

Carolyn Roth Ministry

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Newsletter



Experiences Looking for a New Church

In the last quarter of 2019, Bruce and I searched for a new church and had multiple discussions about what we wanted and multiple experiences as we visited different churches.

In several of the churches we were warmly greeted as new attendees. In one church, no one spoke with us. Bruce decided he did not want to attend that church despite the excellent sermon. We are elder adults and he felt that the church would be too hard to break into and be able to make a contribution at our age.

When we came out of one church service, Bruce said, “What did the pastor say?” The pastor was an excellent theologian; but, possibly he spoke over the heads of most congregates.

In another church, the people were gracious and warm; however, I thought that they were “pushy.” Individuals kept inviting us to numerous events even though it was our first Sunday there. We were there to just “check it out” not to be major involved. You know how difficult it is when you have to keep telling nice people that you do not want to commit right now. I felt overwhelmed.

After months of church visitation, we decided on a church that was so different from our church style. For 20+ years we have been attending a liturgical church with communion every Sunday. This one doesn’t have liturgy and communion only once per month. Yet, the people are gracious and the sermons applicable for life. At this stage of our lives, it will be a good fit.

POLITICHICKS

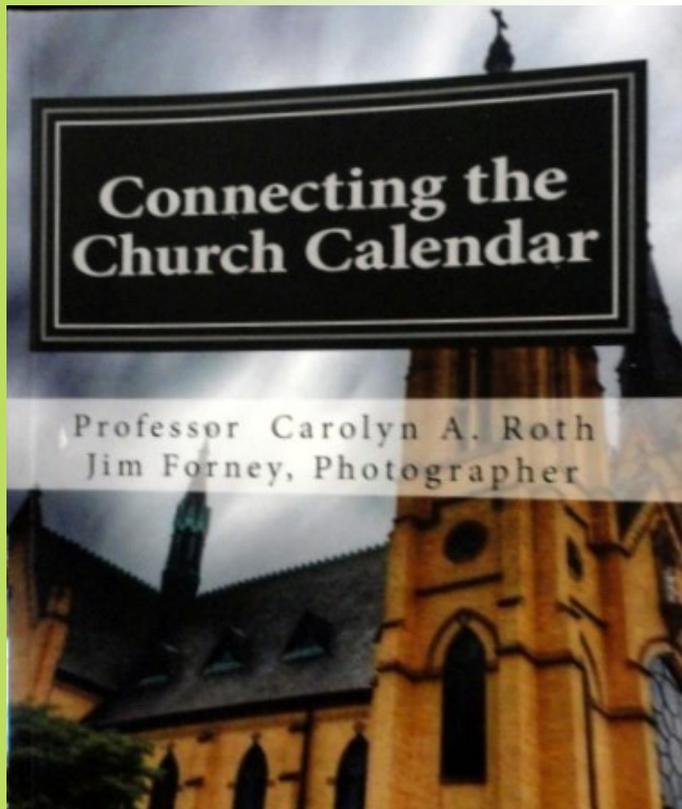


2019

New Venture

In 2019, I had published about 20 op-eds on www.politiChicks.com. Many of them were on religion (are you surprised?). At the end of the year I was pleased to receive this award for my Religion articles from PolitiChicks.

Sometimes, I am motivated by awards. Probably, that identifies a character defect in me. I should be motivated by spiritual/moral standards.



Othni'el, First Judge over Israel

Bible Reference: Judges 3:7-11.

Othni'el was the nephew of Caleb and married Caleb's daughter (Ascah). Through the marriage, Othni'el acquired valuable land. At the time that Othniel was a judge, Israel – definitely Judah — was harassed and possibly paid tribute to Cushan-Rishathaim, King of Aram for about eight years. The Israelite cried out to God for help (Judges 3:9). In response, the LORD raised up Othni'el as the first Judge. God's Spirit came on Othniel and Israelites threw off the suppression of the Arameans. After Othniel defeated Cushan-Rishathaim, the land was at peace for 40 years until Othniel died. His leadership was likely 1350-1310 BC.

The Bible is clear why God allowed the Israelites to be overrun by Aram – Israel abandoned God worship and worshiped the Baals and Asheroth. The Lord's anger was kindled against Israel (Judges 3:7-8). The Israelites cried out to God and God raised up a deliverer (Othniel) to save them. If the Israelite didn't repent likely their period of subjugation by a foreign entity would have been longer. A relatively short period of time (8 years) elapsed before Israelites saw the relationship between their abandonment of God and being overrun by a foreign enemy.

The name Chushan-Rishathaim means “twice-evil Kushite.” Most likely this name was a pejorative description given by Israelites to the King of Aram. He ruled under a different name in his kingdom. Calling the King a “twice-evil Kushite” may have indicate that the Hebrews had concrete reasons to bear him a grudge, beyond the meager information given in the surviving Biblical text.

Reflection: Think about pejorative terms you have used to describe a person or group of persons. Now ponder that this person or group of persons is as loved by God as you are loved.

Altogether there are 6 seasons in the church calendar. *Connecting the Church Calendar* focuses on church seasons, i.e., Lent, Easter, Epiphany. The book contains beautiful photographs, most taken by Jim Forney. Cost of book on Amazon is \$15.00 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling. I sell books for the same price from my website (carolynrothministry.com) and I get to keep more of the royalties. I mail within USA only.

Recommendation for Connecting the Church Calendar:

“The church seasons with their beauty, depth of meaning, discipline, and hope are God's gift to all of us. And, at just the right time, the *kairos* moment, God gives us Carolyn Roth and her 101 meditations to renew and revitalize our understanding and practice of these seasons. In *Connecting the Church Calendar*, Dr. Roth and collaborators provide an exceptional and timely gift, a unique vehicle for rediscovering the power and beauty of liturgical worship using the church calendar.” — Dr. Charles Ross

Happy Valentine's Day

Contact Details

Dr. Carolyn A. Roth

Carolyn Roth Ministry

CarolynRothMinistry@gmail.com