

Celeste Kennel-Shank's Christmas list

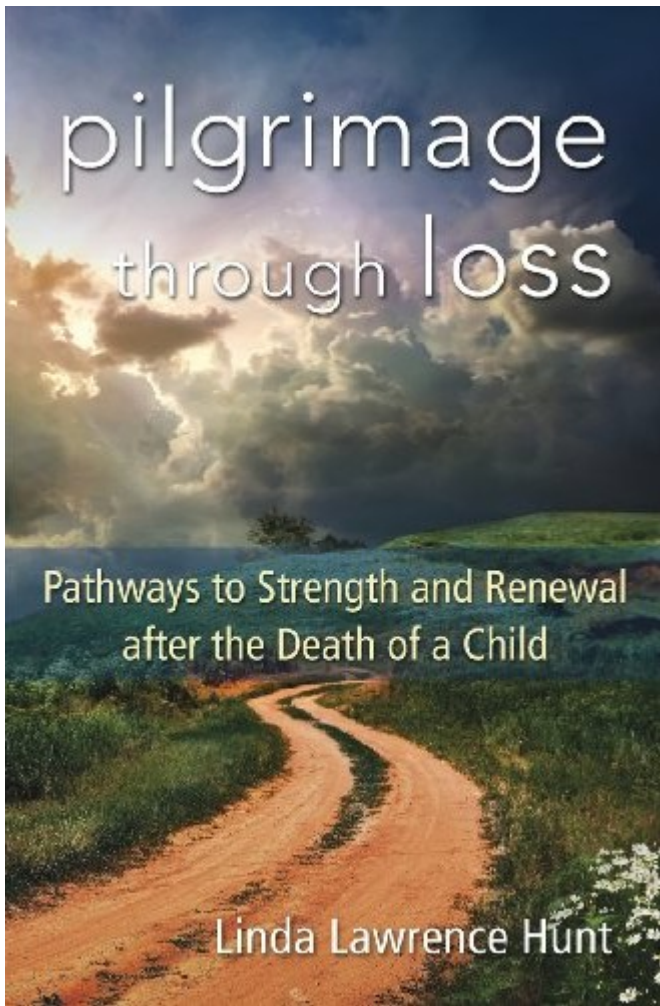
by [Celeste Kennel-Shank](#) in the [December 10, 2014](#) issue

In Review



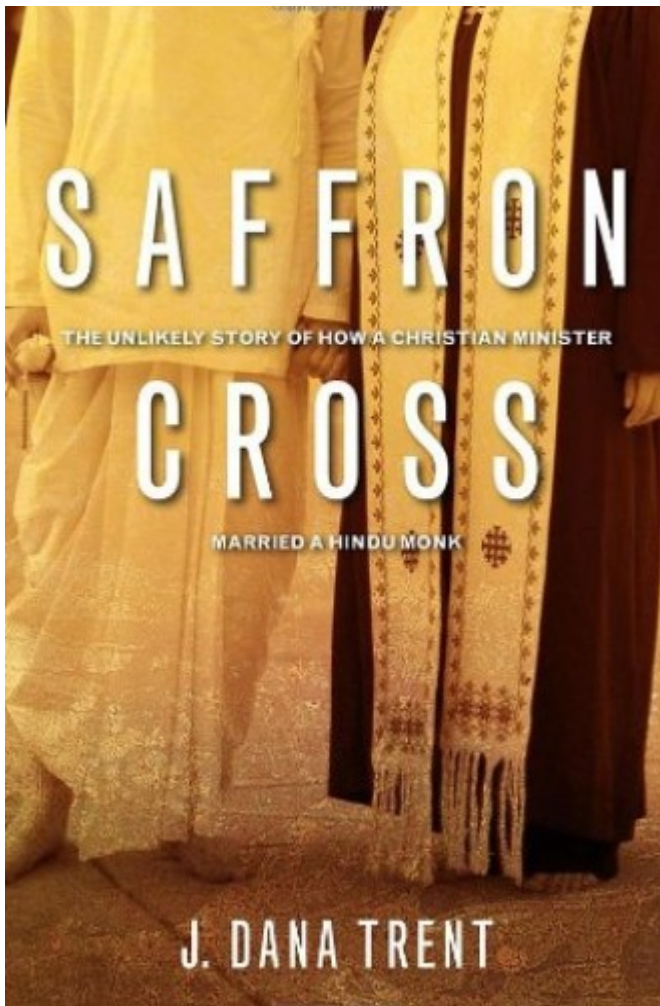
The Both

by Aimee Mann and Ted Leo
SuperEgo



Pilgrimage through Loss

by Linda Lawrence Hunt
Westminster John Knox



Saffron Cross

by J. Dana Trent

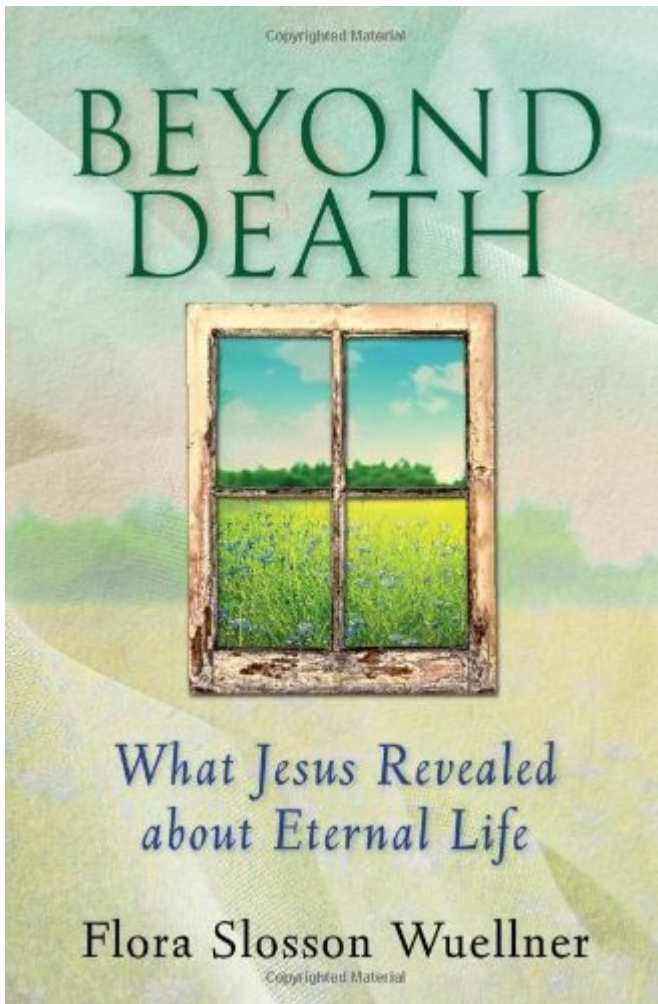
Fresh Air



Pushin' Against a Stone

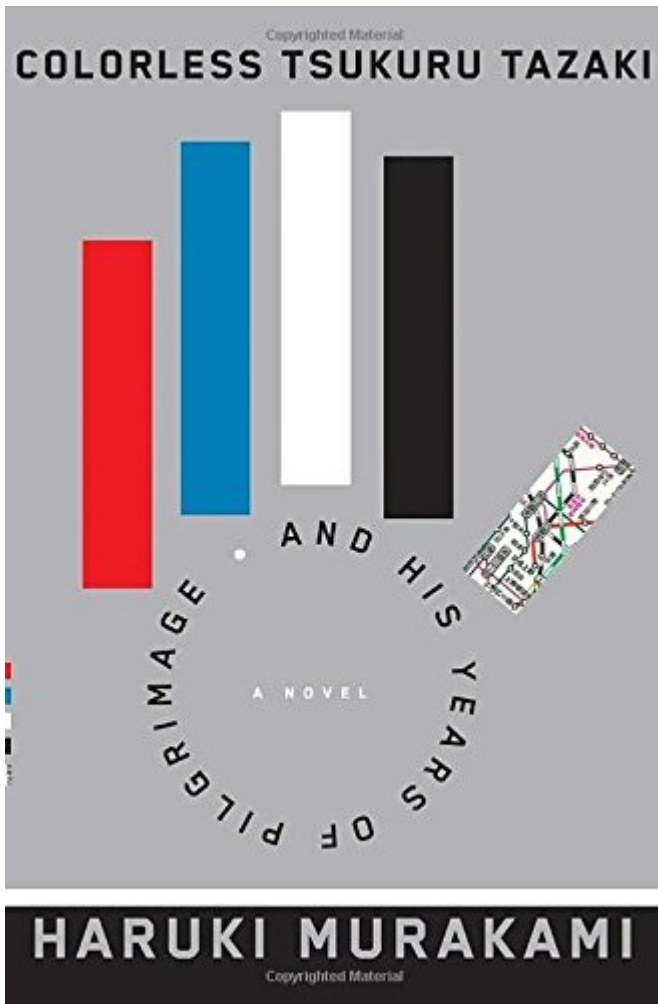
by Valerie June

Concord



Beyond Death

by Flora Slosson Wuellner
Upper Room



Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage

by Haruki Murakami
Knopf

To give

The Both, Aimee Mann and Ted Leo's first album together, combines catchy tunes with lyrics about the complexity of human relationships. Topics include setting boundaries with people with addictions, conflict with loved ones, and coping with environmental destruction. But the songs aren't disheartening so much as cathartic.

Pilgrimage through Loss is part memoir about Linda Lawrence Hunt's grief for her 25-year-old daughter and part guide for parents mourning the death of a child. Hunt makes it clear that there's no one path through grief. She provides the perspectives of other parents who've lost children and offers help for those who care for families through loss.

Much of the writing and research on interfaith marriages takes a tone of warning. In *Saffron Cross: The Unlikely Story of How a Christian Minister Married a Hindu Monk*, J. Dana Trent writes candidly about the challenges, joys, and lessons of being in such a union.

To receive

In *Pushin' Against a Stone*, Valerie June weaves strains of gospel, soul, and bluegrass. Growing up in the Church of Christ denomination, where congregations don't use instruments or have choirs, June says that she learned to sing from "500 teachers three days a week for 18 years." The voice they trained is extraordinary.

In *Beyond Death: What Jesus Revealed about Eternal Life*, retired pastor and spiritual director Flora Slosson Wuellner writes with wisdom, honesty, and gentleness about issues encountered in pastoral care, both from the people we care for and from within ourselves. She guides those grappling with questions related to death and faith.

My husband loves to read new fiction, especially everything he's read by Japanese author Haruki Murakami. I expect that the author's newest book, *Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage: A Novel*, will be no exception.