



Church Mission Society summer reading list

Homegrown inspiration: CMS staff publications

Here are some books CMS staff members have written, edited or contributed to that we think you might enjoy.

All views expressed are those of staff members, not necessarily those of CMS.

1

Fringe Dweller, Jonny Baker and David Cotterill, Getsidetracked, 2026

Jesus was loved by fringe dwellers – the poor, lame, blind, lepers, the oppressed, the possessed, foreigners, beggars, outsiders, those deemed unclean, women who experienced shame, tax collectors and sinners. He spent time with them. Fringe Dweller is a collection of 40 reflections with 20 original illustrations by artist Jon Birch, based on encounters in the gospels with Jesus the Fringe Dweller. Each reflection includes a scripture reading, a practice and a liturgy. Ideal for personal use, for groups and for those preaching or curating worship.

2

Into All the Parish: Pioneering Practices for Every Local Church, Greg Bakker and Tina Hodgett, Church House Publishing, 2026

Arising out of the Pioneering Parishes project, Into All the Parish holds together pioneering and parochial forms of ministry, which are frequently in tension. It honours both as distinct yet connected modes of ministry, seeing pioneering as an integral dynamic within vibrant parochial ministry and essential for widening the possibilities to fulfil the “care of souls” in a local area.

Into all the Parish offers practical principles, stories and case studies, forming a framework for corporate discipleship in which congregations identify their aspirations, commit to live out of shared values and create space to pursue ministry within and beyond the church walls.

3 In the Fullness of Time: A Story From the Past and Future of the Church, Paul Bradbury, Canterbury Press, 2024

This is a book about the present and future of the church in our own challenging context: a secular age, decline, stretched resources, complex and fragmented communities requiring diverse missional approaches. Weaving together storytelling, travelogue and poetry, Paul Bradbury journeys from rural Norfolk to inner-city London, from a radical missional community in Lincolnshire, to a traditional village parish in Dorset, to explore what the church looks like today, and how local parish communities are wrestling with the tensions between the value of inherited church and the need to look to the future.

4 Being the People of God: Missional Ecclesiology for Uncertain Times, Paul Bradbury, Isabelle Hamley, Andy Smith, SCM, 2025

In unsteady political, societal and ecclesial times, what might a missional ecclesiology offer? Drawn from a consultation by the Church of England's Faith and Order Commission, this book seeks to offer a conversation involving theologians and practitioners across three key themes – the church's worship as a gathered community, its witness as a scattered community and its walk as a pilgrim community. With contributors including: Jonny Baker, Angus Ritchie and Cathy Ross.

5 Decolonizing Mission, Harvey Kwiyan, SCM Press, 2025

For the past 500 years, the idea of the mission of God has been synonymous with that of the expansion of Western civilisation and its influence in the world. In Decolonizing Mission, Harvey Kwiyan traces the history of Christian mission alongside the history of empire, showing the influence that one had on the other. Imagining what mission without imperialism would look like, Kwiyan sheds light on the connection between colonialism and mission and invites us to realign our missional methods with God's. One of the International Bulletin of Mission Research's Ten Outstanding Books in Mission Studies, World Christianity, and Intercultural Theology for 2025.

6 Words Fitly Spoken: Everyday African Theology for Millennials and Gen Z, Joseph Ola, Word Alive, 2025

What does it mean to live faithfully as a young African Christian in a digitally connected, culturally complex world? In Words Fitly Spoken, Joseph Ola weaves together powerful quotations, African proverbs and personal testimony to offer a refreshing vision of Christian discipleship – one that honours both global wisdom and African identity. Through 13 compelling reflections, this book addresses the core struggles of millennials and Gen Z: the pressure to succeed, the fear of failure, the tyranny of busyness and the search for authentic faith in an age of performance and comparison.

7 Chinese Heritage in British Christianity: More than Foreigners, Alexander Chow (ed), SCM, 2025

This is a critical time for British Chinese Christians. On the one hand, the national churches of each of Britain's four nations have experienced an unprecedented decline in attendance. On the other hand, British Chinese Christianity is among the fastest growing Christian populations in the UK. But there is a much longer history, with the first Chinese Christian in Britain dated to the 17th century. This book tells the story of the rise of British Chinese Christianity, and how British Chinese people have been shaping and reshaping the future of British Christianity. It brings together theological educators, church ministers and parachurch leaders, including a contribution from Mark Nam, chaplain to the Asian Christianity MA students at CMS.

8 The Starter's Way: Leading New Contextual Christian Communities, Ed Olsworth-Peter and Dwight J Zscheile (eds.), Church Publishing Inc, 2025

A call for new ways of starting thriving church communities, based on global case studies of churches who have innovated from within their local communities. As many established churches struggle to connect with people in increasingly post-Christian societies, there has been a vital shift in focus toward starting new Christian communities.

This book – edited by two leading thinkers around innovation in the Church, one from the United States, the other from the UK – brings a rich and international array of practitioners and scholars together to explore starting new contextual Christian communities as a way of life. Includes contributions from Jonny Baker, Ali Boulton, Tina Hodgett and Harvey Kwiyani.

9 Imagining Mission with John V Taylor, Jonny Baker and Cathy Ross, SCM, 2020

The impact that John V Taylor, former general secretary of CMS, had on our contemporary understanding of mission is vast – his determination that mission should mean engagement across cultural boundaries has deep resonance today.

In Imagining Mission with John V Taylor, leading missional thinkers Cathy Ross and Jonny Baker invite us into a vision of church, mission and society which takes John V Taylor's ideas seriously, seeking to imagine what Taylor's insights might mean for these three areas in our contemporary context.

The result is a clarion call to the church to take bigger risks and dream bigger dreams.

Recommended reads

We asked a few of our team for some recent reads and mission classics that might interest you, so here is their selection! (These are suggestions from individual staff, CMS does not endorse any of the titles on the list.)

- **The Gratitude Way: Creating Common Ground in a Divided World, [Girma Bishaw, IVP, 2025](#)**
- **When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself, [Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett, 2014](#)**
- **Living for Jesus and Justice: Daily Prayers for Radical Christians, [Simon Jones, Red Letter Christians UK, DLT 2026](#)**
- **Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development, [Bryant L Myers, Orbis, 1999](#)**
- **The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission, [Lesslie Newbigin, SPCK, 1995 \(2nd edition\)](#)**
- **God's Heart for Child Protection and Safeguarding: Practical Theology from Global Perspectives, [Nativity A Petallar, Roseline Olumbe and Martin Munyao \(eds\), Langham Global Library, 2026](#)**
- **Positive Urban Theology: Finding God in the Grit and Glory of the City, [Revd Dr Cris Rogers, CCX, 2026](#)**
- **Liturgies of the Wild: Myths that Make Us, [Martin Shaw, Rider \(PRH\), 2026](#)**
- **Justice of Jesus: Reimagining Your Church's Life Together to Pursue Liberation and Wholeness, [Joash P Thomas, Baker Books, 2025](#)**
- **Love made me an inventor: The story of Maggy Barankitse, Humanitarian, Genocide Survivor, Citizen without Borders, [David Toole, Orbis Books, 2025](#)**
- **Solidarity: The Work of Recognition, [Rowan Williams, Bloomsbury, 2026](#)**

Next on our nightstand: the “to be read” list

And these are some books members of CMS staff are looking forward to reading – we hope they are as good as expected!

- ▶ **Grace Abounds: God’s Abundance Against the Fear of Scarcity, [Walter Brueggemann, Westminster/John Knox Press, 2024](#)**
- ▶ **Earthbound: God at the Intersection of Climate and Justice, [Grace Ji-Sun Kim, Orbis, 2025](#)**
- ▶ **Reconciling Mission: Realizing God’s Reign through Community Engagement, [Alastair McKay and David Brubaker, T&T Clark, 2026](#)**
- ▶ **The Cross and the Olive Tree: Cultivating Palestinian Theology amid Gaza, [John Munayer and Samuel Munayer \(eds.\), Orbis, 2025](#)**