

UCC ROOTS

Remembering our History

September 2021

“Dosia Carlson: A Long Life that Made a Difference”

She was a young woman born in 1930 who wanted to become a missionary in China. However, after an encounter with Polio, her life unfolded in new ways. She studied at Oberlin College, attended a seminary, was ordained, earned a doctorate at the University of Pittsburg and for fourteen years taught in a religion department at Defiance College in Ohio.

Reverend Dr. Dosia Carlson (1930-2021) understood the importance of caring for people who were often the most vulnerable. In 1974, she moved to the Valley of the Sun in Phoenix, Arizona. There she committed her life and ministry to the Church of the Beatitudes Campus Lifestyle Community. She founded “DUET: Partners in Health and Aging” (formally the DORA CENTER). In 1979, when she was ordained by the United Church of Christ, her call to service in the church and her growing interest in gerontology expanded her growing understand of aging people.



Music was at the heart of Carlson’s faith. She found important ways to serve on the church staff and explained how her hymnal writings incorporated her faith. She published many hymns. One of her most popular hymn, was *“Oh Jesus, I Have Promised to Serve Thee to the End.*

.. My Master and My Friend.” Her hymns recognized how humans cannot fully comprehend the nature of God. In 1986 she published an autobiographical collection of her hymns entitled *“God’s Glory”*. Carlson won several awards and became well-known as an “Arizona Woman of the Year.” She was also honored when the United Church of Christ gave her the “Antoinette Brown Award for an Outstanding Women Clergy.”

Dosia Carlson lived to be 91. She died from complications of the Covid-19 virus in January 2021. Her final words were gifts that she repeated for many friends— *“God’s love and encouragement exists for people to show love and light.”*

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