

Historic Moment:

An Enormous Step of Faith

Church Members Are Sent to Start a Church in New Hampshire

Forest Baptist Church in Forest, Virginia, has taken an enormous step of faith. After months of prayer and discussion, the church has unanimously affirmed its elders' motion to formally commit to sending members to start a church in New Hampshire.

Specifically, the church committed "to uphold this work through godly patience, faithful prayer, generous funds, practical assistance, and brotherly

encouragement for a period of no less than five years..." Their goal? "...that an autonomous, healthy sister church be firmly established."

"This is an historic moment for us as a church," Pastor Tyler Scarlett reminded members as they considered the decision. While the church had been moving in this direction for many months—years, actually—Scarlett acknowledged that the vote was largely

symbolic. He reminded the gathered members, "symbols matter."

Prior to the vote, drawing from Acts 13, he reminded the congregation that church planting is not merely the work of a pastor, planter, or denomination, but the sending work of the local church. Just as the church at Antioch prayed, fasted, and sent out Barnabas and Paul, Forest Baptist believes the Lord is leading them to



Matthew Hubley and the church planting team.



Applause after a unanimous vote to plant a church in New Hampshire.

“ This is an *historic moment* for our church. ” *Pastor Tyler Scarlett*

send people, resources, and encouragement to establish a new Gospel-centered church in New Hampshire.

The church plant will be led by Matthew Hubley, a North American Mission Board approved church planter with personal ties to New Hampshire. Hubley was born and raised in Bradford, about an hour south of Plymouth, where he was nurtured by parents who loved and served the Lord. He became a Christian while attending a summer camp in Tuftonboro, New Hampshire.

Hubley attended Liberty University after setting aside his high school dream of becoming an architect, sensing a call to ministry instead. Reflecting on his time at Liberty and the clarification of his calling, Hubley recalls writing two simple letters in his prayer journal: “NH?” Over time, the spiritual

needs of New Hampshire weighed more and more heavily on his heart.

“I would be a terrible steward if I didn’t bring what I am learning back home,” Hubley decided.

Hubley and fellow church members began meeting on Saturday mornings to pray about God’s plans for them. Soon vision trips followed, during which conversations with pastors in New Hampshire revealed opportunities and challenges. Eventually, the group sensed a call to Plymouth, home to Plymouth State University and a strategic hub in central New Hampshire.

Now, with the support of his wife, Lauren, the couple will move their newborn son and all their possessions to New Hampshire. In total, 12 adults and 3 children will be joining the effort.

It seems Hubley’s high school interest in architecture has been replaced by the architecture of the eternal kind. The kind mentioned in 1 Peter 1:4, where living-stone believers are being built into a “spiritual house,” the Cornerstone, which is the Lord Jesus himself. One thing is certain: through his time at Forest Baptist Church, his training in Liberty University’s Pastoral Leadership and Church Planting program, and graduate studies at Southeastern Seminary, God has set into motion the next season of life for Matthew Hubley, his family, and his church.

It is a season that will undoubtedly bring challenges, but one in which he goes prepared, supplied, supported, and accompanied. The two-letter question has been answered: “NH?” Yes—New Hampshire. ●