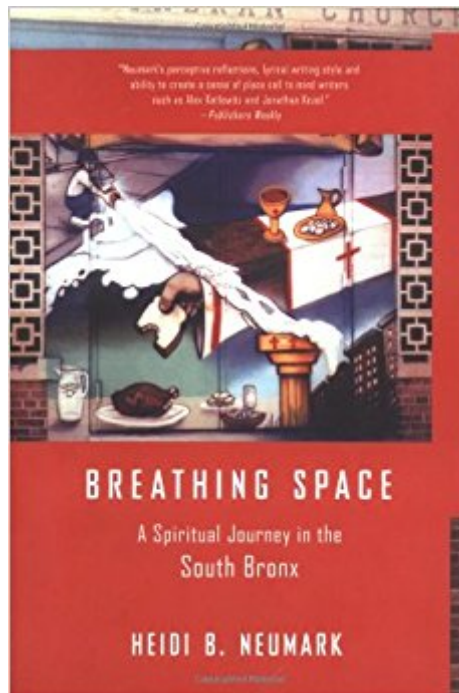


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Breathing Space: A Spiritual Journey In The South Bronx



Synopsis

Breathing Space is the story of Heidi Neumark and the Hispanic and African-American Lutheran church-Transfiguration-that took a chance calling on a pastor from a starkly different background. Despite living and working in a milieu of overwhelming poverty and violence, Neumark and the congregation encounter even more powerful forces of hope and renewal. This story of a community creating space for new life and breath is also the story of a young woman-working, raising her children, and struggling for spiritual breathing space. Through poignant, intimate stories, Neumark charts her journey alongside her parishioners as pastor, church, and community grow in wisdom and together experience transformation.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In 1984, when Neumark became pastor of Transfiguration Lutheran Church, the South Bronx was groaning under decades of neglect. A 1976 HUD policy called "planned shrinkage" had radically reduced city services, including hospitals and schools, and only people too poor to move elsewhere remained in this area of sewage treatment plants and torched apartment buildings. For 19 years Neumark lived and worked among addicts, pushers, prostitutes, people with AIDS, abused women and children and gang members, without abandoning hope: "I am drawn to a different vision-the walls rebuilt, the land reclaimed, the people who rise up like grass improbably breaking through slabs of stone." A gifted storyteller, she portrays people who, despite personal tragedies and minimal resources, band together to build low-income housing, create first-rate schools, restore their

church, plant trees and help each other through crises. People like Burnice, who initially came to church to pick up Christmas gifts, intending to trade them for drugs and then kill herself with an overdose; but who kept coming back, got her GED, found a job and is now a leader in church and community. "Some future pillars of the church arrive in ruins," Neumark wryly notes. With its hard-nosed realism and passion for God, this memoir should appeal to people of faith across the political spectrum. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Although a white woman of privilege, Neumark spent nearly 20 years ministering in the South Bronx to an exclusively Hispanic and African American Lutheran congregation that considered a church to be a community, and the church building a place to worship and to meet, sing, laugh, converse, and interact. Surrounded by violence and poverty and threatened by urban renewal, Transfiguration Lutheran Church under pastor Neumark survived and, perhaps miraculously, thrived. Neumark visited homes and walked the streets to meet the church's neighbors; talked with community leaders, shopkeepers, and street-corner misfits; recruited neighborhood kids and promising artists into an art class that became the cornerstone of an after-school program; initiated Sunday school classes; and sought to heal racial and class divisions that had festered for decades. Her story proves genuinely inspirational as we follow her from despair and frustration to cautious optimism in the face of a still tenuous future. June Sawyers Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I am loving this book. I picked it up as part of preparing a sermon for Transfiguration Sunday. The sermon is yet to be written, but I know that the book will be influential. Thank you Pastor Neumark for your masterful writing and your courageous example.

I learned so much from this book. It made me think differently about the challenges of living in urban areas and the joys to be found in all of God's world amongst His people.

A very good read. The author has the ability to convey her story in an interesting and engaging manner. I laughed and cried reading this book. It was insightful reading the author's thoughts, fears, hopes and dreams for her ministry.

I enjoyed this easy read as I journeyed with Heidi Neumark in the South Bronx. Inspiring stories and

life changing stories of how to preach the grace, mercy, and love of God in a place torn apart by violence. You will want to buy this book!

This is one brave woman in a compelling story of fulfilling God's mission.

This book brought up serious subjects about the inner city. Also, the pressure on citizens. The importance of faith in our lives.

Excellent story. A true witness to service and listening to God's call.

Neumark is authentic, yet hopeful in her description of what it's like to do ministry in a depressed urban area. She's a great writer and a humble, compassionate person.

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