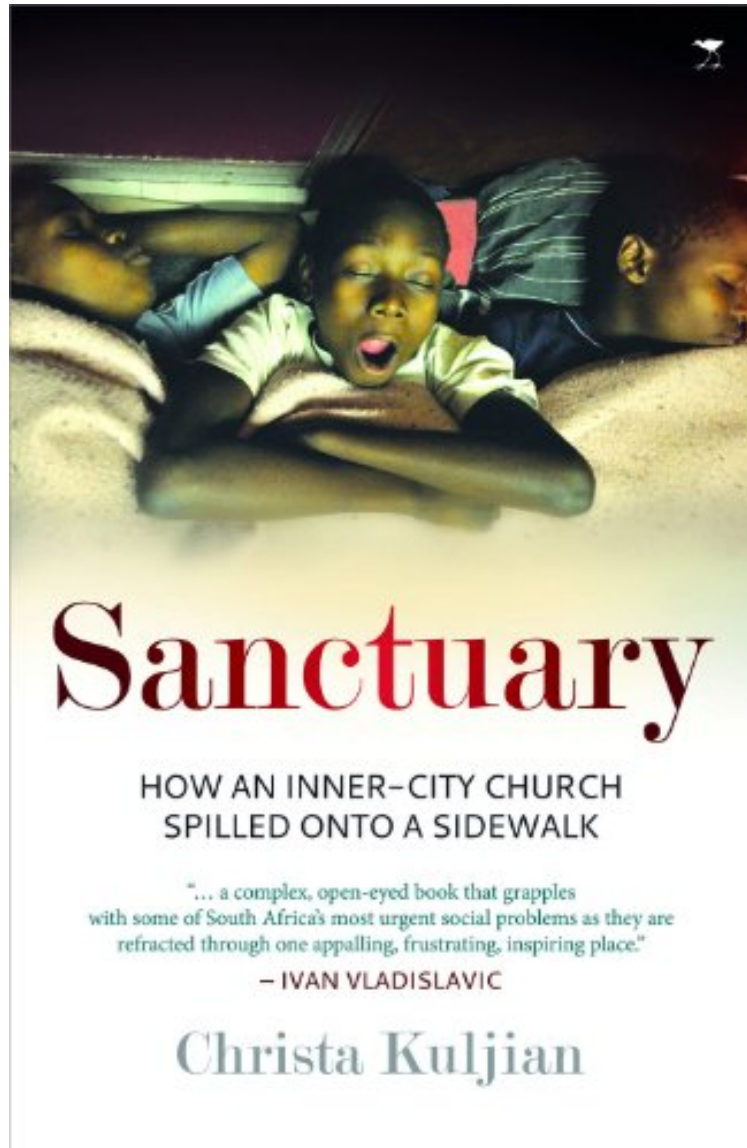


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Sanctuary: How an Inner-City Church Spilled Onto a Sidewalk

Christa Kuljian

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Christa Kuljian : Sanctuary: How an Inner-City Church Spilled Onto a Sidewalk before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sanctuary: How an Inner-City Church Spilled Onto a Sidewalk:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. richly observed, deeply moving story of courage and charityBy Rex DeanWhat if every church opened its doors to the homeless, and fed them? What if every church provided sanctuary to immigrants and other displaced souls, and did all it could to protect them? The author doesn't spend much time on the

specific strains of bigotry, xenophobia, and oppression one might find in South Africa, because small-mindedness and bullying seems pretty universal on this planet. The subject of Ms. Kuljian's book is not so much the ways people are commonly abused, but the very uncommon way in which one church has responded. The sheer ongoingness of Paul Verryn's charitableness is astounding. It's hard to imagine Sanctuary being turned into a movie along the lines of Hotel Rwanda, because the generosity and courage practiced at Central Methodist Church isn't a simple, single story, but multiple stories woven into decades. I highly recommend this book for anyone curious about South Africa, and anyone interested in a full accounting of just how much an underfunded bunch of caring individuals can accomplish if they stop acting and thinking conventionally.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great escapeBy willow7772Tanya Hanson's story-telling took me there to Heart Crossing and I enjoyed every minute of the trip. What a feel good read!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I'd pick it up and read it again, sure as shootin'!By Dora HiersMallie Cameron arrives at Hearts Crossing Ranch as her brother's plus-one for a wedding, aiming for a weekend flirtation with a cute cowboy. That's all she will allow herself since she has GBM, Glioblastoma Multiform. Even if the dreaded disease is in remission, without a cure, she won't risk falling in love when she faces a death sentence. Although Hooper (Hoop) Martin beat testicular cancer, he still worries about his daughter, Ella. Since his wife deserted them shortly after Ella's birth, what would happen to Ella if the cancer decided to return with a vengeance? When Mallie shows up at Hearts Crossing, he falls hard for the city slicker in pink-toed boots, but while Hoop leans on his faith, Mallie finds it "hard to accept a God who allowed perfectly decent, innocent people" to suffer. I felt that the author tackled a tough topic with sensitivity, and characterized Mallie and Hoop with realistic emotions and reactions. They must work through plenty of separate issues, including their faith, to find their happily-ever-after. With Hanson's vivid descriptions, prepare to be transported to a remote ranch set against the backdrop of the Rocky Mountains. At 155 pages, Sanctuary is the perfect size to read in a few hours. You'll be simultaneously entertained and encouraged, and alternate between laughing and tugging at the tissues. My only wish is that Sanctuary packed a few more pages, so I could savor the romance longer! But I'd pick it up and read it again, sure as shootin'!

Disclaimer: I won this book at the Petticoat and Pistols blog, as a free gift from the author for a comment left on the blog. I received no monetary compensation for this review, and the opinions expressed are mine.

This striking account tells the story of how the Central Methodist Church in downtown Johannesburg and its controversial Bishop Paul Verryn came to offer refuge to people who had nowhere else to turn. Xenophobic violence erupted in South Africa in May 2008 and the threat of it spreading to Central Methodist Church became very real already there were over a thousand migrants living in the church, most of them having fled across the Zimbabwe border in search of a life beyond poverty and political oppression. Every square inch was occupied. Christa Kuljian fluently combines many elements to share this remarkable experience openly: interviews with members of the refugee community, residents of the church, and key figures who include the head of Central Methodist; historical material on the church and its role in the city since the early years; and an understanding of urban dynamics, migrancy, and South African politics. Central Methodist became a visible reminder of the challenges facing Johannesburg and South Africa such as poverty, migration, xenophobia, and policing and this is the complex and compelling history of how it happened.

About the Author Christa Kuljian is a freelance writer and the recipient of the Ruth First Fellowship at the journalism program of the University of the Witwatersrand. She is the former director of the C. S. Mott Foundation in South Africa, a former visiting research fellow at the Johannesburg-based Centre for Policy Studies, a trustee of the Eugene Saldanha Memorial Fund, and a senior fellow of Synergos. She has also served on several boards, including the Southern Africa Grantmakers Association and the U.S. South Africa Fulbright Commission.