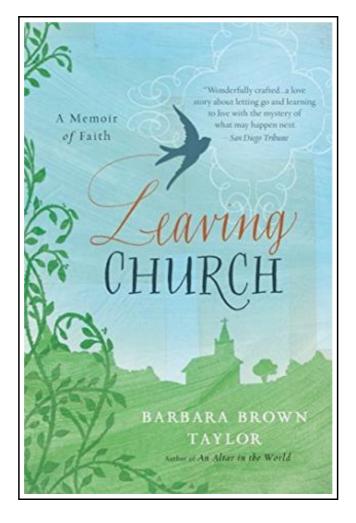
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(Prof. Johnson Cole Sr.)

LEAVING CHURCH: A MEMOIR OF FAITH



HarperOne. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 272 pages. By now I expected to be a seasoned parish minister, wearing black clergy shirts grown gray from frequent washing. I expected to love the children who hung on my legs after Sunday morning services until they grew up and had children of their own. I even expected to be buried wearing the same red vestments in which I was ordained. Today those vestments are hanging in the sacristy of an Anglican church in Kenya, my church pension is frozen, and I am as likely to spend Sunday mornings with friendly Quakers, Presbyterians, or Congregationalists as I am with the Episcopalians who remain my closest kin. Some-times I even keep the Sabbath with a cup of steaming Assam tea on my front porch, watching towhees vie for the highest perch in the poplar tree while God watches me. These days I earn my living teaching school, not leading worship, and while I still dream of opening a small restaurant in Clarkesville or volunteering at an eye clinic in Nepal, there is no guarantee that I will not run off with the circus before I am through. This is not the life I planned, or the life I recommend to others. But it is the life that has turned out to be mine, and the central revelation in it for me -- that the call to serve God is first and last the call to be fully human -- seems important enough to witness to on paper. This book is my attempt to do that. After nine years serving on the staff of a big urban church in Atlanta, Barbara Brown Taylor arrives in rural Clarkesville, Georgia (population 1, 500), following her dream to become the pastor of her own small congregation. The adjustment...



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