

RESOURCE REVIEW



The House Where the Hardest Things Happened

Kate Young Caley

Doubleday; © 2002; 158 pages; hardcover

I reserve a place behind my desk for my favorite books. I keep about 15 books on that shelf. Since the space is limited, as the years go by it gets harder and harder for a new book to break into the stack of my most revered titles. While it meant that a Barbara Brown Taylor volume got bumped, I recently found room for Kate Young Caley's *The House Where the Hardest Things Happened*.

The author is a college English professor, and her language has the earthy character of my favorite novelist, Wendell Berry. The book is a memoir, and a healing salve for anyone who has ever been wounded by the church. With insight and mercy, the author takes us from her family's banishment from the church of her childhood to her own work as a Sunday school teacher in the Massachusetts church where the author found redemption and grace.

Caley is a gifted story-teller and insightful sojourner. If you have church memories that need to be healed, here is a book for which you might find room on your favorite bookshelf.

—Paul S. Williams
East Islip, New York

The Ministry Playbook

Henry Klopp

Baker Books; ©2002; \$16.99; 304 pages; paperback

It is easy to guess by the title that Henry Klopp draws upon the sports world as a metaphor for his book. Not to worry, he does not overdo it. Klopp's emphasis for "strategic planning for effective churches" is viewing the pastor as a coach.

Step by step, Klopp takes the reader from the playing field to scouting reports to team philosophy to developing a game plan to ultimately playing the game. Along the way detailed, practical suggestions are given to assist churches in analyzing their congregation and community to become more effective in ministry.

This book is a helpful tool for church leadership to do self-analysis. Surveys and various organizations' resources are given for the do-it-yourself strategic plan. Klopp draws upon church experts such as George Barna, Lyle Schaller, Leonard Sweet, and John Maxwell. He also quotes business

leaders like Peter Drucker, Burt Nanus, and Warren Bennis.

Klopp's theological perspective is somewhat different than the majority of the people reading this review. However, I think most will still benefit from his experience and insight.

Specific comments and statistics are given to help congregational analysis. For instance:

1. The average ministerial career is about 14 years (Barna).
2. Churches need one ministerial staff for every 150 attendees and one support staff for 170 attendees.
3. Multiple services will reach worship center capacities of 90, 80, and 55 percent, therefore, three services will accommodate 2.25 times the size of the worship center.

Statistics are based upon Klopp's experience and research.

This is a helpful six-to-nine-month plan to help churches turn "their team" around or to become more effective.

—Joe Grana
Fullerton, California

When Morning Gilds the Skies

Joni Eareckson Tada, John MacArthur, Robert and Bobbie Wolgemuth

Crossway Books; ©2002; \$19.99; 128 pages; hardcover

The CD accompanying this book is well worth the purchase of this book/CD combo. The rich choral music conveys a faith sung through hymns of the church. It is not that each song is sung perfectly but that the songs are done with integrity and passion. The companion book follows each song and helps bring deeper meaning to forgotten melodies and texts. The personal testimonies and stories bring emotional depth to the 12 hymns highlighted. You will find yourself drawn into the life experiences of the authors and how these hymns have impacted their lives and brought them closer to a loving relationship with God.

—Tim Neuenschwander
Cincinnati, Ohio

We failed to provide ordering information for two self-published books favorably reviewed in the January 5 edition of CHRISTIAN STANDARD. *The Family Connection: A Journal to Strengthen Your Family* is available for \$20, plus \$4 shipping; *Embracing Encouragement: Nine Studies on Ways to Encourage* is available for \$5, plus \$2 shipping. Both books are written by Angela Miller and Beth Welch. Contact Heart to Heart Talks, c/o Angela Miller, 22 Woodstock Dr., Brownsburg, IN 46112; e-mail, Twotimesbw@aol.com.

Items reviewed in this column may be ordered from your local Christian bookstore.