

Celebrating The Rev. Melissa St. Clair

at the Conclusion of her Clergy Residency at Community Christian Church, Kansas City, Missouri
offered by Dr. Bob Hill on Sunday, June 27, 2010

Melissa St. Clair, how can we ever let you go? You have inscribed your love and your life into our hearts and your ministry is woven into the very fabric of our family of faith. You are ours, and we are yours, for sure. But how can we keep you? For, before you and we were connected, there was a higher covenant, a deeper claim which God had on you and upon the trajectory of your life. So we must relent and let you go, and we do so with a showering of blessings.

*We bless you and give God thanks for **the indelible touch of divine hospitality** that has been placed on you and within you. We will miss your gracious spirit that has always been quick to offer thanks and steadfast in showing Christ-like appreciation for others and for God's love in our lives. One of your homiletical heroes has said that the ultimate work of God's grace in the life of a person of faith is to make one gracious. And God has done so, abundantly so, with you.*

*We bless you and give God thanks for **your keen intellect** and for how you have plied it so faithfully and with such precision and with a healthy dose of traditional Disciple respect for a diversity of opinions. You are an outstanding preacher and teacher, and the Church at large needs you so. We are proud of you today, and we will be aboundingly proud in years to come when we say "You know, Melissa St. Clair began to hone her craft first at Community."*

*We bless you and give God thanks for **your ministerial fire** which expresses itself in passionate care for the people of God and in your treasurable capacity to organize ... a program, a liturgy, a worship service, a meal, a mission trip, a mission trip devotional booklet, a Vacation Bible School skit, a book study, a meal program for the homeless, a young adult gathering... and all of it with such apparent ease.*

*We bless you and give God thanks for **your eagerness to come to Community two years ago**, and that we were smart enough to snatch you up. The time has seemed to fly past fast, but on the wings of those two years are lifetimes of memories and graces that will never pass.*

Melissa St. Clair, you are truly *sui generis*, "one of a kind." And while we cannot fathom how the people of First Christian Church in Republic, Missouri, can be fully ready for you, we know, without a shadow of a doubt, that you are ready for them and for the rest of your magnificent journey in ministry.

On behalf of a grateful congregation and its equally grateful Executive Committee and Administrative Council, and the unspeakably thankful ministerial staff, we offer as symbols of blessing and celebration of your ministry among us this stole hand-crafted by Conchita Reyes, this scrapbook lovingly assembled by Rev. Donna Mueller, and this acrylic flame of commendation. By these gifts please always remember that we love you very much.