

## **Rite of Release & Blessing** *aka Litany for Ending a Pastoral Relationship*

Leader: After a candidacy weekend in late August of 2002, this congregation called Rev. Dr. Kharma Amos to serve as Interim Pastor; and a year later (in September of 2003), we called her to become our Senior Pastor.

*Minister: I want to thank The Metropolitan Community Church of Northern Virginia (MCC NOVA), its members and friends both past and current, for the love, kindness, and support that you've shown me these last 9 years. I am grateful for the ways you have accepted and affirmed my leadership, and for the good things we have been able to accomplish together. I earnestly ask your forgiveness for any mistakes I have made. And I want to assure you as I leave that I carry with me all that I have learned here. You have changed me for good.*

**All: We receive your gratitude, offer forgiveness, and accept the fact that you now leave to minister elsewhere. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We also ask your forgiveness for any mistakes we have made. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will not leave us at your departure.**

*Minister: I receive and am humbled by your gratitude. I forgive you. And I trust that both our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.*

Leader: Do you, the members and friends of MCC NOVA, release *Kharma* from the duties of pastor?

**All: We do, with the help of God.**

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement and your blessing for *Kharma*'s ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

**All: We do, with the help of God.**

Leader: *Kharma*, do you release this congregation from turning to you and depending on you as Pastor?

*Minister: I do, with the help of God.*

Leader: Do you offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here and for the relationship this congregation will develop with another who will come to serve after you?

*Minister: I do, with the help of God; and I do so enthusiastically.*

Leader: Let us pray. O God, for remembered times when we, together, have shared the life of faith, we express our sincere gratitude. We thank you for the moments we have shared with *Kharma* in worship, in learning, in laughter, in service, and in the daily tasks of Spiritual living. We pray that *She* will be aware of your guidance as she answers your call to a new ministry. We pray that those with whom she will minister in the future will begin

already to have room in their hearts for her gifts and graces. We ask your blessing on her ministry and on the ministry of this community as we continue to faithfully serve you.

**All: Holy God, whose everlasting love for all is trustworthy, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. The time we were together witnessed our laughter and tears, our hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories, and yet move in new directions. Keep us safe, risky, bold, and faithful until that time to come when we are completely one with you and with each other. In the name of Jesus Christ and All that is Holy, we pray. Amen.**