

The following questions have been taken from AuthorLink: Authors and Readers Magazine. The audio interview was conducted by Doris Booth, and includes questions about Joy's inspiration behind *A Tangled Mercy*; why she, as a white woman, writes about racial injustices; how she has seen the power of stories in breaking down walls during student discussions; her decision to include the Emanuel AME shooting in her story; one teacher's kindness that changed her world, and more.

**A Tangled Mercy is set in Charleston, South Carolina, but in two time periods: in 2015 and in 1822. What is each story about, and how do those two stories meld together?**

**This 2015 storyline started out as a single story, not two, but something happened to propel you into that second story again?**

**Kate's life seems to mirror yours in many ways. Are the people and places you depict real, fictional, or both?**

**You have a very poetic rhythm to your writing, and I'm wondering where you learned those skills?**

**You're a white woman writing about racial injustices, what has equipped you or inspired you to be an unlikely author of such a challenging subject?**

**In the book, one of your characters says, 'A life worth living is a life of compassion, and a life of compassion will include many tears,' so I suppose this is true for you as well?**

**You hold a PhD in English and of course you said you're a former chaplain at Harvard, and you've taught writing at several universities. Had you always wanted to become a novelist?**

**Do you believe that good writing is innate, or learned, or both?**

**You've written more than a half dozen books, including the Christy Award winning *Blue Hole Back Home*. How did you get your first break into publishing?**

**What sort of advice do you have for writers struggling to break into publishing?**

**What do you hope readers will take away from this story?**