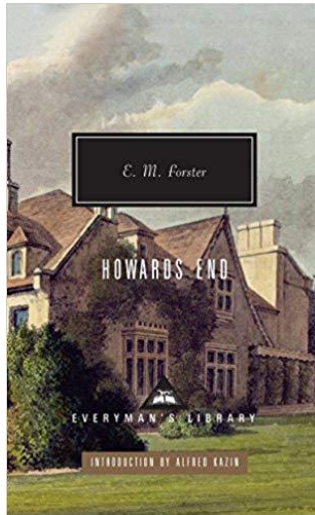


St. Stephen's Book Club Selections for 2021

July

Hosts: Greg Balchin and Mac Lambert



Howard's End by E. M. Forster, 408 pages

First published in 1910, *Howards End* is the novel that earned E. M. Forster recognition as a major writer.

At its heart lie two families—the wealthy and business-minded Wilcoxes and the cultured and idealistic Schlegels. When the beautiful and independent Helen Schlegel begins an impetuous affair with the ardent Paul Wilcox, a series of events is sparked—some very funny, some very tragic—that results in a dispute over who will inherit Howards End, the Wilcoxes' charming country home.

As much about the clash between individual wills as the clash between the sexes and the classes, *Howards End* is a novel whose central tenet, "Only connect," remains a powerful prescription for modern life.

August

Hosts: Jeff and Linda St. George.



The Secrets We Kept by Lara Prescott, 368 pages

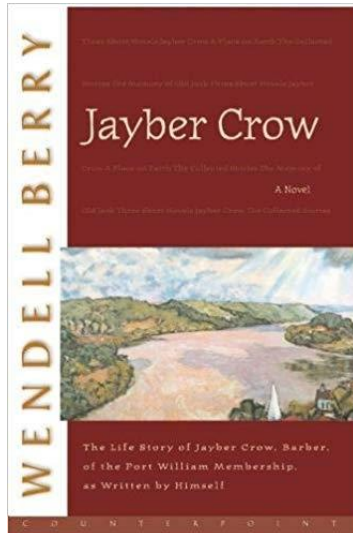
At the height of the Cold War, two secretaries are pulled out of the typing pool at the CIA and given the assignment of a lifetime. Their mission: to smuggle *Doctor Zhivago* out of the USSR, where no one dare publish it, and help Pasternak's magnum opus make its way into print around the world. Glamorous and sophisticated Sally Forrester is a seasoned spy who has honed her gift for deceit all over the world--using her magnetism and charm to pry secrets out of powerful men. Irina is a complete novice, and under Sally's tutelage quickly learns how to blend in, make drops, and invisibly ferry classified documents.

The Secrets We Kept combines a legendary literary love story--the decades-long affair between Pasternak and his mistress and muse, Olga Ivinskaya, who was sent to the Gulag and inspired *Zhivago's* heroine, Lara--with a narrative about two women empowered to lead lives of extraordinary intrigue and risk. From Pasternak's country estate outside Moscow to the brutalities of the Gulag, from Washington, D.C. to Paris and Milan, *The*

Secrets We Kept captures a watershed moment in the history of literature--told with soaring emotional intensity and captivating historical detail. And at the center of this unforgettable debut is the powerful belief that a piece of art can change the world.

September

Hosts: Dan and Lorrie Morissette



Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry, 384 pages

“This is a book about Heaven,” says Jayber Crow, “but I must say too that . . . I have wondered sometimes if it would not finally turn out to be a book about Hell.” It is 1932 and he has returned to his native Port William to become the town's barber.

Orphaned at age ten, Jayber Crow's acquaintance with loneliness and want have made him a patient observer of the human animal, in both its goodness and frailty.

He began his search as a "pre-ministerial student" at Pigeonville College. There, freedom met with new burdens and a young man needed more than a mirror to find himself. But the beginning of that finding was a short conversation with "Old Grit," his profound professor of New Testament Greek.

"You have been given questions to which you cannot be *given* answers. You will have to live them out—perhaps a little at a time."

"And how long is that going to take?"

"I don't know. As long as you live, perhaps."

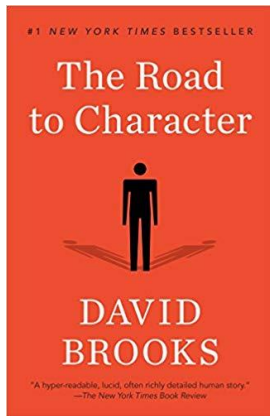
"That could be a long time."

"I will tell you a further mystery," he said. "It may take longer."

Wendell Berry's clear-sighted depiction of humanity's gifts—love and loss, joy and despair—is seen though his intimate knowledge of the Port William Membership.

October

Hosts: Phil Moore and Gary Chafin



The Road to Character by David Brooks, 320 pages

With the wisdom, humor, curiosity, and sharp insights that have brought millions of readers to his *New York Times* column and his previous bestsellers, David Brooks has consistently illuminated our daily lives in surprising and original ways. In *The Social Animal*, he explored the neuroscience of human connection and how we can flourish together. Now, in *The Road to Character*, he focuses on the deeper values that should inform our lives.

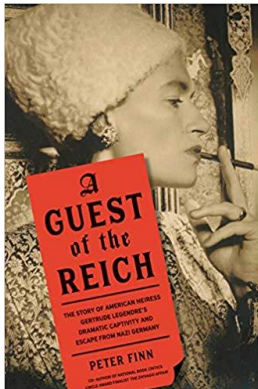
Looking to some of the world's greatest thinkers and inspiring leaders, Brooks explores how, through internal struggle and a sense of their own limitations, they have built a strong inner character. Labor activist Frances Perkins understood the need to suppress parts of herself so that she could be an instrument in a larger cause. Dwight Eisenhower organized his life not around impulsive self-expression but considered self-restraint. Dorothy Day, a devout Catholic convert and champion of the poor, learned as a young woman the vocabulary of simplicity and surrender. Civil rights pioneers A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin learned reticence and the logic of self-discipline, the need to distrust oneself even while waging a noble crusade.

Blending psychology, politics, spirituality, and confessional, *The Road to Character* provides an opportunity for us to rethink our priorities, and strive to build rich inner lives marked by humility and moral depth.

“Joy,” David Brooks writes, “is a byproduct experienced by people who are aiming for something else. But it comes.”

November

Hosts: Bill and Ellen Kirby



A Guest of the Reich: The Story of American Heiress Gertrude Legendre's Dramatic Captivity and Escape from Nazi Germany by Peter Finn, 256 pages

Gertrude “Gertie” Legendre was a big-game hunter from a wealthy industrial family who lived a charmed life in Jazz Age America. Her adventurous spirit made her the inspiration for the Broadway play *Holiday*, which became a film starring Katharine Hepburn. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, Legendre, by then married and a mother of two, joined the OSS, the wartime spy organization that preceded the CIA.

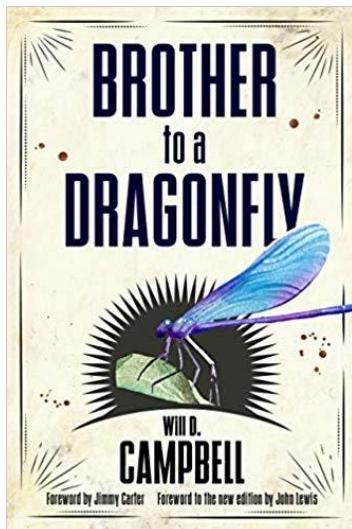
First in Washington and then in London, some of the most closely-held United States government secrets passed through her hands. In *A Guest of the Reich*, Peter Finn tells the gripping story of how in 1944, while on leave in liberated Paris, Legendre was captured by the Germans after accidentally crossing the front lines.

Subjected to repeated interrogations, including by the Gestapo, Legendre entered a daring game of lies with her captors. The Nazis treated her as a “special prisoner” of the SS and moved her from city to city throughout Germany, where she witnessed the collapse of Hitler’s Reich as no other American did. After six months in captivity, Legendre escaped into Switzerland.

A Guest of the Reich is a propulsive account of a little-known chapter in the history of World War II, as well as a fascinating portrait of an extraordinary woman.

December

Hosts: Jim and Dianna Russell



Brother to a Dragonfly by Will Campbell, 250 pages

In *Brother to a Dragonfly*, Will D. Campbell writes about his life growing up poor in Amite County, Mississippi, during the 1930s alongside his older brother, Joe. Though they grew up in a close-knit family and cared for each other, the two went on to lead very different lives. After serving together in World War II, Will became a highly educated Baptist minister who later became a major figure in the early years of the civil rights movement, and Joe became a pharmacist who developed a substance abuse problem that ultimately took his life.

Brother to a Dragonfly also serves as a historical record. Though Will's love and dedication to his brother are the primary story, interwoven throughout the narrative is the story of the Jim Crow South and the civil rights movement. Will is present through many of the most pivotal moments in history--he was one of four people who escorted black students integrating the Little Rock public schools; he was the only white person present at the founding of the SCLC; he helped CORE and SNCC Freedom Riders integrate interstate bus travel; he joined Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s campaign of boycotts, sit-ins, and marches in Birmingham; and he was at the Lorraine Motel the night Dr. King was assassinated.

Will's accomplishments, however, never take the spotlight from his brother, and as his relationship with Joe evolves, so does Will's faith. Featuring a new foreword by Congressman John Lewis, this book brings back to print the combined lives of Will Campbell--Will the brother and Will the preacher.