



# Open Secrets: A Memoir of Faith and Discovery

*Richard Lischer*

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## **Open Secrets: A Memoir of Faith and Discovery** Richard Lischer

In the tradition of Garrison Keillor, *Open Secrets* captures the friendships, rivalries, and rumors of small-town life by chronicling the lives of the citizens of a small Midwestern community through the eyes of a young minister.

Fresh out of divinity school and bursting with enthusiasm, Richard Lischer found himself assigned to a small conservative church in an economically depressed town in southern Illinois. It's an awkward marriage at best--a young man with a Ph.D. in theology, full of ideas and ambitions, determined to improve his parish and bring it into the twenty-first century, and a community that is "as tightly sealed as a jar of home-canned pickles." In *Open Secrets*, Lischer tells not only his own story but also the story of New Cana and its inhabitants. With charm, openness, and humor, Lischer brings to life the clash of cultures and personalities that marks his pastoral tenure, including his own doubts, as well as those of his parishioners, that a twenty-eight-year-old suburban-raised liberal can deal with the troubled marriages, alcoholism, teen sex, inadequate farm subsidies, and other concerns of the conservative, tightly knit community. But the inhabitants of New Cana--lovable, deeply flawed, imperfect people who stick together--open their arms to him in their own way, and the result is a colorful, poignant comedy of small-town life and all it has to offer.

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