

Women, Ministry, and Preaching: A Reading List

Recommended by Renita J. Weems, Ph.D.
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Folks who know that I'm an avid reader are always inquiring about what I'm reading these days, probably hoping to get some idea where some of the lamebrain ideas I have come from. Other folks are genuinely interested in a list of books to help get them started on this or that particular intellectual journey.

Here you will find a list of my favorite books as an African American woman in ministry on matters pertaining to **WOMEN, MINISTRY, AND PREACHING**. Of course, one of the hazards of sharing a list like this is that it probably won't make sense to anyone other than me.

It's an idiosyncratic compilation of books, to be sure. But that's what I love about the books on this list. Each was a stepping stone on my idiosyncratic journey to becoming who I am. Each found its way to me, like so many books on my shelf, just in the nick of time. While many of these books are well known and show up on everyone's list of 'must-reads' for women in ministry, others are not so obvious. Believe me when I say, however, that some important, much needed clue for the next leg of my spiritual and intellectual journey was tucked away in the pages of each of these books.

Finally, invariably someone is wondering why this or that particular book does not show up on my list. My answer: This is my favorite list of books on this topic. It doesn't have to be exhaustive. In fact, there are plenty of books on my shelf that don't show up here. This is a list of the books I return to again and again when I catch myself pondering once more what it means to be a thinking woman in ministry grappling with the modern religious landscape, grappling with gender and race, grappling with the art and act of preaching, grappling with vocation, grappling with God's church, grappling with preaching at this particular historical juncture.

Check back regularly. I have a feeling that I'll be updating this list often, especially since a new book arrived just today from my favorite online bookstore and, judging from the cover, it promises to be a gem.

WOMEN, MINISTRY, AND PREACHING: A Suggested Reading List

Karen Armstrong.

The Spiral Staircase: My Climb Out of Darkness. Alfred A. Knopf. 2004.

Jo Ann Browning.

Our Savior, Our Sisters, Ourselves. Journey of Faith. 2006.

Frederick Buechner.

Telling Secrets: A Memoir. HarperSanFrancisco. 1991.

Sydney Callahan.

The Challenge of Religious Experience. Paulist Press. 2003.

Katie Geneva Cannon.

Katie's Canon: Womanism and the Soul of the Black Community. Continuum. 1995.

Delores Carpenter.

A Time for Honor: A Portrait of African American Clergywomen. Chalice Press. 2001.

Bettye Collier-Thomas.

Daughters of Thunder: Black Women Preachers and their Sermons, 1850-1979. Jossey-Bass. 1998.

Claudette Anderson Copeland.

Stories from Inner Space: Confessions of a Preacher Woman and Other Tales. Red Nail Press. 2003.

M. Elaine McCollins Flake.

God in the Midst of Her: Preaching Healing to Hurting Women. Judson. 2007.

Teresa L. Fry Brown.

Weary Throats and New Songs: Black Women Proclaiming God's Word. Abingdon Press. 2003.

bell hooks.

Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics. South End Press. 2000.

Sue Monk Kidd.

Dance of the Dissident Daughter. HarperSanFrancisco. 1996.

Cleophus LaRue.

This is My Story: Testimonies & Sermons of Black Women in Ministry. Westminster. 2005.

Vashti McKenzie

Not Without a Struggle: Leadership Development for African American Women in Ministry. Pilgrim. 1996.

- Ella Pearson Mitchell (and Jacqueline B. Glass)
Those Preaching Women. Vol. 4. Abingdon Press. 2004.
- Stephanie Y. Mitchum.
Introducing Womanist Theology. Orbis. 2002.
- Parker J. Palmer.
Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation. Jossey-Bass. 2000.
- Sheron Patterson.
New Faith: A Black Christian Woman's Guide to Reformation, Re-Creation, Rediscovery, Renaissance, Resurrection, and Revival. Fortress Press. 2000.
- Jeanne Porter.
Leading Lessons: Insights on Leadership from Women of the Bible. Augsburg Books. 2005.
- Barbara Brown Taylor.
The Preaching Life. Cowley Publications. 1993.
Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith. HarperSanFrancisco. 2006.
- Emilie Townes.
Womanist Ethics and the Cultural Production of Evil: (Black Religion/Womanist Thought/Social Justice). Palgrave Macmillan. 2006
- Mary Donovan Turner and Mary Lin Hudson.
Saved from Silence: Finding Women's Voice in Preaching. Chalice Press. 1999.
- Renita J. Weems.
Just A Sister Away: Understanding the Timeless Connection Between Women of Today and Women in the Bible. Walk Worthy Press, 2005.
Listening for God: A Minister's Journey through Silence and Doubt. Simon&Schuster. 1999.
Showing Mary: How Women Can Share Prayers, Wisdom, and the Blessings of God. Walk Worthy. 2002.

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