



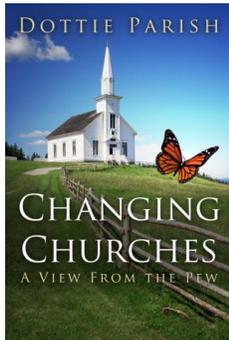
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*NEWS | news | NEWS*

## Where will you worship on Sunday morning? For some, not an easy question

### New book out from Cincinnati author offers help for those changing churches

**For immediate release**



CINCINNATI -- Sunday morning – for many Christians, gathering with their church family to worship is a welcomed bright spot of their week.

But for others, Sunday morning can be a dreaded time while they are navigating the heart-rending and unwanted process of changing churches.

Loveland author Dottie Parish, a long-time counselor, understands this common, yet commonly misunderstood, aspect of Christian living.

“The pain of leaving a church is excruciating,” says Parish. “Church ties are not easily severed. Leaving a church cuts ‘leavers’ off – separates them from the local body of believers.”

Parish knows this from painful personal knowledge. She brings not only her counselor’s mindset but also her own experiences of changing churches to her just-released book called ***Changing Churches: A View from the Pew*** [Winepress, \$16.95].

In the book, Parish offers reflections and analysis to help the church changer.

Her book outlines valid reasons for leaving a church, steps to take when considering leaving, and suggestions for ways to handle the search process for the new church.

She likens the process to any other loss, with the attendant stages of grief. The process takes time and varies with each leaver.

She also suggests steps to help leavers through the grieving process, recommending increased amounts of time spent in Bible study and prayer, journaling, looking for other Christian groups for support, and if necessary, seek Christian counseling.

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"I hope readers facing painful church issues will realize they are not alone, or crazy, or wrong in their tears, frustrations, ambivalence, depression and anger," Parish says. "We need to pay attention to reason and facts, of course, but our feelings inform our reason and vice versa. Awareness of our feelings enables us to grieve losses and be authentic. To heal and grow we need to express our feelings, learn from them and then let go of them.

"All of us—pastors, elders and church members – need to understand church hoppers," she continues, admitting she too had judged people who switched from one church to another – until she became one. "Most leavers are hurt, angry or disappointed by a church they loved and supported for years."

Parish sites a study that shows the majority (76%) of church leavers are mature Christians who leave for valid, biblical reasons and do so prayerfully. Once resettled, they become "very solid, healthy and active members" of another congregation.

***Changing Churches: A View from the Pew*** is now available from Amazon and WinePress Publishing [ISBN: 978-1-4141-2152-9].

Parish holds a Master of Social Work degree from Ohio State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Bucknell University. A long-time resident of the Cincinnati area, her counseling career included work with individuals, couples and families at two family service agencies and in private practice in both Cincinnati and Hamilton. Parish also wrote a weekly advice column, "Family Counselor," for more than a decade for the *Hamilton Journal News*, Hamilton, Ohio.

Currently she blogs at [faithnotes-dottie.blogspot.com](http://faithnotes-dottie.blogspot.com) and publishes a monthly email newsletter called *Changing Churches: News and Views*. For more information, contact her at [dparish@cinci.rr.com](mailto:dparish@cinci.rr.com).

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#### ***WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID ABOUT THE BOOK:***

"Pastors and church members will be touched, surprised and informed by one couple's journey in three very different churches as described in *Changing Churches*. Their story includes inspiring discovery, challenging lessons, struggling and grieving with pastors leaving, new pastors coming, false teaching, 'worship wars' and more."

*Dr. James Bjornstad, Professor of Philosophy  
Cedarville University, Cedarville, Ohio*

"I'm so thankful for the new book, *Changing Churches*. Dottie Parish has done a remarkable job of filling a void in the church world. So many people struggle with switching churches and often church leaders fail to grasp the depth of that struggle. Dottie's book is the best resource I've ever seen on this topic. Her years of experience as a lay leader in the church, her professional expertise, and her diligent research come together beautifully in this helpful book. "

*Dr. Scott Oppliger, Pastor  
The Vine Community Church, Denver, Colorado*

*“Changing Churches: A View from the Pew* will be very helpful in addressing a big need in churches today. Through the years, I have seen churches struggle to figure out how to meet the differing needs of those coming into their fellowship. Assimilating previously 'unchurched' folks is totally different from assimilating those coming from another church. Sometimes the process can be agonizing. *Changing Churches* recognizes this and gives thoughtful, practical help for leaders and leavers.”

*--Debbie Handkins, Minister to Families and Children,  
Crestview Presbyterian Church, West Chester, Ohio*

“I enjoyed *Changing Churches* since I have experienced several of the issues talked about. I especially appreciate the author’s point that a person who is looking for another church is in a difficult situation spiritually and emotionally and shouldn’t be labeled a ‘church hopper.’ Dottie Parish’s honesty in sharing her journey will undoubtedly encourage many people in similar situations.”

*Diana Savage  
Writer, editor, speaker  
[www.WoundedChristians.com](http://www.WoundedChristians.com)*

*“Changing Churches* is an excellent assimilation tool. It will help pastors and leaders see things from the point of view of visitors and new members, challenging the consumer approach to church shopping.”

*--Wayne Lowe, Senior Pastor, Faith Bible Church, Cincinnati, Ohio*