



Pastor Narrative Charge Conference Report

Date: October 10, 2022

Pastor: Rev. Sarah Christine Bailey

Charge: Clover Hill

Please provide a narrative of your pastoral ministry since the last Charge Conference. ("to give an account of their pastoral ministry to the charge and annual conference according to the prescribed forms", ¶340. c, 2b, Book of Discipline).

Response

As a church our vision over the last year and half has been: Seek, Serve, Share. In 2021 we reorganized our ministry teams into one group with three subgroups to help us work towards this vision. This year I think we have really begun to see the fruit of that work and God's Spirit at work in our church. While there is still some sadness and challenges over the effects of the pandemic, especially in church attendance, we have persevered. I have been encouraged by the many who have not given up but have stepped up to serve and stay involved. In my role as pastor I hope to be able to continue supporting, guiding, and equipping members of the church to see their gifts and find ways they too can serve God in the church.

Part of our vision as a church has been to Seek. We seek God above all. And within that goal, seek understanding, seek relationship with our community and one another. Over the last year we have continued to adapt to not having a pianist. This has brought about together some musicians in our congregation to lead music on Sundays. Our women have organized to form a new group called the Faith Friends who have been meeting monthly to grow in faith and deepen relationships between the women of our church. This summer we hosted VBS for the first time in a couple of years with a 1.5 day event and were grateful for the more than 20 kids that we got to share the gospel with both in teaching the stories of scripture and through loving, feeding, and having fun together. This fall we have gone through a sermon series called the Deeply Formed Life looking at some specific areas in our lives that help us become more deeply formed followers of Jesus. With that series I also led discussion groups after each worship service to give those who chose to participate opportunity to talk further about each topic and reflect together on ways to practice our faith more fully. Also this fall, we have launched a Basics of Faith course to help guide and ground us in the teachings of the Christian faith. Over the coming year we have some goals of restarting our GROW Groups (small group ministry) and engaging our young people more.

We continue to be invested in serving our community as a church. One main way we have worked at that is through our ministry Rebuilding Hope. This ministry of our church has been able to bless several families in our community with home repairs and ramps. We are continuing to get new projects and are working to grow our volunteer base to allow us to do more projects over the next year. In addition to this important work, we have also committed to collecting items to go to local needs. Each quarter we have collected items for different causes (Open Doors, Ukraine relief, West Rockingham Food Pantry, school supplies for Ottobine Elementary). We recognize as a church that we need to be more present in our community. Through these servant ministries we are doing that. It was also a great joy for our church to host an ice cream social for the Clover Hill community after the Clover Hill 4th of July Parade. We served over 300 cups of Ice Cream and hope that we can share some love with our community in the same way next year. We are thankful for the ways God guides us to love and serve our community in Jesus name.

One of the great things that was sparked by the pandemic was our desire for more fellowship opportunities,

to share our lives. We see more than ever the need not only for discipleship but for fellowship, to provide a place of friendship, belonging, and relying on one another. We have work to share our lives with each other through our monthly meals, as well as other fellowship activities. This year we had a couple of camping out at the church events where the church was able to gather around the campfire and enjoy one another's company. We have some plans in the works for other fellowship gatherings for the coming year and are excited to see how God will continue to bind us together in love.

Are there challenges we are facing as a church? Yes. Some among them are discerning the path ahead, looking towards replacing the roof of the church, helping to encourage those who are online or are loosely connected at the church to get more involved. However, I have seen the grace of God at work in this church so much over the last year. I know God has greater things in store for Clover Hill. We will continue to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and live into that vision to Seek, Serve, and Share.

~In Christ, Pastor Sarah