

Readers Discussion Guide  
*To Wager Her Heart*  
a Belle Meade Plantation novel (book 3)  
by Tamera Alexander

**Spoiler Alert!** As would be expected in a discussion guide, crucial plot points and events are revealed in the following questions. So if you haven't finished reading *To Wager Her Heart* and don't wish to have these "surprises" spoiled, you might want to skip reading the group guide until you have.

Check out the [Belle Meade Plantation novels page](#) on Tamera's website for pictures of the mansion and real people who lived at Belle Meade, as well as videos Tamera filmed on location at the plantation in Nashville:  
<http://www.tameraalexander.com>

Dear friends,

I'm thrilled you've chosen *To Wager Her Heart* as your reading group selection, and I hope you enjoyed Sylas and Alexandra's story. Christ drew me closer to Him as I wrote the novel, and my prayer is that somewhere along the way as you read, you took a step closer to Him too.

I'd love to join your group discussion!

If you're interested in having me join your group via a Virtual Book Club Meeting, visit my website ([www.TameraAlexander.com](http://www.TameraAlexander.com)) and click on **BONUS FEATURES** then **FOR BOOK CLUBS** to learn more about Virtual Book Club Meetings. Also, if you're ever in Nashville, please make a point to see the Belle Meade Plantation. See [www.BelleMeadePlantation.com](http://www.BelleMeadePlantation.com) for details, and be sure to ask them about the special "novel tour" for readers.



Incidentally, if you enjoyed *To Wager Her Heart*, the third standalone novel in the 3-book Belle Meade Plantation series, I think you'll also enjoy the Belmont Mansion novels. I've written these 2 three-book Southern series—Belle Meade Plantation series and Belmont Mansion series—to be read together because the families in the mansions knew one another. So seeing that their lives connected in the 1800s, it only makes sense that they should connect again...on the page of these novels.

Continued blessings,  
Tamera

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**Discussion Questions** (expanded from those included in the back of the novel)

1. Sy and Alexandra come from very different backgrounds. Discuss those differences and how their varied perspectives shaped their personalities.
2. Alexandra always wanted a sister, a confidante. Do you have that in your life? How is your family dynamic similar to or different from Alexandra's?
3. Before reading this novel, had you heard of the Fisk Singers (or Fisk University) before? Do you share an affinity for music. And if so, what kinds of music?
4. Alexandra's mother states (Ch 2) how their world was changing for women. Discuss the changes she referenced and contrast those with today's culture. What advancements have been made? What common battles are still being fought?
5. We often assume things about one other upon first impression just as Mr. White did with Alexandra. Identify his misassumptions and discuss the challenges that come with making broad assumptions, both then and now, especially in regard to race and culture. Share specific examples from your own life.
6. The tragic accident at Dutchman's Curve in Nashville really did occur—on July 9, 1918. Tamera took artistic license in placing the accident in her story (in 1871) in order to include it in the historical fabric of this novel. But the majority of facts presented about the accident are true. "The Great Cornfield Meet" still stands as one of the worst railroad accidents in American history. Were you aware that there were Freedmen railroad cars? Discuss how social norms and discrimination played a role in the victims of that accident.
7. Sy's thoughts during General Harding's prayer (Ch 10) are revealing about his character. Can you relate to where Sy is in his character journey in that part of the story? Contrast his beliefs then with his later growth in the story. Have you visited any of the places he and Selene Harding discuss in that scene (current day Garden of the

Gods)? Share your personal experiences.

8. Alexandra meets Ella Sheppard, the real life character who was both Mr. White's assistant and the first black teacher at Fisk University. Discuss their awkward first encounter and Alexandra's thoughts and reactions from that experience—and how it served as a catalyst to their friendship.
9. Racial discrimination is certainly a core theme of *To Wager Her Heart* as are cultural differences and the ways they can divide us. Discuss the various prejudices you noted while reading and contrast those to current day struggles.
10. Mr. White, another true to history character, often quoted in real life "Anyone devoted to his books is on the road to freedom, while anyone ignorant of books is on his way back to slavery." Do you agree with that statement (both for then and now)? How have you experienced that freedom that comes through learning? Give personal examples from your life or the lives of others.
11. Alexandra and Mr. White discuss her lingering fear pending her decision (Ch 22), and Mr. White challenges her on how she's viewing her situation. Read the portion of White's dialogue beginning with "I fear the Enemy has entangled you . . ." and then Romans 8:35-39 and Hebrews 12:11. Discuss how you believe God uses suffering in a believer's life, and how He used it in Alexandra's and Sy's lives.
12. Standing for your principles takes courage and most always comes at a cost. What price did the various characters in the novel pay for their convictions? Or for the convictions of others? Specifically Alexandra, Sy, Ella, the singers, Barrett and Laura Jamison, etc . . .
13. Share your favorite character and scene from the novel and the impression they made on you.

**Would you be willing to send Tamera a picture of your book club? She'd love to feature it on her [Facebook Page](#). Send the picture to [TameraAlexander@ymail.com](mailto:TameraAlexander@ymail.com) with your name(s), your group's name, and the city where you're located. Be sure to hold up your books!**

Tamera's website:	<a href="http://www.tameraalexander.com">www.tameraalexander.com</a>
Facebook:	<a href="http://www.facebook.com/tamera.alexander">http://www.facebook.com/tamera.alexander</a>
Twitter:	<a href="http://twitter.com/tameraalexander">http://twitter.com/tameraalexander</a>
Pinterest:	<a href="http://pinterest.com/tameraauthor">http://pinterest.com/tameraauthor</a>
Tamera's group blog:	<a href="http://inspiredbylifeandfiction.com">http://inspiredbylifeandfiction.com</a>
Instagram:	<a href="http://instagram.com/tameraalexanderauthor/">http://instagram.com/tameraalexanderauthor/</a>
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## Recipe Ideas for Group Gatherings—

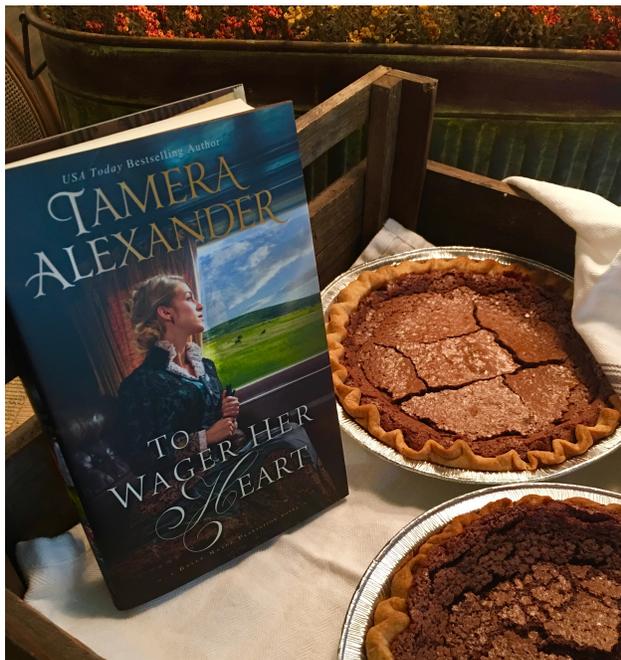
### *Alexandra's Favorite Chocolate Chess Pie*

- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk (I use 2%, but whole milk works just fine)
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla (please, for the love, *no imitation*)
- 1 stick butter (no margarine—do not make me come over there!)
- 3 tablespoons powdered cocoa
- 1 1/2 cups sugar

I LOVE "one bowl" pies. They're the best—and your kitchen smells so divine when this pie is baking in the oven. *Mmmm...*

In a mixing bowl combine eggs, milk, and vanilla and stir well. In a saucepan (yes, I said one bowl, but there is a saucepan involved), melt butter over low heat, then stir in cocoa and sugar and mix well. Remove saucepan from the heat and add the egg mixture (eggs, milk and vanilla) a little at a time until well combined.

Pour into *unbaked* pie shell and bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes (or until the center is set). This is best served when still warm. Oh, so yummy. But it has been seen on occasion at our breakfast table the next morning. Just sayin'!



Recipes from all of Tamera's novels  
are available  
at [www.TameraAlexander.com](http://www.TameraAlexander.com)

## Tamera's Complete Book List–

### Fountain Creek Chronicles series

*Rekindled*, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 1 (ISBN 0-7642-0108-5)

*Revealed*, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 2 (ISBN 0-7642-0109-3)

*Remembered*, Fountain Creek Chronicles, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0110-7)

### Timber Ridge Reflections series

*From a Distance*, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0389-3)

*Beyond This Moment*, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0-7642-0390-9)

*Within My Heart*, Timber Ridge Reflections, Book 3 (ISBN 0-7642-0391-6)

### Stand-alone novel (not part of a series)

*The Inheritance*, Women of Faith Fiction (ISBN 978-1-59554-632-6)

### the Carnton Novels

*Christmas at Carnton*, a short novel (ISBN 978-0310293248) **Coming Oct 3, 2017**

Carnton full length novels (1-3) **Coming in 2018 & 2019**

### Belmont Mansion novels (3 book stand-alone novels)\*

*A Lasting Impression*, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 1 (ISBN 978-0764206221)

*A Beauty So Rare*, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 2 (ISBN 978-0764206238)

*A Note Yet Unsung*, a Belmont Mansion novel, Book 3 (ISBN 978-0764206245)

### Belle Meade Plantation novels (3 book standalone novels)\*

*To Whisper Her Name*, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 1 (ISBN 978-0310291060)

*To Win Her Favor*, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 2 (ISBN 978-0310291077)

*To Wager Her Heart*, a Belle Meade Plantation novel 3 (978-0310291084)

*To Mend a Dream\*\**, a Belle Meade Plantation novella (ISBN B00PWOGZVM)

\* I've written these two three-book Southern series (**the Belmont Mansion novels and the Belle Meade Plantation novels**) to be read individually OR together (your choice!), because the families in the mansions knew one another. So seeing that their lives connected in the 1800s, it only makes sense that they should connect *again* on the page of these novels.

\*\*"To Mend a Dream" is available by itself as an ebook, or in print form in the Southern novella collection entitled *Among the Fair Magnolias* (ISBN 978-1401690731).