

mindful reading

by Wanda Kidd, CBFNC Collegiate Engagement Coordinator

Between You and Me by Ta Nehisi Coates

I recently read an article that states that mega churches are losing their African-American members because they have failed to understand that the realities of their lives are very different from the culture of the white church. It's become apparent that work needs to be done to share a faith space with people of color. It is also imperative that we understand that we are called to honestly look at our role in these issues.

The book, **Between You and Me**, by Ta Nehisi Coates is the reflection of an African-American father to his teenage son. It is poetry written with a scalpel and, while it is sometimes painful to hear the reality of the author's life, it makes it all the more important for us to read.

In CBFNC's year of Mercy and Justice, it is our hope that we will look at issues that are complicated and even uncomfortable for us to examine. For us to move toward the New Testaments teachings of Christ, we will need to walk through doors that make us anxious and reach out hands to people we never even thought to speak to. This book is a good introduction to the honest reality of people whose life experiences are very different from ours.

Troubled Minds by Amy Simpson

In general, the issue of mental health is shrouded in shame, fear, and an inability to know how to effectively address it. If that is how we handle the reality of mental health in the general population, then the way the church talks about it and offers Christ-infused grace is even more convoluted.

The reality of mental health is not a burden that is carried only by the person suffering from the disorder; it impacts everyone who is in relationship with the person, be it family, loved-ones, co-workers, or church members.

Troubled Minds by Amy Simpson is the story of a father who is a pastor, a mother who struggles with schizophrenia, children who are caught up in the family crisis, and a church that has no idea how to respond. This book explores issues and conversations that would be helpful and healing for us to undertake within our church families.

the legacy of agnes yost

by Jim Hylton, CBFNC Business Administration Coordinator

"The parable of the talents is familiar to many of us. I have preached it on many occasions. Usually, I confess that most of us are not five-talent people. We may be more like one-talent people, or maybe two. There aren't many five-talent people. But Agnes Yost may have been a five-talent person." These are the words of David Hailey, pastor of Hayes Barton, Raleigh. David had the pleasure of knowing and working with Agnes at her home church.

David continued, "Agnes was a brilliant student. She was a *magna cum laude* graduate of Atlantic Christian College (now Barton) in Wilson. She majored in English and later moved to Houston where she earned an MA in English. She was a gifted teacher.

Agnes taught English at the high school and university levels. She more than once said, "I loved teaching in schools and college, and also loved teaching the Bible and religion in church."

Perhaps the greatest tribute a teacher can receive comes from their students. One of her students wrote, "The progress of the human race depends upon the knowledge passed to each successive generation. Let all humankind aspire to learn, revering always those who teach." Another wrote about Agnes, "Your method of teaching is unique, Mrs. Yost, for although you may think you are just teaching English, you are teaching us, in a beautiful way, how to live by setting yourself as an example."

In addition, Agnes was a wife of 66 years and a devoted follower of Christ. So maybe she was a five-talent person.

Several months ago, with no prior notice, CBF of North Carolina received a letter from a lawyer's office in Raleigh. The letter was a "Notice to Beneficiary." Upon talking with the lawyer, we discovered that Agnes had left CBFNC a sizeable estate gift. The instructions we received from Agnes were simple: use the gift in accordance with the mission of CBFNC.

Agnes is a wonderful example that few things bring more joy to philanthropic people of faith than making meaningful contributions to their favorite charitable organizations. Like Agnes, many have discovered the added pleasure of knowing they can continue to support our mission beyond their lifetimes by arranging to make gifts to CBFNC in their estate plan. It is our hope that more and more of our constituents will find the same satisfaction that Agnes found in this selfless act of charity.

Contact Jim Hylton at (336) 759-3456 for more information about estate giving.

*Build thee more stately mansions,
O my soul,*

As the swift seasons roll!

Leave thy low-vaulted past!

Let each new temple, nobler than the last,

Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,

Till thou at length art free,

*Leaving thine outgrown shell by
life's unresting sea!*

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.