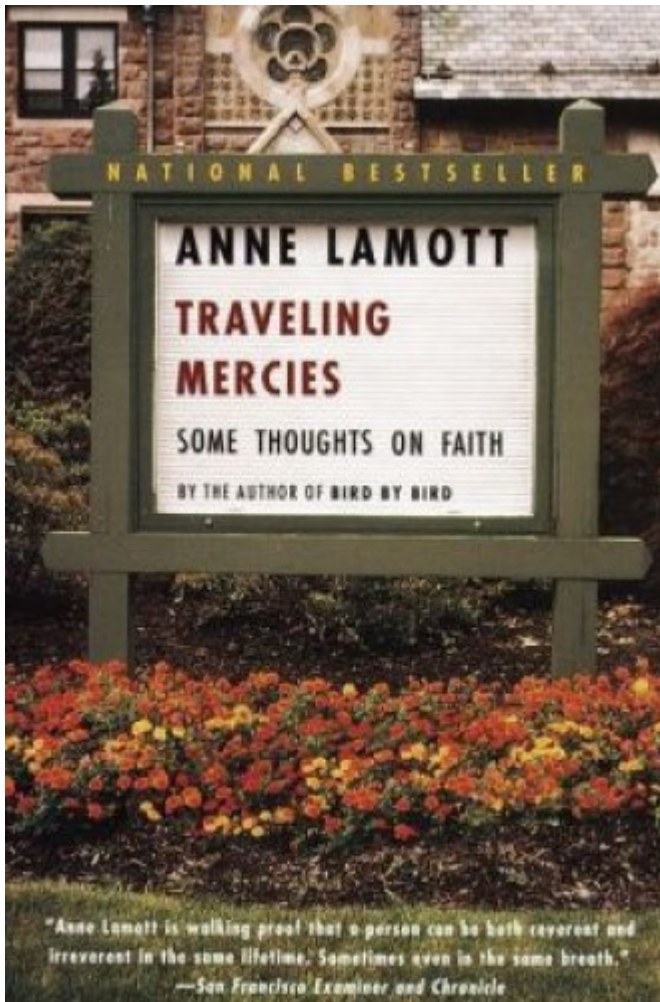


Secretly orthodox

by [Shawnthea Monroe](#) in the [April 29, 2015](#) issue

In Review



Traveling Mercies

by Anne Lamott
Anchor

I was three years into my first call when my faith began to unravel. I was serving a mainline church that took a hard line on social justice issues but seemed far less convinced of the basic tenets of the Christian faith. Personally I had come late to

Christianity, and when I fell in love with Jesus at the age of 21, I fell hard. Little did my congregation suspect that their pastor believed in social justice and the bodily resurrection of Christ. I kept quiet about my orthodox faith for fear of embarrassment. It was a low and lonely time.

Then I read *Traveling Mercies*, by Anne Lamott, and suddenly I wasn't so alone. Lamott's stories reveal a woman who is keenly intelligent, wickedly funny, and unapologetically Christian. She seamlessly connects the messy stuff of life with an unwavering faith in God, and she does so without embarrassment. Early in the book, Lamott confesses, "I am capable . . . of presenting myself as a sort of leftist liberation-theology enthusiast and maybe sort of vaguely Jesusy bon vivant. But it's not true . . . I am a believer." Reading those words, I blushed with recognition. *Traveling Mercies* inspired me at a low moment in my life, and I have been a better, bolder witness ever since.