

The most-read Tribal Church posts

January 4, 2016

Here are Carol Howard Merritt's most-read posts of the year:

- 1) **[It's time to change the way pastors get paid.](#)** What do we do? Do we go the way of attrition? Do we allow pastors to be starved out, until we all get jobs as baristas?
- 2) **[You are a pastor.](#)** Being a pastor informs it all. It's my vocation. The manure in the vegetable garden. All of this makes sense, in my day-to-day work. But it becomes complicated when I tell someone that I'm a pastor, and they want to know where I serve.
- 3) **[Five liberal excuses to do absolutely nothing.](#)** The person has been robbed and beaten. He's bleeding on the side of the road. Unlike the Good Samaritan, we step over him. But we have really great reasons.
- 4) **[Falwell's damage and our response.](#)** I went to a Bible school, where students sometimes imagined that they were the good people and everyone else was a bad person. It was a warped view, for sure. But at least we just passed out tracts.
- 5) **[How do we get people to church?](#)** It's easy to say that people used to care about God and now they don't. But I think the picture is more complex than that.
- 6) **[A woman's guide to getting coffee.](#)** Coffee is a power play, but it's also a sign of hospitality. It's how we greet one another, especially in church.
- 7) **[Why we don't like Donald Trump and what that means for the church.](#)** According to our constitution, our government has six goals. Businesses have one.
- 8) **[Actually, we have plenty of money.](#)** We have people who are working with younger, more diverse groups. They have communities made up of the people we need in our denominations. And we are starving them out.
- 9) **[Why I support Planned Parenthood.](#)** I was a serious sign-carrying pro-lifer who thought that the devil lived at PP. But I didn't have any other choice. I went.

**10) What the church can't do for pastors.** A friend was going to seminary, and she became very disappointed that someone in her home church did not send her a birthday card. When I heard this story, I thought that the church probably did her a favor.

**11) Pastoral care: How much is too much?** I loved the pastoral visits, but hated the complaints that I wasn't doing enough. My time was consumed with those complaints, and I wasn't able to dedicate any time to the things that gave me joy and made the church more vital.

**12) Overcoming the culture of nice.** Mid-rant, I said, "I don't want to be a pain, but..." My friend stopped me midsentence. "Yes. Yes, you do," he smiled. "You want to be a pain. You don't know that about yourself?"

**13) Deconstructing patriarchy, one ritual at a time.** I love weddings. I even like the parts pastors aren't supposed to enjoy.

**14) On being yoked.** I shake her hand and say, "Yes, I am Brian's wife. My name is Carol Howard Merritt." As she introduces me to her husband, I wonder if I should have added the "Reverend" to my name.

**15) Just buy the book already.** The Internet loves to disdain the celebrity Christian. If anyone sells too many books, builds too big of a platform, or just gets too big for his or her britches, we like to bring that person down a notch or two.