

Blessed is the Busybody

Reading guide

1. When her minister husband is offered a new church in small town Ohio Aggie Sloan-Wilcox makes a choice to leave an urban area she loves to set up housekeeping in Emerald Springs and raise her family. Some professions require frequent moves, and ministry is often one of them. Were you sympathetic to her struggle to fit into her new environment? Sympathetic that she agreed to the move in the first place?
2. When Aggie finds a body on the front porch of the parsonage, she gets involved in solving the murder, largely because Ed, her husband, is a suspect. Did you ever suspect that Ed might have been the murderer? Did anyone else seem like a good possibility?
3. Gelsey Falowell is out to create trouble for Ed with the congregation, in fact she would like to see him fired. Have you been part of any similar organization when members have banded together to oust a minister or employee? Did this seem realistic to you?
4. Gelsey and Jennifer Marina had an unexpected connection. As that story unfolds, were you able to believe Gelsey's past and present could be so different?
5. The plot of *Blessed is the Busybody*, like all the novels in the *Ministry is Murder* series, was suggested by an Old Testament story. Did you see the similarities as you read? Now that you know, are you aware which story it resembles? Think about Aggie ending up in the road salt dome for the ultimate clue. If you see that, then what other portions of the story are familiar?
6. Aggie and Kirkor Roussos, the Emerald Springs' detective who is lead on the murder, experience some chemistry. Obviously, even though they are adversaries, they also admire each other. Were you bothered that a happily married woman can be attracted to another man? Do you believe it's possible to be attracted to a man and not act on that attraction? Is that simply human?
7. Why do you think the author added that element?
8. Aggie is a Unitarian-Universalist, a liberal denomination, and the Consolidated Community Church is a liberal congregation, served through the years by ministers of a variety of denominations. Given that your own church might be a bit different in style, were you able to relate to the church and the life of this clergy family?

9. All the Ministry is Murder novels are rich in their family, church and community dynamics. In your opinion does this detract or add to the mystery?
10. The Ministry is Murder novels have been described as Janet Evanovich meets Jan Karon. Would you agree?