

Questions to use in a book group to discuss
“Finley’s Tale – Book III: The Bond of Love”

For Fun . . . For Real . . . From God

Friday, September 25 (page 5)

For Fun – What wedding decorations have blessed weddings you’ve seen?

For Real – What liturgical colours are there, and what do they mean?

From God – How does Exodus 26:31-36 describe the use of fabric in the Israelites’ Tabernacle?

Saturday, September 26 (page 9)

For Fun – Where do you imagine Gretchen’s PU notes are delivered?

For Real – How does humour make better a foul situation?

From God – What do you think are the three strands that make a marriage strong (after Ecclesiastes 4:12)?

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 27 (page 12)

For Fun – Where does the expression “PU” originate?

For Real – How do our “every day moments” contribute to our humility?

From God – Which part of Christ’s attitude of humility in Philemon 2:5-8 means to most to you? (See verses 1-4 & 14-18)

Monday, September 28 (page 16)

For Fun – Why is “fishing for men” so much harder than fishing for fish or a fish fry?

For Real – How does “making disciples” require “re-doing” or “re-vamping” the church?

From God – According to Mark 1:17 who is the leader when we go fishing for people?

St. Michael & All Angels – Tuesday, September 29 (page 20)

For Fun – Do you know anyone who watches what they eat in order to protect their breath?

For Real – How important is meal-planning on your calendar?

From God – A text read at Michaelmas (September 29), Daniel 12:1-3, tells of what role that angels fill with regard to those “who lead many to righteousness?”

Wednesday, September 30 (page 22)

For Fun – How will it feel to have a nun in her habit attending all Sunday Services?

For Real – How do you make unusual attendees welcome – ignoring or talking to them?

From God – How does Acts 2:42 list the elements of Christians’ gatherings in the early church?

Thursday, October 1 (page 24)

For Fun – Can you think of something “minor” that seemed “major” to yourself or someone else?

For Real – Why would a church member show up every day except Sunday?

From God – In John 12:8 Jesus excuses unusual, extravagant behaviour because it is directed where?

Friday, October 2 (page 27)

For Fun – How do volunteers reward themselves?

For Real – How does your church make the volunteers feel appreciated?

From God – According to Matthew 9:37, how does Jesus value the work of those who harvest souls?

Saturday, October 3 (page 29)

For Fun – Describe how the Ladies settle on the menu for their guests’ luncheon?

For Real – Is slavery something merely historical for HSP?

From God – In Galatians 5:1 what is Paul’s warning to Christians about slavery?

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost – October 4 (page 33)

For Fun – How do animals’ behaviours mimic people’s behaviours?

For Real – Are we more or less willing to forgive animals than people?

From God – How does Psalm 104:24 affirm that Finley and Ruby have God’s blessing as they believe?

Monday, October 5 (page 37)

For Fun – Was the Blessing of the Animals worth the grief this year?

For Real – Are you worried that Clement’s injuries could overcome him?

From God – Is it common for pastors to be hurt in the course of their work, as Galatians 6:17 indicates?

Tuesday, October 6 (page 39)

For Fun – Should pastors and their families express their individuality by their choice of a gift?

For Real – Should dislike for a pastor or his family ever come from a parishioner’s mouth? When?

From God – What does Hebrews 13:7-17 have to say for the benefit of pastors, their families, and their congregants?

Wednesday, October 7 (page 42)

For Fun – What is your favourite Christmas carol to sing?

For Real – Why do churches struggle so to receive a gift?

From God – How was our Saviour “pavilioned” on His first night after His birth? (Luke 2:7)

Thursday, October 8 (page 44)

For Fun – Is Aia concerned about her figure?

For Real – When is it good to improve physical health? How about our spiritual health?

From God – What does Proverbs 16:24 say is something for anyone seeking better health?

Friday, October 9 (page 46)

For Fun – Why do the Osterhagens decide to get a new doctor?

For Real – How much privacy are public leaders allowed to have?

From God – What does James 4:8 mean when it says, “Love covers over a multitude of sins”?

Saturday, October 10 (page 48)

For Fun – Do you know any couples who met at a church event?

For Real – Has Claire “crossed the line” in her attention to Finn?

From God – How does the Church foster Christians finding a partner?

The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost – October 11 (page 51)

For Fun – Why do property issues bring forth so much wisdom/input from parishioners?

For Real – How does Methuselah’s wisdom save lives?

From God – How did Matthew 5:42 challenge Aia this day?

Monday, October 12 – Canadian Thanksgiving Day (page 55)

For Fun – Do you have a holiday that no one else celebrates?

For Real – What made Aia feel homesick this day?

From God – Why did God make so many fabulous things to eat?

Tuesday, October 13 (page 56)

For Fun – How do “little things” become “big issues?”

For Real – How many are impacted by the “anonymous” letter?

From God – How does Clement follow the guidance of Matthew 5:25?

Wednesday, October 14 (page 58)

For Fun – How many things can you name that are made from apples?

For Real -- Describe Clement’s pastoral visit to the Carpenters.

From God – What is the Psalmist praying for in Psalm 17:8?

Thursday, October 15 (page 61)

For Fun – What is one game you enjoy playing?

For Real – Why is it important to stay in touch with each other, even by a tin can telephone?

From God – How did Jesus show He was the Christ in Matthew 4:23-24?

Friday, October 16 (page 64)

For Fun – What comfort is there in the passage of time?

For Real – What kind of cross was given to Big Ben?

From God – How did the prophet Hosea tell the time in Hosea 10:12?

Saturday, October 17 (page 66)

For Fun – Was it a good event for Claire?

For Real – Why do church events mean different things to different people?

From God – How does Isaiah 55:8 remind us how God has different purposes than ours each day?

St. Luke Evangelist – October 18 (page 68)

For Fun – About which the many events of this day did you feel most strongly?

For Real – What did you learn about joining and leaving a church?

From God – How does the blessing of Philippians 4:7 give comfort to this and every day?

Monday, October 19 (page 71)

For Fun – For what reasons is Hudson suspected in the offering's disappearance?

For Real – How high is the level of trust at the church for the Pfalzgrafs?

From God – What counsel does Jesus give for building trustworthiness in Luke 16:10-12?

Tuesday, October 20 (page 75)

For Fun – How much fun are the two having in Spain?

For Real – What is enjoyable about getting to know someone new?

From God – How does Romans 12:3 say to show love?

Thursday, October 22 (page 78)

For Fun – How do the mice make their own fun?

For Real – What value is there in celebrating?

From God – What reason did God give in Deuteronomy 16:1 for Jews to celebrate Passover?

Friday, October 23 (page 79)

For Fun – Which of these (or another) is your favourite bulletin blooper?

For Real – Why is the cost/value ratio of volunteers' help not always equal?

From God – How does God measure the deeds of volunteers in Mark 9:41?

October 24, Saturday (page 81)

For Fun – Of what is the wedding ring a symbol?

For Real – Has Claire gotten her man, or has Finn led her on?

From God – Is Hebrews 13:4 to be applied here with Clement's words to Finn?

Reformation Day (Observed), the Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost – October 25 (page 84)

For Fun – What is Reformation Day about?

For Real – Why is it important to remember the Gospel in the hearts of people long ago?

From God – What does Romans 3:21-26 have to say about justification before God by faith alone?

Monday, October 26 (page 90)

For Fun – Who is in more danger, Finn or the mice?

For Real – Why was Pastor’s counsel so helpful to Finn?

From God – Galatians 6:1 enjoins us to share what kind of a blessing?

Tuesday, October 27 (page 93)

For Fun – What would you do if you saw a church mouse?

For Real – How does Gretchen explain her faith in a simple way?

From God – How does the freedom from sin offered by Jesus in John 8:36 apply to all freedoms?

Wednesday, October 28 (page 96)

For Fun – Do you like to see members of the clergy get along well?

For Real – Why do clergy families have money shortfalls?

From God – How does God provide according to Matthew 6:26?

Thursday, October 29 (page 98)

For Fun – How can a trip to the cemetery be uplifting?

For Real – Why did people like to be buried by the church?

From God – How does Romans 8:18 speak of the afterlife?

Reformation Day – Saturday, October 31 (page 100)

For Fun – Why is reforming the church so tiring?

For Real – Where does the Church need reforming in our day?

From God – How does Galatians 2:16 show the Church where to refocus?

All Saints' Day – Sunday, November 1 (page 103)

For Fun – Why was Ralph so unwilling for his error to become known?

For Real – How does facing/confessing an error help our character rather than harm it?

From God – What does 1 John 1:8-10 say about our errors?

Friday, November 6 (page 105)

For Fun – How does the mice's need to leave St. Peter's turn out well?

For Real – Is it home or adventures that drives passions most?

From God – How does Hebrews 13:14 describe our homes here and our future home?

Saturday, November 7 (page 108)

For Fun – How do people get their names and nicknames?

For Real – Why do you think Finley has a low opinion of the four boys?

From God – Though they have much, what guidance from God's Word in Matthew 19:23-30 would benefit them?

Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost – November 8 (page 114)

For Fun – Have you ever experienced an emergency at church?

For Real – How close do you think the members of St. Pete's were to panicking?

From God – In what ways does Psalm 46 indicate that God will be our refuge?

Monday, November 9 (page 117)

For Fun – What do you like to do to "get away?"

For Real – Why does Aia prefer knitting away from church people?

From God – How did Jesus get His disciples away in Mark 6:30-32?

Tuesday, November 10 (page 118)

For Fun – Why do Lenny’s impersonations bother Clement so?

For Real – What does it take to be a pastor?

From God – How does 1 Timothy 3:1-7 describe a qualified pastor?

Wednesday, November 11 (page 120)

For Fun – How much trouble can a bird in the house cause?

For Real – How important is it that a husband and wife pray for each other?

From God – How are Finley’s thoughts at the end of the day like Psalm 30:5?

Friday, November 13 (page 124)

For Fun – Do you have any memories of a food event, at church or elsewhere?

For Real – Do you think all the volunteers become as drained by the BLT as Aia does?

From God – How is the vision of Revelation 7:15-17 better than Friday the 13th of November?

Saturday, November 14 (page 126)

For Fun – Why do people like to host and attend church events?

For Real – For what reasons do pastors take calls to other churches?

From God – How does Micah 6:6-8 guide and guard the true service of God and the Church?

The Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost – November 15 (page 127)

For Fun – How are weddings over done?

For Real – How do Joey and Jocelyn show that their wedding is not all about them?

From God – What does John 2:1-10 say to a couple getting married?

Monday, November 16 (page 130)

For Fun – What would happen if a mouse were given one of the names on the “NO-NO” list?

For Real – What kind of respect should go into naming someone?

From God – How does 1 Corinthians 12:22-24 counsel us to respect the members of our circle?

Tuesday, November 17 (page 132)

For Fun – How can a heritage church building inspire faith even if it is not used for worship?

For Real – Why do Christians approach the use of alcohol differently when it comes to church-related activities?

From God – How does Micah 2:11 describe the wrong attitude, when God’s Word is missing?

Wednesday, November 18 (page 135)

For Fun – What curiosities arise in the mice from a song?

For Real – How do singing and music help us get through hard times?

From God – How does Job 8:21 offer hope to those who are suffering?

Thursday, November 19 (page 137)

For Fun – Why do the Osterhagens change their water-softener supplier?

For Real – Why do they not want to tell Skip the situation?

From God – How does Proverbs 27:19 teach us to check the condition of our hearts?

Saturday, November 21 (page 139)

For Fun – What do you think of Ginger’s new name for the lost and found box?

For Real – How can a person tell when they are paying too much attention to the task they’ve been given?

From God – What joy in finding what was lost is described in Luke 15:8-10?

Christ the King/The Last Sunday after Pentecost – November 22 (page 142)

For Fun – Why is Clement so bent out of shape about his speeding ticket?

For Real – How are Clement’s and Bernard’s jobs similar?

From God – How does the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) focus on the important things of living and faith?

Monday, November 23 (page 144)

For Fun – Which gift, the flowers discount or the fresh liver, meant the most to Aia?

For Real – Why do the gifts we give sometimes not match the receiver or the giver?

From God – According to 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 what are the godly motives for giving and serving?

Tuesday, November 24 (page 149)

For Fun – How was Gretchen a hero, despite her young age?

For Real – Why are interruptions so often our real work?

From God – What does Christ have according to Isaiah 50:4 that a bishop or leader should pray for in dealing with people?

Wednesday, November 25 (page 152)

For Fun – “If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans.” Why is that so funny?

For Real – Does the offer to pay give the right to decide what changes may be made?

From God – When does a church’s past get in the way of its present and future mission?

Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 26 (page 155)

For Fun – Why are the re-purposed planters so disturbing to Bob?

For Real – Why are the WASP’s so disturbing to Clement?

From God – Why does thanksgiving to our Maker and Redeemer lessen the turmoil in our hearts?

Friday, November 27 (page 158)

For Fun – How does the tragedy affect the people?

For Real – How does the tragedy affect the mice differently?

From God – Why does Isaiah 53:4 say that Christ carried our sorrows?

Saturday, November 28 (page 160)

For Fun – Why does an acrostic (alphabet) poem like the one in this chapter give the impression that it covers the topic completely?

For Real – Why do the couple want to renew their marriage vows after 25 years?

From God – How does Jesus indicate in Matthew 19:6 that God is responsible for a long marriage?

First Sunday in Advent – November 29 (page 163)

For Fun – Why did Clement need to remind himself of the meaning of his own name?

For Real – If sheep-stealing is wrong (Exodus 20:17) why do the pastors agree to do nothing about it except to pray?

From God – Why should we pray for others to receive the blessings of the Gospel at their own churches?

St. Andrew Apostle – Monday, November 30 (page 167)

For Fun – Why are light-hearted ways to encourage generous giving often comical?

For Real – What fact makes Brent's antics worthy of attention?

From God – What does the Bible say in Matthew 6:21 about the connection between faith and money?

Wednesday, December 2 (page 169)

For Fun – What do you think of Aia's concept for a book?

For Real – Why do people want to write a book?

From God – According to Romans 15:4, why did God see to it that the Bible was written down?

Thursday, December 3 (page 171)

For Fun – What is your favourite kind of bread?

For Real – Jesus fed 5,000 with bread to show what about Himself? (See John 6:51)

From God – Why can Christians not cut bread completely out of their diet, according to First Corinthians 11:26?

Friday, December 4 (page 173)

For Fun – Why do people get tattoos?

For Real – Despite the health risks and the negativity toward tattoos in Leviticus 19:28, is it wrong to get a tattoo?

From God – Romans 12:1-2 sets what pattern for Christians to treat their bodies as belonging to God as well as to themselves?

Second Sunday in Advent – December 6 (page 175)

For Fun – What kind of music do you like to have in the church?

For Real – Is the song of the church an individual or corporate voice?

From God – What attitudes does Paul want the Church to cultivate in Colossians 3:12-17?

Monday, December 7 (page 179)

For Fun – Why do the Osterhagens enjoy sending Christmas cards?

For Real – Though disappointing, is the lack of a gift proof of a lack of love?

From God – How does 1 Peter 4:8 place love in charge when sins threaten to divide us?

Wednesday, December 9 (page 181)

For Fun – Who has the say how your home is decorated?

For Real – Why does noticing or taking stock of our shelter and food often result in gratitude?

From God – Why is Psalm 145:15-16 often used as a table prayer?

Friday, December 11 (page 183)

For Fun – Which art forms have you seen used to praise God?

For Real – Psalm 150 lists dancing along with what other ways to praise God?

From God – As Psalm 107:29 suggests, can God be praised without any words?

Third Sunday in Advent – December 13 (page 185)

For Fun – What inspires Finley to write a poem?

For Real – Why does the snow outside remind us of our need for peace inside?

From God – How does Isaiah 1:18 offer comfort on a snowy day?

Saturday, December 19 (page 187)

For Fun – How surprised was Blake, do you think, when he found out Michelle’s occupation?

For Real – Why do practical and serious matters so often arise instead of being shelved during the holidays?

From God – What is protected by God’s command in Exodus 20:16?

Fourth Sunday in Advent – December 20 (page 189)

For Fun – What comfort foods have Finley and Ruby found lately?

For Real – How does missing church for a special reason make the reason more special?

From God – How did Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1-10) and Mary (Luke 1:46-55) anticipate their upcoming motherhood?

The Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Day – Friday, December 25 (page 190)

For Fun – Why did the hopes of “A Different Kind of Christmas” turn out to be folly?

For Real – Why does it matter that we celebrate Christmas?

From God – What details in the account make Luke 2:1-10 what Christmas is all about?

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs – Monday, December 28 (page 193)

For Fun – What do you think of the “Wall of Diapers?”

For Real – Is it better to have a family heirloom or to visit to an ancestral home?

From God – In 1 Corinthians 11:24-25 what does Jesus bequeath so His heirs can remember Him?

Tuesday, December 29 (page 196)

For Fun – How do those with chronic pain deal with it?

For Real – Why do those who share something in common often get along?

From God – How does James 5:14-16 remind us of the place of healing in the mission of God?

Tuesday, January 5 (page 198)

For Fun – What scrumptious ingestible things did the people and the mice enjoy this day?

For Real – Why is a day with something to eat a joy?

From God – How does Mary’s praise in Luke 1:53 apply to this day at St. Pete’s?

Friday, January 8 (page 201)

For Fun – Do you think Aia’s small-plate, extra pepper, chop-stick plan would work for you?

For Real – Why do people give up on diets?

From God – Why is the passion History (Matthew 26 & 27, Mark 14 & 15, Luke 22 & 23, John 18 & 19) such a key part of the Bible and worthy of a regularly repeated Passion Play?

First Sunday after Epiphany, January 10 (page 203)

For Fun – Why is it important to the mice not to be messy?

For Real – What kinds of church food events can your taste buds remember?

From God – How does Psalm 112:9 show that faith, blessing, and thanksgiving go together?

Tuesday, January 12 (page 205)

For Fun – How would you react to find a mystery powder in a donation box?

For Real – Why did Pastor Clement keep a level head?

From God – What does Jesus promise in Matthew 10:17-20 so His disciples are not worried that they are unprepared for what happens to them?

Wednesday, January 13 (page 207)

For Fun – How did Finley’s journal show that, as Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, there is a time for everything?

For Real – Why is it important to remember and respect your pastor? (See Hebrews 13:7, 17)

From God – Why is Romans 1:17 chosen as a fitting summary of Lutheran church life?

APPENDIX (List of Characters included in Book III) (page 211)

For Fun – Who were your favourite characters in Book III?

For Real – How can we remember that what we do is observed by many in the world around us?

From God – What does Jesus say about the list of His sheep in John 10:27-28?

ADDENDUM (31 years later) (page 227)

For Fun – Is the church a boat of transport to heaven or a cruise ship?

For Real – How are different generations supposed to deal with similar pasts, dissimilar presents, and a common future?

From God – Under God’s benediction or blessing (Numbers 6:24-26) what about the church must change and what must stay the same?