short story harnesses the seasons to frame the slow ebb and flow of maturation in faith. It is an original and

relatable portrayal of the struggles and despair of girlhood and high school friendships, and captures the challenges facing Australian teenage Christians.

Extract from *In Bloom*

I look at the clock on the wall.

Midnight.

I am officially eighteen!

My mother hugs me tightly and I smile.

I listen to the flood of notifications coming from my phone. I respond to my friends' birthday texts one by one. I tell them how much I love them. I silently thank God for all the amazing people He has placed in my life. There is nothing from Alina. My eyes fill with tears of gratitude for the friends I still have.

Later that day, I pass Alina in the school hall and smile politely, but she looks straight ahead. My eyes tingle with sadness, I continue walking. I have no regrets and

my smile spreads wider. Maybe growing up means leaving some people behind.

As dusk approaches, I sit in my backyard under the vast sky, pink and purple hues surround the setting sun. I take a moment to breathe.

Although I am now an adult, I still feel like a child. The future still scares me. I am still learning to trust God. Perhaps I always will be. But as I sit here now, the person I was a year ago seems like a distant memory. I am changing. I am growing.

I look up at the sky and say a short prayer.

"God, thank you for everything you have done in my life. Thank you for your faithfulness to me even when I don't deserve it. Help me to continue to trust you and follow you for the rest of my life."

I open my eyes. The sun peeks through the clouds. I grin.

My story is just beginning.

Second Prize



Aubrey Woods *Oceans and Trees*

This rich collection of imaginative, vivid and sometimes raw poems explores the experience of young women.

A distinctive and versatile literary style matches the tone and gravity of the joy, the grief, the opportunities, and the uplifting hope of the gospel.

A Change In the Way I Sway

Opportunities come like kisses
in the breeze

I want to grab one and press it to my heart
Feast on the simplicity of choice
Hide it a little longer
Just mine, not forever
My heart has strings that cross

a thousand dimensions
My choice sends ripples to those
who know me
Crashes waves on those who love me
But I am in the silent centre
Opportunity in hand and choice in heart
Tears only flow, my love pours
I have the blessing of the Highest King

Joint Third Prize

Eliza Kumnick *What a Beautiful Man He Is*

A modern writer imagines they witness the crucifixion. The writing is well paced and theological ideas are clearly articulated. The result is solid, moving and encouraging.

Joint Third Prize

Lisa Payne *Hadassah*

A compelling retelling of the story of Esther. Strong dialogue, evocative settings, humour, and knowledge of Jewish history and traditions add depth to the biblical account. Relatable and relevant historical fiction.



2025 Young Australian Christian Writer Award

Winner



Ashleigh Dowling *In Between*

This collection of heartfelt and accomplished poems draws the reader into the author's world and leaves us

wanting more. It offers rich insights into themes of faith and doubt, contemplation and creation, and meaning and purpose.

Do Not Be Surprised

Some people have been surprised
to hear
that I am religious.

Some think that religion is being gradually
stripped away, passed down through
the ages like pass-the-parcel,
each generation ripping off a crude layer
of wrapping paper
until it's all gone.

I don't know exactly where my faith
came from.

I know that I started to feel
achingly empty at seven years old.
I nibbled on an apple-flavoured
fruit roll-up
and craved something more.

School was poisonous ground for faith
in anything apart from being popular.

We tussled to be liked, to fit the
revolving door of teenage idolatry.
I waited outside for long enough
to begin to hate myself and look for
something better, something bolder,
something louder

until I realised God was quiet.
When I lost myself—when everything
I knew

was wrong and everything I held
was gone—I found it all.

We live in a world of thistles and thorns
of disease and drought and concreted
lawns
but faith does not need Earth to grow.
So, do not be surprised.

Honourable Mention

Zoe Ho *Marriage and Fruit*

Shawn Rajaratnam *Food, Family, Forgiveness and Faithful Footing*

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.

The 2025 Australian Christian Literature Awards were announced and prizes presented on Thursday 21 August 2025.

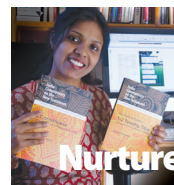
The Australian Christian Literature Awards are administered by SparkLit (The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia Incorporated and the Australian Christian Literature Society).

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**Titles submitted
for the 2025
Australian
Christian Book of
the Year Award**

10 Publishing

Wow God! Thank You, Sorry, Please,
Simon Camilleri
(Illustrated by
Dominic On)

Acorn Press

The End of Men?
Simon Smart

*Every Moment,
Everywhere,*
Naomi Reed

Andrew Bond

The Awakening,
Andrew Bond

Aquila Press

Job: Enduring Hope,
Andrew R. Prideaux

Ark House Press

By His Grace,
Di McDonald

Fulfilled, Angus Ling

It's Not a Sprint,
Stephanie Walters

Press Upwards,
Ashley Walmsley

*The Truth About
High School,* Diana
Adis Tahhan

**Bible Society
Australia**

*Godaku Tjukurpa
(God's Story),*
various artists

Cascade Books

The Farewell Suites,
Andrew Lansdown

World Christianity,
Graham Joseph Hill

**Christian
Education
National**

Valley of the Shadow,
Julia Verdouw

Coventry Press

Theology Matters,
Peter Sherlock
and Daniel Nellor

**Delta Partners
Press**

Paint in the Blood,
Anne Winckel

Felicity Jayne

Free Indeed,
Felicity Jayne

**Footprints
Chaplaincy**

*The Doors of the
Ocean,* John
O'Callaghan

Form Faith

Shaped by the Spirit,
Kate Pocklington

Free InDeed Media

Blue Skies Dreaming,
Amanda Deed

Growing Faith

The Forgetful Prince,
Matt Redmond
(Illustrated by
Lauren Redmond)

*Parenting in God's
Family,* Harriet
Connor (editor)

**Honest
Christianity Media**

Honest Christianity,
Drew Cordell

InterVarsity Press

*A Bird's-Eye View
of Luke and Acts,*
Michael F. Bird

*Preaching in a
New Key,* Mark
R. Glanville

**Leprosy Mission
Australia**

When Hope Came,
Janet Walmsley

**Lexham
Academic Press**

The Body God Gives,
Robert S. Smith

**Master Design
Publishing**

*Declaring the End
from the Beginning,*
Rose Peak and
Mervyn Farrell

Matthias Media

Getting Over Yourself,
Caroline Spencer

Made in Our Image,
Stephen Driscoll

Motherhood,
Jocelyn Loane

Subjects and Citizens,
Michael P. Jensen

*The Team Leader's
Handbook,*
Dave Moore

**Movement
Australia**

Unity for Movement,
Greig Whittaker
and Andrew Katay

NavPress

*Confessions of
an Amateur Saint,*
Mandy Smith

Olive Tree Media

Impress,
Ainsley Freeman

**Pickwick
Publications**

*A Language for
the Soul,* Stuart
C. Devenish

Quiet Communion

*Silent Meditation
and the Gospels,*
Michelle Wood
and Paul Wood

**Resource
Publications**

Global Revival,
Robert J. Nyhuis

*This Teeming
Mess of Glory,*
Matthew Pullar

Rhiza Press

The Captive's Song,
Amanda Deed

**RiverCity Worship
Movement**

It's Time to Go Up!
Nico Smit

Ruth Amos

Boots that Fit,
Ruth Amos

Ruth Close

*The Midwife, the
Plumber and the
Bishop,* Margaret
Docking

**Shepherd
Street Press**

*Beauty and the
Law,* Mark Fowler

**Soul Window
Books**

*Hey God, Can I Ask
You Something?*
Brad R. Emery
(Illustrated by
Tiarne Hookham)

Steph Penny

*Surviving Chronic
Illness,* Steph Penny

**thedaytheworld.
com**

*Jesus, a True Trauma
Expert,* M. J. Bellas

W Publishing

Plans for Your Good,
Scott Morrison

Wipf and Stock

Learning to Love,
Sue M. Holdsworth

Xulon Press

Journey to Joy,
Lorna Hardy

Youthworks Media

*The Child in God's
Church,* Tim Beilharz

**Zondervan
Academic**

*Modern
Genre Theory,*
Andrew Judd

**Zondervan
Reflective**

Priests of History,
Sarah Irving-
Stonebraker



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books are needed.

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PO Box 198, Forest
Hill Victoria 3131
Telephone 1300 13 7725
admin@sparklit.org
www.sparklit.org