



Casting the Net

Pam Rhodes

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Heart-warming English comedy of manners, featuring the trials and tribulations of newly ordained minister, Neil Fisher. In part two of the Dunbridge Chronicles, Neil Fisher returns from ordination inspired by his sense of ministry, but determined to distance himself from the two ladies in his life. This is not altogether well received, and a wide segment of the congregation of St Stephen's, Dunbridge--including the music group--points Neil to the error of his ways.

Meanwhile Neil's close friend Colin and his wife Jeannie are delighted by the birth of a daughter, but is all well with the baby? Neil's mother Iris continues to meddle, to his irritation. Churchwarden Peter has said a relieved farewell to his flighty wife Glenda--or has he? Dunbridge is not as peaceful as it seems.

Casting the Net Details

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From Reader Review Casting the Net for online ebook

Lisa Johnson says

Title: Casting the Net (The Dunbridge Chronicles #2)

Author: Pam Rhodes

Pages: 254

Year: 2014

Publisher: Lion Fiction

Neil Fisher is just finishing his first year of training as a vicar under the tutelage of Margaret Prowse. His love life is a main topic of discussion with most seeing Wendy Lambert as an ideal wife for him. He likes Wendy and can see she would be an asset as a vicar's wife, but isn't sure he loves her. He has feelings for Claire, the gardener at the church, as well. Claire, however, isn't a Christian. Should he even begin a romantic relationship with her then? He learns that some Christians are not really what they claim.

He is kept very busy planning social events at the church, sometimes between or with other churches nearby, weddings, funerals, services for those who can't make it to church and visits to the elderly to name some of the things Neil does every week. Neil takes his responsibilities seriously and wonders if he will ever get over his nervousness and innate shyness to blossom as a church leader. He views his main task as bringing others into a relationship with Christ, whether he talks to people about Him or shows Him through Neil's actions. No matter the background or the current family/personal/social situation, Neil doesn't judge and shows compassion and caring to those in need.

This is a very enjoyable read about the everyday life of a vicar in the small town of Dunbridge. Neil encounters and must deal with a variety of situations, including his mentor's apparent loss of faith in this installment of the series. This causes him to wonder if this might happen to him after seeing such a strong Christian say they have no faith anymore after a tragic event. He is faced with life here on this earth and the good and bad that come with it. I really admire Neil's knowing his purpose in life and being centered and focused on God. He tries his best to show Christ to those he encounters. This is an entertaining series and I'm looking forward to the next book titled, If You Follow Me.

My rating is 4 stars.

Amazon Link: <http://www.amazon.com/Casting-Net-Dun...>

Note: I received a complimentary copy for an honest review of this book. The opinions shared in this review are solely my responsibility. Other reviews can be read at <http://seekingwithallyurheart.blogspot....> Also follow me on Twitter @lcjohnson1988, FaceBook at <https://www.facebook.com/lisa.johnson...>

Jessica Powell says

This is the kind of book you want to read with a cup of tea in the afternoon, if that makes sense. It's homely without being stodgy, and cosy without being stifling. It has moments which make you want to cry, moments which make you laugh, and you come away feeling that you've spent a very enjoyable couple of hours!

*I received this book via a goodreads giveaway.

Denita says

This is the second book in the Dunbridge Chronicles. I enjoy reading stories about people in English villages

and in particular stories that involve vicars and churches. These stories have Christian messages that are not preachy but very practical. I look forward to Book 3.

Mark says

Some years ago, I read a couple of the books by Jan Karon that have been so popular, and didn't really care for them. This series is somewhat along the same lines of those books, but I find myself enjoying them far more. I loved the first book, and found myself liking the second one even better.

In this book, Neil, the main character, is finding his footing more as a vicar. The same interesting and sometimes odd characters from book one are back for this, along with the two competing love interests for the new minister.

I am more used to the main character hanging out a tavern and drinking ale, but I could still do without that, but I still found myself completely enjoying the book. Neil is constantly finding himself in funny and difficult circumstances, and also finds himself struggling a bit with his call.

Not all is fun and games in this book, as a seasoned leader loses faith in the midst of loss, and Neil is left scrambling to fill a void he doesn't feel ready to fill, while trying to plow through the question of whether God is truly good in the midst of loss.

I do find the idea of a minister becoming involved with a nonbeliever against what the Bible teaches, but this is fiction, and that may be worked out in the next book. The book was a quite satisfying sequel, and though a departure from my usual suspense/mystery novels, is still a book that kept me turning the pages as fast as I could turn them. This is a series worth reading, and one that men might enjoy more than a lot of the fiction that is geared for women,

Victor Gentile says

Pam Rhodes in her new book, "Casting The Net" Book Two in The Dunbridge Chronicles series published by Lion Fiction continues the story of Neil Fisher.

From the back cover: Neil Fisher returns from ordination inspired by his vocation, and determined not to let his love life get in the way. Some might think a man lucky to have two women declaring their love for him, but it's not that straightforward when you're a priest!

Neil's second year as curate of St. Stephen's, in the small town of Dunbridge, promises to be no quieter than the first. There are joys to be celebrated, worries to be shared, and bereavements that shake the community to its core.

And of course, there are the women who mean to take care of him – from his domineering mother, Iris, who appears to have moved in, and Wendy, who knows she'd make him the perfect wife, to Claire, who doesn't believe in God, but does believe in Neil...

Neil Fisher returns and he is definitely living up to his name for he is a fisher of men and women. The little town of Dunbridge needs him and he needs to people of Dunbridge. Together this is a win-win situation. There is a lot going on in conflicts, births and deaths are just some of what Neil has to contend with. Then

there is his mother and the women who want to marry him. This story is the kind that plays out best in a small town in an English countryside. Dunbridge is a town that I would not mind living in. The people who there are terrific and life, while it has its ups and downs, is slow and easy. I am glad Ms. Rhodes has given us this new taste of life there I can hardly wait to visit again Neil and the people of Dunbridge.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Kregel Publications. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255: "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Beckie Burnham says

I have rather mixed emotions about Casting The Net, the second book in The Dunbridge Chronicles by Pam Rhodes. I very much liked the cast of characters and the charming English village of Dunbridge. I liked the wonderful sense of community that Rhodes has created in the parish of St. Stephens. I also liked the look into how Christianity is lived out in a culture different from my own. But the theology of the book gives me some pause. It definitely got me thinking!

Neil Fisher is a young curate embarking on his second year of potty-training or curacy in the Anglican parish of St. Stephens. He begins with a bit of confusion and hesitation over his abilities as curate and his romantic feelings. By the end of this challenging year, Neil has grown into a more confident and knowledgeable minister. His love life seems settled too, but of course the next book in the series could produce even more challenges for him.

First the pros of Casting The Net. Rhodes has done a wonderful job of creating a village and parish church that teems with life. The characters are very realistic and run the gamut from lovely and loving people to busy-bodies to those who use manipulation to get what they want. You can find these characters in any setting in real life! The triumphs and trials of their lives mirror real life as well. The main character, Neil, is by far my favorite. I liked the way he grew in his understanding of both his congregation and himself, ministering to people with God's grace. Rhodes also tackles issues that don't have easy answers — the death of loved ones, divorce and marriage. Culturally, the Anglican church in an English village is much different than my conservative, evangelical church in the Deep South and it was interesting to see what was accepted and what was not. While raising hands and singing praise songs is seen as a bit alien for them, regular visits to the pub and having a pint are a way of life.

Now the cons. When it comes to the theological issues, Rhodes presents views that are all over the spectrum. Neil presents one of the best explanations of why evil exists and God's rule within a fallen world that I have read. But later in the novel, when faced with someone who does not share his faith, he offers a somewhat vague statement about there being many paths. Neil is a committed Christian, yet I don't get the sense that he believes it is necessary for salvation. Neil is a bit on the fence when it comes to personal morality. He takes a strong stance in some areas, in others he looks the other way. I find it unusual for a priest not to be concerned with being unequally yoked. Relationships with others seem to take precedence over his relationship with God.

So do I recommend Casting The Net? Maybe. I liked it even though I could not agree with many of its sentiments. I liked the look into a church and community so different from my own. If you liked Jan Karon's Mitford series, you will probably like this book. If you expect a book to express conservative Christian values, you may want to pass.

(Thanks to Kregel for a review copy. The opinions expressed are mine alone.)

Kimberly says

When I signed up for this tour I did so thinking that this was a cozy mystery, so when I started reading it I was surprised to find that it was a contemporary Christian fiction novel instead, which worried me because I'm not religious and I wasn't sure how preachy this one would be, so it came as a huge surprise to find out that it wasn't preachy in the least but I that I also really enjoyed it.

I had read some pretty heavy books before I picked *Casting the Net Up* and this one acted as a bit of a palate cleanser for me because it was just such an easy, feel good funny read that didn't in anyway force religion on me as a reader and focused more on the characters and the story (with a little religion thrown in) but mostly on the relationships of everyone in the small village town of Dunbridge in rural England.

I really liked Neil, he's such a sweet guy and he's still so young and nervous about his role in the vicarage that he comes across as really endearing. He's just one of those guys that you want to stop and have a chat with and be friends with because he's so kind, caring and approachable plus he's actually quite funny. I was surprised by how much I liked him but there I was at the end of the book feeling quite sad that my time in his company had come to an end, but feeling as though I left him in a much better place than he was after about halfway through the book when tragedy struck twice in the tiny town involving people close to his heart.

I thought it was very refreshing that the author decided to write a novel from the male perspective, often times I see women writers (not all of course but a majority) that use women in their novels as their main characters especially in small town settings. I thought the way she wrote Neil was fantastic, right down to his exasperation when it came to dealing with his over bearing mother.

Neil wasn't the only well written character in the book though, I thought the whole cast was lovely even the characters that I didn't care for, such as Neil's horrible ex-girlfriend Wendy. She was a witch and was only thinking of how wonderful it would be to be a Vicar's wife. I didn't like her personality and I really hope she gets her comeuppance in the next book in the series.

Overall, I thought that this was a really well written book. As light hearted as it was, there was also tragedy and sadness and death in the novel as well which gave the characters a more human slant because I was able to see them in happy times and sad times but also saw the strength that they took not only from the Church but took the majority of strength from their friends in family in the community. The book just left me feeling good, because I could see things were finally on the mend.

I would recommend *Casting the Net* to everyone. As a non-religious person I can tell you that this one isn't in your face about religion at all and I think it offers a cute little glimpse of life in rural England to the reader that will have you laughing often and wishing you could move to a small town.

***I received a free copy of this book in exchange for my free and honest review. All thoughts and opinions expressed herein are 100% my own.**

Stephanie says

I was reading this at work trying not to laugh out loud or cry all over myself.

Meagan Myhren-bennett says

Casting the Net
The Dunbridge Chronicles #2
By Pam Rhodes

Sometimes life throws you some real curves and Neil Fisher has some real doozies to deal with in Casting the Net. First off he has two women vying for a place in his heart - Wendy and Claire. (In my opinion Wendy is the type person I'd want to run from even if she's a pillar in the church's musical worship group). In like Claire in that she's not so pushy, but Neil is the one who has to make a decision and someone is sure to be hurt, even if it is him.

But all Neil's problems aren't related to matters of the heart. He has members who are the financial backbone of the church who aren't happy with the modern trends in the worship service. Try as he might Neil seeks a balance that will make everyone happy at least part of the time while not alienating everyone in the process and if possible to bring in new members (or visitors who keep coming back).

And then there is life in general that Neil and the congregation of St. Stephen's have to deal with. There are the joys of birth and the utter heartache and despair of death. There are marriages and there is the loss of health. Through it all Neil offers support and caring even as some have their faith and beliefs shaken to the core.

Casting the Net is an apt title as this is what Neil is doing - he is casting his net and being a fisher of men and women. Though there are a few bumps along the way that snag his net.

Want to make some new friends? Take a trip to Dunbridge where life is never boring. You'll have times of laughter and times of tears, but you'll enjoy your trip and want to come back again.

Though Casting the Net is set in a totally different time something about it reminds me of the Cranford PBS series based on Elisabeth Gaskell's works. I think it has something to do with the daily interactions between the various characters and their care for one another.

Grab a cup of your favorite tea and settle in for a visit in Dunbridge...

I was provided a copy of this book by Kregel Blog Tours in exchange for my honest review.

Jo Hurst says

This was the second in the series and it didn't disappoint. Even as a Christian I found this a little preachy at points and the author appears to struggle to know her audience at times, either explaining in too much detail what Easter means or just being a little over the top with the Christian values and meanings at times. The book had me in floods as there are a number of very sad scenes which were handled well. Neil and the gang again continue to have little depth at times but remain engaging and delightful. Bring on book 3!

Ann says

I love this series about Neil - a second year curate in the Anglican Church and his trials, tribulations and joys in his discovery of himself and the real practice of religion in a small countryside village in England. Truthful about the problems ministers face each day! With assurances and doubts.

Gayle Pace says

REVIEW

The author wrote a light fiction with the setting being a small church.. It has snippets about the life of the town's vicar. I myself am not much into reading these kind of religious based books., but this one was rather interesting. A little liberal but with an open mind it's not a bad read. I always thought as I was growing up that Priests didn't marry or have any intimate relationships. They were in a sense, married to God. So I learned some things about the priesthood. The author kept you interested by the many different characters and the situations they got themselves into. The book put personal aspects that touch us all such as, death, anger, love, sadness and so many others, into the book. We all struggle with one or more things in our lives so this book was true to the point about this aspect. The author showed some who accepted their situations with grace. That is not an easy thing to do at times. I feel the book was an easy read without a lot of serious spirituality mixed in. I feel the book is a good read for the doctor's office or when you're waiting on the kids at soccer practice. I just have a hard time reading religious based books. It's just my own opinion. Grab a copy of CASTING THE NET and develop your own opinion.

I received a complimentary copy of CASTING THE NET by Pam Rhodes from Kregel Publication Blog Tours for my view. No other compensation took place.

Sarah Bailey says

I really enjoyed the first book in The Dunbridge Chronicles, Fisher of Men, so I was thinking I would like this one just as much as I did the first but unfortunately for me this one didn't pull me in as the first one did. Don't get me wrong I enjoyed visiting Dunbridge again and getting to visit with Neil, Margaret and all the other town citizens – it was like visiting with old friends but there were so many crisis among the people and since I was have my own family crisis it was hard for me to really see past all the character's messes. I love the way Pam Rhodes writes as it's friendly and down to earth and I love the British terms for such things as mundane as a parking lot, so all that was great and very enjoyable but as I said it was probably stemming more from my own crisis than anything really wrong with the book.

I must say the real issue I had was the attitude toward divorce and remarriage – even though the divorce was precipitated by an affair but when the wife tries to come back she is advised to just leave her husband so he can marry the woman he loves and there also seems to be no batting of the eye in regards to a couple who begin living together and then become pregnant. I'm all for the whole love the sinner but hate the sin but it seemed like things are quite liberal even within Dunbridge's church and their young curate doesn't know how to really get his hands dirty (but then again he is engaged to a non-Believer). Overall though the book

was a delightful read and I was so happy to read that Neil and his mom had made repairs in their relationship and I hope that in book 3 Margaret can come to a peace about her faith struggles after he husband suddenly passes away. I honestly do look forward to reading the next book in the series.

**I was provided a copy of the book from Kregel Publications in exchange for my honest opinion, no other compensation was given.

Hannah says

Really good series. Like all of the characters.

Judio says

She did it again. Thought that this was a TV serial and - stopped! Just like that. This is annoying. The next book of hers that does that will get just one star. Just for pulling a stunt like that.
