



**Parkdale United
Zoom Book Club**

**Saturday, May 10th
at 10:00 am**

The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store

by James McBride

From Goodreads:

“In 1972, when workers in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, were digging the foundations for a new housing development, the last thing they expected to uncover was a human skeleton. Who the skeleton was and how it got buried there were just two of the long-held secrets that had been kept for decades by the residents of Chicken Hill, the dilapidated neighborhood where immigrant Jews and African Americans lived side by side, sharing ambitions and sorrows.

Chicken Hill was where Moshe and Chona Ludlow lived when Chona ran the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store, which served the neighborhood's quirky collection of blacks and European immigrants, helped by her husband, Moshe, a Romanian-born theater owner who integrated the town's first dance hall. When the state came looking for a deaf black child, claiming that the boy needed to be institutionalized, Chicken Hill's residents—roused by Chona's kindness and the courage of a local black worker named Nate Timblin—banded together to keep the boy safe.

As the novel unfolds, it becomes clear how much the people of Chicken Hill have to struggle to survive at the margins of white Christian America and how damaging bigotry, hypocrisy, and deceit can be to a community. When the truth is revealed about the skeleton, the boy, and the part the town's establishment played in both, McBride shows that it is love and community—heaven and earth—that ultimately sustain us..”

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82432011683?pwd=SEgwSFFIOTRZODVtSmVuYW1vOXNwdz09>

Meeting ID: 824 3201 1683

Passcode: 284356

If you're not able to join the meeting, you are welcome to send your comments about *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* to sloanelm@shaw.ca or bethbalshaw@shaw.ca before May 10th so they can be shared with the group and included in our next Book Club Newsletter.