

Religious History of the Civil War

Bibliography

NON-Fiction

Camp, March and Battlefield: Or Three Years and A Half with The Army Of The Potomac, Alexander M. Stewart, 1865. Collection of newspaper columns by Chaplain of PA 102nd regiment originally published by "The Presbyterian Banner". Not available in EIN libraries but reprints available on Amazon.com.

Decade of Disunion: How Massachusetts and South Carolina Led the Way to Civil War, 1849-1861, Robert W. Merry, Simon & Schuster, 2024. Merry explores how our country came apart beginning with the Mexican War which brought vast new territories to the United States. Political battles began over expanding slavery into these territories. There is some analysis of religious thought, but this book is primarily political analysis. Detailed but helpful background to understanding what and who create change.

God's Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War, George C. Rable, 2010, EIN 635.R33. Rable borrows from Lincoln to entitle this comprehensive study. The book underscores religion's presence in the everyday lives of Americans north and south struggling to understand the meaning of the conflict, from the tragedy of individual death to victory and defeat in battle and even the ultimate outcome of the war. Rable shows that themes of providence, sin, and judgment pervaded both public and private writings about the conflict.

Mightier Than the Sword: Uncle Tom's Cabin and the Battle for America, Reynolds, David S, 2011, EIN 813.3. Reynolds traces the factors that made Uncle Tom's Cabin the most influential novel ever written by an American. He credits Stowe's story-telling genius and her style of expressing religion through human relationships brought readers to embrace "a higher law" that swung the fence sitters to the side against slavery. Despite the book's popularity in the North the novel enraged the South, polarizing American readership and ultimately widening the rift that led to the Civil War.

Religion and the American Civil War, Randall M. Miller, Harry S. Stout, Charles Reagan Wilson, eds., New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998. Topical essays written by historians who met for a conference at Louisville Seminary to answer the question, "What did religion have to do with the Civil War?"

Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South, Albert J. Raboteau, 1978. *Slave Religion* remains a classic in the study of African American history and religion. Using a variety of first and second-hand sources Raboteau analyzes the transformation of the African religions into evangelical Christianity. He presents the narratives of the slaves themselves, as well as missionary reports, travel accounts, folklore, black autobiographies, and the journals of white observers to describe the day-to-day religious life in the slave communities.

This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War, by Drew Gilpin Faust, 2008. EIN 973.71 F37. Drew Gilpin Faust focuses on the aftermath of the Civil War North and South and how a deeply religious culture struggled to reconcile the unprecedented carnage with its belief in a benevolent God. Faust explains the 19th century idea of "a good death" and chronicles the efforts to identify, reclaim, preserve, and bury battlefield dead.

Fiction

Andersonville, MacKinlay Kantor, The 1955 Pulitzer Prize-winning story of the Andersonville Fortress and its use as a concentration camp-like prison by the South during the Civil War.

Cold Mountain, Charles Frazier, 1997. A Confederate soldier abandons his regiment in Peterburg and walks back to his North Carolina home. Meanwhile his sweetheart tries to survive on her father's failed farm in a time and place where nothing is the same as the certainties of the past. Also, watch the movie starring Nicole Kidman, Jude Law and Renee Zellweger. Paramount, 2003.

Days without End, Sebastian Berry, 2017. An intensely poignant story of two men and the makeshift family they create with a young Sioux girl, Winona. *Days Without End* is a fresh and haunting portrait of the most fateful years in American history. Their service in the Federal troops of the U.S. Civil war is just one of the many adventures.

Night Watch, Jayne Anne Phillips, 2023. a mesmerizing story about a mother and daughter seeking refuge in the chaotic aftermath of the Civil War--and a brilliant portrait of family endurance against all odds.

Uncle Tom's Cabin, Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1852. Stowe's powerful novel denounced the institution of slavery in a dramatic story of the peril of runaway slaves, the heartbreak of slave families torn apart never to be reunited and the loving relationships that become possible between white and black persons whose lives intersected leading up to the Civil War. Critics, scholars, and students are today revisiting this monumental work with a new objectivity, focusing on Stowe's compelling portrayal of women and the novel's theological underpinnings.

Ann E. Morris
foxmorris@verizon.net
412-344-5249
March 2025