

**Charge to First Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, Tennessee and Kristina Brown**  
**Ordination Service of Kristina Brown**  
**August 21, 2011**  
**By Michael Smith**

When I think of the history of First Baptist Church and the story of Kristina Brown, I believe I see God at work.

The church has been faithful to Kristina. From her childhood down to this day, the church has given her opportunities to serve God and others, to grow through such service, and to prepare for additional service. At each step of the way, the church has affirmed her particular gifts and seen in her, sometimes, more than she saw in herself. How we arrive at a night like tonight always contains elements of mystery, but I think it right to say the church shared the journey with Kristina and often paved the road on which she walked.

Kristina has been faithful to the church, not only First Baptist Church but the Church Universal. She has followed Christ as best she could see her way, thrown her particular gifts into the service of the church, and strengthened the church's ministry presence in the community. She has listened for the voice of Holy Spirit within the church. Again, how arrive at a night like tonight always contains a bit of mystery, but I think it right to say Kristina's faithfulness to the church has helped lead us here.

So, we come to ordain her, that is to set her apart as one of those women and men to whom we the church look to equip us to serve God well, set an example of life lived in humility before God, and lead us in shared, sacrificial service.

As we start this shared journey, I charge the church family to:

. . . continue to walk with Kristina on her journey, lending her your support through prayer, friendship, and wise counsel.

. . . help her as she seeks to broaden and deepen the church's ministry to the least of these and the church's partnerships with other care-giving organizations.

. . . speak a word on her behalf and to open doors for her among all you know.

. . . do all you can to provide opportunities to grow in the knowledge and expertise, that she might better serve God.

. . . mourn with her, when she mourns; celebrate with her, when she celebrates; care for her, when she needs special care; be the good family of God in her life.

Kristina, as you receive ordination from this your church family, I charge you to:

. . . practice humility all the days of your ministry, so that in word, deed, heart and thought you reveal the humble Christ to all those around you.

. . . practice good stewardship of your life, your energy and health and mind and body, that you might serve unhindered all the days of your life.

. . . pursue with diligence multiple avenues of learning, that you might maximize the scope and excellence of your service

. . . practice the fine art of trusting those with whom you work, both clergy and laity, even as Christ trusts you.

. . . practice meaningful forgiveness, that you might deal with the inevitable disappointments and hurts of the ministry yet be unstained.

. . . practice worship in the company of others and in private, that God might better guide and sustain you.

. . . encourage and smooth the way for those who come after you, that God's work might more abound.

. . . minister in such a way that you reveal and model the redemptive love of God

May the Lord Who called you, bless, preserve and keep you as you minister in the name of Christ all the days of your life. Amen.