

United Church of Marco Island June 2019 Book Discussion

Everything Happens for a Reason and Other Lies I've Loved by Kate Bowler

Wednesday, June 12th at 10AM, Sunset Conference Room

Introductions and Prayer

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the “prosperity gospel” and how does Bowler wrestle with its message?
2. Bowler writes: “I lost faith in the concept of things being fair.” (24) How does Bowler respond to unfairness?
3. Bowler must learn to surrender control. Why is this an important spiritual concept for her?
4. How do you sense Bowler’s spiritual life and understanding of God progressed as the book moved forward?
5. Throughout the book, Bowler wished she could express herself more honestly by truly lamenting. Explain the following sentence: “Positivity has become a burden.” (104)
6. Through her writing for the *New York Times*, Bowler received many responses from hurting people. She writes: “My pain feels connected to the pain of others somehow.” (144) Explain this connection.
7. It often gets said that “death is a great interpreter of life.” Through the lens of death (knowing she will die) how does Bowler’s life take on new meaning?
8. Throughout the book, Bowler mentions how people were helpful and unhelpful during her struggle and suffering. She lists some do’s and don’ts in the appendix of her book. In thinking about your own life struggles, where did you resonate with her on this wisdom and what can be learned from Bowler about being in ministry with those who suffer?
9. One of the key themes in this book is grief. What did you learn from Bowler about grief?
10. Having read the book, now explain the title!