



Parkdale United  
Zoom Book Club

Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>  
at 10:00 am

# The Splendid and the Vile

by Erik Larson

From Goodreads:

## ***Nominee for Best History & Biography 2020***

"The #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Devil in the White City* and *Dead Wake* delivers a fresh and compelling portrait of Winston Churchill and London during the Blitz. On Winston Churchill's first day as prime minister, Hitler invaded Holland and Belgium. Poland and Czechoslovakia had already fallen, and the Dunkirk evacuation was just two weeks away. For the next twelve months, Hitler would wage a relentless bombing campaign, killing 45,000 Britons. It was up to Churchill to hold the country together and persuade President Franklin Roosevelt that Britain was a worthy ally – and willing to fight to the end. In *The Splendid and the Vile*, Erik Larson shows, in cinematic detail, how Churchill taught the British people "the art of being fearless." It is a story of political brinkmanship, but it's also an intimate domestic drama set against the backdrop of Churchill's prime-ministerial country home, Chequers; his wartime retreat, Ditchley, where he and his entourage go when the moon is brightest and the bombing threat is highest; and, of course, 10 Downing Street in London. Drawing on diaries, original archival documents, and once-secret intelligence reports – some released only recently – Larson provides a new lens on London's darkest year through the day-to-day experience of Churchill and his his wife, Clementine; their youngest daughter, Mary, who chafes against her parents' wartime protectiveness; their son, Randolph, and his beautiful, unhappy wife, Pamela; Pamela's illicit lover, a dashing American emissary; and the cadre of close advisers who comprised Churchill's "Secret Circle," including his lovestruck private secretary, John Colville; newspaper baron Lord Beaverbrook; and the Rasputin-like Frederick Lindemann. *The Splendid and the Vile* takes readers out of today's political dysfunction and back to a time of true leadership, when – in the face of unrelenting horror – Churchill's eloquence, courage, and perseverance bound a country and a family together."

## **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 Splendid and the Vile* to [sloanelm@shaw.ca](mailto:sloanelm@shaw.ca) or [bethbalshaw@shaw.ca](mailto:bethbalshaw@shaw.ca) before November 9<sup>th</sup> so they can be shared with the group and included in our next Book Club Newsletter.