

**Declaration of Installation of Mary Katherine Robinson
and Charge to the Minister (delivered by Keith Grogg)
Black Mountain Presbyterian Church
June 14, 2015, 3:00 P.M.**

Mary Katherine Robinson,
You are now a teaching elder in and for this congregation.
Whatever you do, in word or deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through him. Amen.

*Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate,
shall welcome the newly installed teaching elder into their fellowship
in the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.*

Charge to the Newly Installed Pastor

Mary Katherine, Sister in Christ, highly respected colleague, my new neighbor and great new friend: It is an honor to be invited to this task for you and for this phenomenal and inspiring church.

During Montreat Presbyterian Church's call process, several things were brought into clear focus for me, as I am sure similar things became clear to you in the call to Black Mountain Presbyterian Church.

Mary Katherine, you have a rigorous, insightful mind,
and your tremendous theological dexterity is obvious,
But this church was not in dire need of a theological giant,
to come in and open their eyes and their minds;
This congregation already has an unusual abundance of Biblical scholarship
and theological ingenuity.

Your leadership in mission speaks for itself with eloquent humility, faithfulness,
and nobility,
But they didn't need somebody to come in and invent the idea of doing mission;
Black Mountain Presbyterian Church is already exemplary in its commitment
to service and outreach, here in our community and around the world.

Though you show tremendous, radiant energy,
and a clear sense of urgency for what is necessary,

They don't need somebody who can come in and work harder;
This congregation already works hard at serving Christ.

And though you are personally amazing,
They don't need a charismatic, dedicated minister whose restless intelligence,
gigantic heart, and enormous depth of spirituality
come in a deceptively amiable package that leaves people
trying to figure out what the heck just happened when they come into a room.
They've already got Berry.

What they're looking for, and what they have found, is a leading pastor:
A fount of inspiration.
A non-anxious presence in a time of great anxiety for the whole Church.
An emotionally healthy, confident, self-differentiated leader
at a time when the very concept of leadership is under review.
Someone whose presence gives the people around her enough evidence
to believe that what we believe is worth believing,
even or especially when we're not quite sure we believe it.
Somebody who can offer them the faith, hope, love, courage and persistence
to pray every morning, in the words of Fred Craddock,
"O Lord, I thank you for a way of life that is more important
than how I happen to feel about it on any given day."ⁱ

Mary Katherine, speaking of Craddock, I address you "as one without authority;"
I have not been invited to regale you with my advice or opinions—
which is too bad, because, I mean, they're just adorable.

I wish you a spirit of adventure and a boundless imagination,
a resting confidence that everything we do is an experiment;
the faith to make mistakes; the freedom to try, and fail.

And I ask you to engage, befriend and challenge me in my role as the pastor
of a sibling and partner congregation in Montreat Presbyterian Church.

Servant of God, Sister in Christ, Subject of the Holy Spirit,

We are miners, exploring, making educated guesses,
digging deep and seeing what we can come up with.

We are farmers, tilling soil whether it be rich and fruitful or sandy and unyielding.

We are oceanographers, joyfully acknowledging that for all of our knowledge,
the depth of our field of study is unimaginable, and carries within it,
in both its specifics and in its overwhelming grandeur,
unfathomable mysteries that hundreds of human lifetimes
will not apprehend.

We are astronauts, sent up and out into the dark, endless,
terrifying vastness of the heavens,
charged with bringing back something, anything,
to expand the perspective of our earthbound species.

Mary Katherine, God dreamed you into existence before the beginning of time,
and has always known this day would come.

Mary Katherine Robinson, called by God,
empowered by the Holy Spirit,
duly installed emissary of the risen Christ,

On behalf of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina
I charge you to accept God's call,
as issued through the discernment of the Pastor Nominating Committee
and the voice of this congregation,

to be the pastoral, spiritual leader of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church;
to love God with your whole heart and soul and mind and strength;
to love your neighbor as yourselfⁱⁱ—and that means both;
to respect your own boundaries,
and the sanctity of home, family, and private timeⁱⁱⁱ;
like the Canaanite woman^{iv}, to not let what may seem like the silence of God
dissuade you from demanding mercy for all children regardless of their origins;
to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God^v;
and to remember that it is not you that supports the root,
but the root that supports you.^{vi} ■

ⁱ From his address to APCE, "Hope When Cynicism Is Easier," February, 1995, Atlanta, GA.

ⁱⁱ Mark 12:29-31

ⁱⁱⁱ Matthew 14:23

^{iv} Matthew 15:22-27

^v Micah 6:8b

^{vi} Romans 11:18b