

Inspirational poet comes to Jefferson

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JEFFERSON — Jayne Jaudon Ferrer has loved poetry since discovering Robert Louis Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses" in her church library at the age of 4. Forty-something years later, she still carries a torch for a genre most have turned their backs on as soon as they passed high school English.

"You say 'poetry' and people take two steps back and hold up crossed fingers," laughs the South Carolina author of four bestselling gift books for women. "I'm on a mission to prove that anyone who thinks they don't like poetry just hasn't found the right poet."

Ms. Ferrer will be a featured author at this year's Books Alive! Christian and Inspirational Book Extravaganza at First Methodist Church of Jefferson on Friday through Sunday. Her books, "She of the Rib: Women Unwrapped," "A New Mother's Prayers," "A Mother of Sons," and "Dancing with My Daughter," are all inspirational books targeted at women; they have won accolades from celebrities such as Emme, Dixie Carter, and Marcia Wallace, and from mothers as far away as Australia.

Despite its often serious topics, humor plays a big role in Ferrer's poetry. "Think Erma Bombeck meets Emily Dickinson," the author quips when asked to describe her work. A popular speaker for women's events and retreats, Ms. Ferrer believes one of the reasons women respond so strongly to her writing is because she validates their frustrations, then offers a positive perspective. "Whether it's child care, parent care, health concerns, income, or time, we're all juggling something. But there are always blessings to be found, no matter how bleak life gets."

Having spent 10 years caring for her mother, who suffered from Alzheimer's disease, Ms. Ferrer is the first to acknowledge that a positive outlook is not always easy when life starts to overwhelm. "I'm a believer in good naps and good books," she confesses. "Both are cheap and easy ways to escape from reality when you need a break."

For details on Books Alive!, visit www.booksalivejefferson.com. For more details on Ms. Ferrer, visit www.jaynejaudonferrer.com.