

Recommended Reading/Viewing list (as compiled by Sandy Hatfield)

Books:

Poland, by James A. Michener

- a historical fiction account of Poland's history. Well worth reading.

God's Playground: A History of Poland, by Norman Davies

- the “monster” history of Poland for those who are really serious about it 😊

Rising '44: The Battle for Warsaw, by Norman Davies

- One of the most comprehensive tellings of the Warsaw Uprising by British historian, Norman Davies.

The Holocaust: The Human Tragedy, by Martin Gilbert

- another “monster,” written by a world-renowned historian. 959 grueling pages take you day by day across the length and breadth of Europe and the surrounding regions, chronicling every abominable deed committed against the Jewish people during the Holocaust. Our concept of the enormity of the Holocaust exploded exponentially while reading this book. It took months to finish it since I could only read a few pages at a time. If possible, I would attach a “Warning: read at your own risk” decal to this one.

The Zookeeper's Wife: A War Story, by Diane Ackerman

- the story of Jan Żabiński, director of the Warsaw Zoo, and his wife, Antonina, who managed to hide 300 Jewish people during WWII. A film was released in 2017.

I Only Wanted to Live: the struggle of a boy to survive the Holocaust, by Arie Tamir

- the true story of a 10-year-old boy who survives the Krakow Ghetto and the Plaszow and Gozen labor camps. Incredible story.

We Were the Lucky Ones, by Georgia Hunter.

- inspired by the incredible true story of a Jewish family separated at the start of WWII and determined to survive and reunite.
- Was developed into a TV mini-series on Hulu

Invisible Jews: Surviving the Holocaust in Poland, by Eddie Bielawski.

- an amazing story of grit and ingenuity. For three years Eddie and his family hid in secret bunkers dug in fields, under sheds, or in barn lofts. The only way to survive was to become invisible.

Wira of Warsaw: Memoirs of a Girl Soldier, by George Szlachetko

- the true story of Danuta, a teenage girl who fought in the Warsaw Uprising and became a POW in Germany. An up-close account with lots of additional information that makes this a highly recommended resource on the events in Warsaw surrounding the 1944 uprising.

The Girl in the Green Sweater: A Life in Holocaust's Shadow, by Krystyna Chiger

- the true story of a Jewish family who hid for 14 months in the sewers of L'viv
- the movie "W Ciemności" is a re-telling of the story (read the book first!)

Irena Sendler and the Children of the Warsaw Ghetto, by Susan Goldman Rubin

- the story of a non-Jewish nurse who managed to rescue 2,000 Jewish children from the Warsaw ghetto
- Hallmark has produced a movie about her: "The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler"

When God Looked the Other Way, by Wesley Adamczyk

- Wesley's personal story of the tragic events his family endured as the Russians expelled them from their home in eastern Poland, murdering his father (a Polish officer) in the Katyn massacre and forcing he, his mother, and siblings on a horrific journey as refugees of war.

The Pianist: The Extraordinary True Story of One Man's Survival in Warsaw,
by Władysław Szpilman

- this story has also been produced as a movie, "The Pianist," – partly filmed in Warsaw

Into No Man's Land, by Irene Miller.

Written by our Jewish friend, Irene, who lives near us in Detroit. She was 6 years old when the bombs fell on her neighborhood in Warsaw in 1939. Her story is an incredible account of survival in Siberia and beyond.

The Children of Willesden Lane, by Mona Golabek and Lee Cohen.

Mona tells the story of her mother, Lisa Jura, a 14-year-old Jewish girl and music prodigy studying piano in Vienna, who is rescued via the Kindertransport.

Ghetto Diary, by Janusz Korczak

- Janusz Korczak was the pediatrician/author/director of orphanage who accompanied his children to the gas chambers. 2012 was the "Year of Janusz Korczak" in Poland. The diary is difficult to read at times, but gives insight into his final days.

Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto: The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum, edit/trans. by Jacob Sloan

- much more "scientific" in its approach, this is Emmanuel's attempt to document all that was happening in Poland, and specifically Warsaw, as all things Jewish were being destroyed. It is a large work, and I was tempted to give up – but pressed on to the finish in

honor of those who did the same. This book had a great effect on me. (Most of the documents/exhibits in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw are a result of Ringelblum's work, preserved in canisters hidden below ground during the war.)

Medallions, by Zofia Nalkowska

- an appalling account written by a member of the Commission for the Investigation of Nazi War Crimes. Considered one of the masterpieces of Holocaust world literature. Required reading in Polish high schools.

Peace by Piece, by Sandra Kellogg Rath and Peter Loth

- horrific tale of one young boy's experience in post-war Poland. Born in Stutthof concentration camp. Came to Jesus later in life – now travels to speak on “forgiveness.”

Out of the Fury: The Incredible Odyssey of Eliezer Urbach, as told to Edith S. Weigand

- wonderful testimony of God's faithfulness. Eliezer became a “father” to many young Jewish believers and leaders. I had the privilege to meet him. He is now with Yeshua.

Zvi, by Elwood McQuaid

Zvi and the Next Generation, by Elwood McQuaid

- another book and its sequel testifying to God's power to restore those who have suffered.

Revolt in Treblinka, by Samuel Willenberg

- riveting account of Samuel's internment and escape at Treblinka. I had the honor of sitting across from him at a Passover meal in Warsaw.
- Here are two links about Samuel. He was a sculptor. He died in February, 2016. Before that date, he was the only living survivor of Treblinka.

<https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium.MAGAZINE-the-ghosts-of-treblinka-in-a-tel-aviv-basement-1.6868301>

<http://www.haaretz.com/jewish-world/remaining-two-survivors-of-nazi-camp-world-must-not-forget-treblinka-1.322187>

Night, by Elie Wiesel

All Rivers Run to the Sea: Memoirs, by Elie Wiesel

- two classics that everyone should read at some point

Survivors: True Stories of Children in the Holocaust, by Allan Zullo and Mara Bovsun

Looking Back, by Mania Salinger

I Am David, by Anne Holm (made into a movie by the same name)

A Question of Honor: The Kosciuszko Squadron – Forgotten Heroes of WWII,
by Lynne Olson and Stanley Cloud

- I had to include this book – it touched me deeply.

Trail of Hope: The Anders Army, an Odyssey Across Three Continents, by Norman Davies

- When Germany and Russia invaded Poland in 1939, hundreds of thousands of Polish families were sent to Siberia. In 1941 when Germany invaded Russia, Russia decided to create a Polish army from those imprisoned. This is the remarkable story of General Anders and this Polish army and their journey from Siberia through Iran, the Middle East, Africa, and finally Italy as they fought alongside the Allies.

Your People Shall Be My People, by Don Finto

- A Scriptural look at the role between the Church and Israel. This book was one of the first that helped guide Dave and me on our journey of ministry with the Jewish people.

Films:

- “The Zookeeper’s Wife” – 2017 film based on the true story of Jan & Antonina Żabiński
- “The Pianist” – 2002 film starring Adrien Brody as Władysław Szpilman, a survivor
- “Ida” – won 2015 Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film
- “Katyn” – 2007 film about the mass murder of 20,000+ Polish officers and elite
- “Aftermath” (“Pokłosie”) 2012 controversial Polish film about the murder of Jews by Poles
- “W Ciemności (In Darkness)” – nominated for Academy Award 2012 for “Best Foreign Film”
- “The Courageous Heart of Irena Sendler” -- Hallmark Hall of Fame (starring Anna Paquin)
- “Run, Boy, Run,” – 2013 (starring Andrzej & Kamil Tkacz) – boy who escapes the ghetto
- “The Boy in the Striped Pajamas” – 2008 Lionsgate film (starring Asa Butterfield)
- “Hidden in Silence” – 2010 (starring Kellie Martin, Marion Ross, Joss Ackland)
- “Defiance” – 2008 based on a true story (starring Daniel Craig)
- “Life Is Beautiful” – 1997 Best Foreign Language Film (Italian with Eng. subtitles)
- “I Am David” – 2005 (starring Ben Tibber and Jim Caviezel)
- “Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport” – 2000 Academy Award Winner
- “Uprising” – 2005 (starring Jon Voight and Donald Sutherland)
- “Out of the Ashes” – 2003 Emmy winner (starring Christine Lahti)
- “The Devil’s Arithmetic” – 1999 (starring Kirsten Dunst)

Obviously, there are so many more books and films on this subject. This is but a sampling, dealing mostly with the historical events of the Holocaust – as well as some broader works detailing the history and culture of Poland. Please join us in praying for the people of Poland. May God bring true healing and restoration to this country that has endured so much.