The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, Ph.D., Dean and President, Professor of Theology and Ethics at Virginia Theological Seminary, recommends the following books as part of the Bishop Payne Library’s monthly series highlighting a faculty member’s “picks”:


This is one of the few books that reduced me to tears. Human life in all its raggedness, brokenness, yet underpinned by tragic routine is taken on a remarkable journey. In so many respects, this is an utterly secular novel, yet God and grace are never named but found everywhere. A man facing the hurt and pain of his retirement starts walking to reach a friend who has cancer. It is a truly great novel.


The sort of book that I just wish I could write. Plenty of learning underpins this powerful defense of the Christian narrative. Starting with the reality of sin (which is very imaginatively named) and working to an understanding of the disclosure of God in Christ, this is one of the best and most accessible texts for those unfamiliar with the Christian faith. For years, we all tried to emulate C. S. Lewis, Spufford has done the C. S. Lewis exercise for the 21st century in an utterly un-C. S. Lewis style.


Almost anything written by Stephen Webb is provocative, informed, and well-written. So here is a conservative Roman Catholic defending many principles of Mormonism. There is so much to disagree within this book; but it is a book that will stay with you a long time after you have finished reading it. Quite brilliant.