



Book Recommendations on Interfaith Family Life
Rabbi Mychal Copeland, Director of InterfaithFamily Bay Area

INTERFAITH MARRIAGE

The Guide to Jewish Interfaith Family Life: An Interfaithfamily.Com Handbook

By Ronnie Friedland and Ed Case, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001

The Guide to Jewish Interfaith Family Life is a helpful, practical book that offers the perspectives of many intermarried families, as well as people who work with them, on how to handle issues that can be delicate. Some of these issues are: working out a wedding ceremony that is comfortable for you and their families, choosing a religion for your child, telling your parents, handling holidays, creating life-cycle events that honor both families, and much more.

Between Two Worlds: Choices for Grown Children of Jewish-Christian Parents

By Leslie Goodman-Malamuth and Robin Margolis, Pocket Books, 1992

For the grown children of intermarriage. How do grown children find a place of their own, to inhabit in spiritual and emotional comfort? What does it feel like to be raised "both or nothing?"

But How Will You Raise the Children?

By Steven Carr Reuben, Pocket Books, 1987

The author draws on his more than 20 years of counseling experience to answer readers' questions about interfaith unions with compassionate guidance and real-life examples, addressing every facet of the interfaith marriage.

Embracing the Stranger

By Ellen Jaffe McClain, Basic Books, November 1995

McClain interviews couples about how they are handling two traditions in one family.

Half Life

By Laurel Snyder, Soft Skull Press, 2006

Essays by children of interfaith couples. Most of them are pretty dark. Note that most of the people are patrilineal Jews, adding to their struggle. Most are not raised solely Jewish and have suffered some other family trauma like drug use, alcoholism or divorce.

If I'm Jewish and You're Christian, What are the Children?

By Andrea King, UAHC Press, 1994

Written by the Christian mother of a Jewish son, Ms. King creates two composite families; one raising their children with a single faith, the other combining Judaism and Christianity. Ms. King clearly states her opinion that children "benefit from having a single-religious orientation."

Inside Intermarriage: A Christian Partner's Perspective on Raising a Jewish Family

By Jim Keen, URJ Press, 2006

A positive message about how couples can negotiate differences.

Intermarriage: The Challenge of Living with Differences Between Christians and Jews

By Susan Weidman Schneider, The Free Press Macmillan, 1989

An exploration of how interfaith couples and their families face the challenges of intermarriage at each step of the couple's relationship, and throughout the lifecycle. Also discusses how perspective on intermarriage may differ as a function of gender.

Mingled Roots: A Guide for Jewish Grandparents of Interfaith Grandchildren

By Dahlia G. Schoenberg and Sunie Levin, URJ Press, 2003

Publisher: B'nai B'rith Women. Guide for Jewish grandparents on how to "teach your grandchild in a non-proselytizing manner about your background, your tradition, your way of life."

Common Prayers: Faith, Family, and a Christian's Journey Through the Jewish Year

By Harvey Cox, Mariner Books, 2002

The eminent Christian theologian and scholar of religion, offers an intimate tour through the Jewish year certain to inform and enlighten Jews and non-Jews alike. As a member of an interfaith household, Cox has had ample opportunity to reflect upon the essence of Judaism and its complex relationship to Christianity.

Mixed Blessings: Marriage Between Jews and Christians

By Rachel and Paul Cowan, Doubleday, 1987

The Cowans first consider their own marriage, then provide a historical overview, and finally contemporary issues: time bombs, some practical resolutions, advice from children of interfaith marriage, and recommended reading. A classic; many stories of couples and how they met and dealt with religious issues and differences.

Mixed Matches: How to Create Successful Interracial, Interethnic, and Interfaith Relationships

By Joel Crohn, Ballantine Books, 1995

In this groundbreaking and timely book, one of the nation's foremost experts on cross-cultural marriage shares his vast knowledge of the unique strains these couples face and helps them develop the necessary skills to make their marriages thrive. Informative and practical.

Strangers to the Tribe: Portraits of Interfaith Marriage

By Gabrielle Glazer, Houghton Mifflin, 1997

A journalistic glimpse into the lives of six families juggling issues of ethnicity, class and religion within the context of intermarriage.

What I Wish My Christian Friends Knew About Judaism

By Robert Schoen, Loyola Press, 2002

Offers a clear explanation of the streams of Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform and



Reconstructionist. Discusses what goes on inside the synagogue, followed by an examination of the Jewish holidays. Also deals with Jewish life cycle events, home life and beliefs and Judaism in the world.

The Intermarriage Handbook: A Guide for Jews & Christians

By Judy Petronsk and Jim Remsen, New York, Morrow 1991

The Intermarriage Handbook is a comprehensive, immensely practical self-help book for interfaith couples. Judy Petronsk and Jim Remsen interviewed hundreds of experts: psychologists, family therapist, sociologists, religious leaders--and especially the couples themselves. They discovered that the cultural differences between Christians and Jews are as significant as their religious upbringings.

Interfaith Families: Personal Stories of Jewish-Christian Intermarriage

By Jane Kaplan, Praeger, Seabury Books, 2004

This book will open your eyes to both sides of the story from the very different personal viewpoints of Jewish and Christian partners and is non-judgmental in the display of the difficulties that may arise. We all know our own point of view but how well do we understand our partner's perspective? If your partner has problems putting his/her feelings into words, these vignettes may help.

Making a Successful Jewish Interfaith Marriage: The Jewish Outreach Institute Guide to Opportunities, Challenges and Resources

By Kerry M. Olitzky, Joan Peterson Littman, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2003

In this first of its kind resource, Jewish and non-Jewish members of interfaith families--grandparents, parents, children, dating and committed couples, Jews-by-Choice, and extended family members--and the rabbis, cantors, family educators, and outreach professionals who work with them, offer you their own first-hand experience. This family reference guide is packed with advice and insight from a Jewish perspective on the day-to-day issues facing interfaith families.

Being Both

By Susan Katz Miller, Beacon Press 2013

Being Both chronicles the rise of a controversial new grassroots movement: interfaith families choosing to celebrate both religions. Miller, a former Newsweek reporter, interweaves her own story with original reporting, and with hundreds of responses from original surveys of parents who chose both religions, and of their grown interfaith children. She describes the formation of communities, across the country, pioneering interfaith education for interfaith children. The result is the first book by an adult interfaith child to advocate for the right of interfaith families to claim, and embrace, both family religions. *Being Both* is also the first book to give voice to a new generation of interfaith children growing up with formal interfaith education.

For Children

Papa Jethro

By Deborah Bodin Cohen, Kar-Ben Publishing, 2014

With warm watercolor artwork and a gentle storyline, this picture book sensitively looks at the issue of interfaith families. "Why can't you be Jewish like me? Why can't I be Christian like you?" To answer



these questions posed by his granddaughter, a modern grandfather tells her the parallel story of Jethro, the famous non-Jewish grandfather of the Bible.

My Two Grandmothers

By Effin Older, HMH Books for Young Readers, 2000

Lily loves spending time with her Grammy Lane, riding tractors in the summer and snowshoeing in the winter. She loves playing golf and going to the clubhouse with her Bubbe Silver. And she especially loves the holidays--Christmas with Grammy and Hanukkah with Bubbe. There are Lane family traditions. And there are Silver family traditions. But Lily wishes she could share a tradition with *both* of her grandmothers. Maybe it's time to start a new one.

Light The Lights! A Story About Celebrating Hanukkah And Christmas

By Margaret Moorman, Cartwheel, 1999

Every December, Emma and her family celebrate two special holidays. First comes Hanukkah, with dreidel games and lighting the menorah. Then comes Christmas, with carols, bright lights on the tree, and presents for everyone!

What Makes Someone a Jew?

By Lauren Seidman, Jewish Lights Publishing, 2007

What makes a person a Jew? Is it the way that they look or the things that they do? Is being Jewish a matter of how you look, or how you live? Using everyday examples that children can relate to, this colorful book helps all young Jewish readers understand what it really means to be a Jew.

