

The Book Group will meet in the church library on Tuesday, July 26th at 10:30. We'll be discussing:

The Memoirs of Stockholm Sven by Nathaniel Ian Miller

Miller's captivating debut bears out its eponymous narrator's observation that "a life is substantially more curious, and mundane, than the reports would have it." Sven Ormson, an indolent Swedish mill worker with a spotty employment history and a fascination with polar exploration, decides in 1916, at age 32, to take on a two-year contract mining coal on the island of Spitsbergen on the edge of the Arctic Sea. Before his contract is up he loses an eye during an avalanche, an event that convinces the already misanthropic Sven to shun further contact with fellow humans. So begins his apprenticeship as a trapper during the harsh winter months when all but three other hunters have left his portion of the island. Though Sven keeps to himself as much as possible, inevitable friendships and family ties eventually draw him into contact with others, even as his life remains relatively untouched by historical events unfolding just beyond his sphere for the next 30 years. Miller offers a marvelously detailed look at a way of life and a profession practiced in an extreme environment, and though purportedly based on a historical figure, the character's colorfully rendered experiences are the stuff of powerful dramatic fiction. This has Miller off to a promising start.