



### [Lila by Marilynne Robinson](#)

Returning to the town of Gilead, Marilynne Robinson tells the story of Lila, who after being homeless and alone for many years, steps inside a small-town Iowa church and ignites a romance and a debate that will reshape her life. Lila is a truly unforgettable story of a girlhood lived on the fringes of society in fear, awe, and wonder.

**Try these lyrical works about faith:**

[The Book of Strange New Things by Michael Faber](#) (Science Fic Fab) Peter Leigh leaves Earth and his wife, Bea, to embark on a Christian missionary trip on a planet called Oasis. As he ministers to his enthusiastic new congregation, those he left behind on Earth seem to be facing the brink of the Apocalypse. Peter must decide what his faith means to him as he chooses between a new life on the promising land of Oasis or facing the end with the ones he loves.

[Someone by Alice McDermott](#) (Fic McD). Marie Commeford is an average woman, whose life is not so extraordinary; however, as Marie deals with death, faith, and love within her close-knit family and community, her moments of strength and vulnerability highlight how just an average life can be meaningful when looked at from afar.

[The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver](#) (Fic Kin). The fate of the Price family is forever changed when American Christian missionary Nathan Price moves his wife and daughters to the Congo in 1959. In the midst of war and social and political change, the family's ideologies and identities clash with each other, their home country, and the local population as the Price women grow up in the shadow of their despotic father in an unstable postcolonial Africa.

### **Moving tales of literary fiction:**

[The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake by Aimee Bender](#) (Fic Ben). Eating the cake her mother has prepared for her ninth birthday, Rose Edelstein discovers she has a gift: she can taste her mother's emotions in the food she prepares. Soon, every bite Rose takes is filled with feelings—not just her mother's but those of other people as well—and what might have been a gift becomes a burden and then, perhaps, a curse.

[The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein](#) (Fic Ste). Enzo knows he is different from other dogs: a philosopher with a nearly human soul, he has educated himself by watching television and listening closely to the words of his master, Denny Swift, an upand-coming race car driver. On the night before his death, Enzo takes stock of his life, recalling all that he and his family have been through, hoping, in his next life, to return as a human.

[Americanah by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie](#) (Fic Adi). Ifemelu and Obinze are young and in love when they depart Nigeria for the West. Ifemelu heads for America, where despite her academic success, she is forced to grapple with what it means to be black for the first time. Obinze had hoped to join her, but with post9/11 America closed to him, he instead plunges into a dangerous, undocumented life in London. Years later, they reunite in newly democratic Nigeria, and reignite their passion—for each other and for their homeland.

### **Award-winning books of local interest:**

[A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley](#) (Fic Smi). Larry Cook, an Iowa farmer who has worked a thousand acre plot owned by his family for generations, abruptly decides to retire in 1979 and leave his farm to his three daughters. In a series of astonishing events, the Cook sisters each reveal their true natures that threaten to destroy the family and their farm.

[The Year We Left Home by Jean Thompson](#) (Fic Tho). The Erickson's, a family of Norwegian descent from the town of Grenada, Iowa have struggled for several decades beginning with the Vietnam War. Marital problems, alcoholism, post-traumatic stress syndrome and a horrific car accident all leave their mark on this family. For all the setbacks that they endure, the Erickson's are lifted above circumstance by their strong ties to each other, enduring values, and their geographical roots.

[Little Heathens: Hard Times and High Spirits on an Iowa Farm during the Great Depression by Mildred Armstrong Kalish](#) (Non-Fiction 977.761 Kal). A memoir about growing up in the heart of the Midwest during the Great Depression. A schoolteacher describes life on an Iowa farm during an era of endless work: where resourcefulness was necessary, family and kinship were valued and the community had little tolerance for idleness or waste.

[Gilead by Marilynne Robinson](#) (Fic Rob). Reverend John Ames of Gilead, Iowa, now in his seventies and failing in health, is afraid he hasn't much time left to tell his young son about his heritage. And so he takes up his pen, and writes to his son in the form of a letter that he imagines him reading when he is grown. In the letter, the Reverend chronicles three previous generations of his family, a story that stretches back to the Civil War and reveals uncomfortable family secrets.

Sioux City Public Library has many titles available in Large Print, Audiobooks on CD, or downloadable eAudiobooks and eBooks through Overdrive. Check the catalog at [www.siouxcitylibrary.org](http://www.siouxcitylibrary.org) or contact us at (712) 255-2933 x 221, to see if your preferred format is available.