



**State of Central United Methodist Church, Florence SC
Charge Conference 2018
Associate Pastor's Report
November 18, 2018**

Greetings in the Grace of God through Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

It gives me great joy to report that this year in review has been phenomenal! As I have observed for the last couple of years, Central continues to embody our vision of “Following Jesus, Loving God, and Loving Neighbors.” Our intentional vision connects us to the global mission of the United Methodist Church where our ultimate goal is to “Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

As a proactive church, we are consistently striving to fulfill our vision and the mission of the church through various outreach initiatives in the broader Florence community and beyond. Some of these initiatives are, but not limited to:

- Digging Deeper
- The Bread Brigade
- Parking Lot Ministry
- Lighthouse Ministries
- Family Promise
- The Courtney Graham Community Shelter Center
- The Manna House
- Salvation Army
- Briggs Elementary
- The Wesley Foundation at Francis Marion University
- Helping Florence Flourish
- House of Hope
- Mercy Medicine
- Help4Kids
- SNAC
- Salkehatchie Summer Project
- Santahatchie Winter Project
- Costa Rica Mission Project.

In July of 2018, a group of 22 persons from Central, which included high school and college students, as well other adults, spent seven days in Costa Rica. Five of those days were spent doing major renovations and clean up at a local church in Golfito, which is a small, poor port town located in the Puntarenas Province on the southern Pacific Coast of Costa Rica, near the border of Panama. Not only did the group do renovation work, but they also created

and facilitated a one-day Vacation Bible Study (VBS) for local children, who lived in the Golfito area. We are excited about our partnership with Costa Rica Mission Project, which began in 2009.

In addition to Central's outreach to Costa Rica, members of Central continue to serve in domestic missions. For example, in December 2018, several youth, college students, and adults from Central participated in the Santahatchie Winter Project where they renovated three homes, which one was built from the foundation up, in the Florence community within a week. Also, during the Salkehatchie Summer Project in June of 2018, seventeen people. This group included church youth, college students, and adults, from Central. They worked, together, at the Fairfield worksite in Winnsboro, SC.

These foreign and domestic mission initiatives provided opportunities to bridge separation of people often created by gaps in sociocultural, sociopolitical, socioeconomic, and cross-generational concerns. With the help of the Holy Spirit, Central is trying to minimize, and as much as possible, prevent, these divides because we believe every person is created in the image of God. I believe Central's good work of faith is inspiring more people to get involved in all aspects of ministry including worship at Central.

The Well continues to provide a casual and unique worship experience that has attracted people from many different walks of life to worship together. The Well has a year-to-date average weekly attendance of 147 each Sunday, which is an increase over last year's average attendance of 135. I believe The Well, along with the sanctuary service, are two worship spaces that offer all persons the opportunity to feel Central's warm hospitality, hear great music through our wide array of musicians, reflect on sound preaching, faithfully connect with God and others through the Sacraments, and observe dedicated leadership in action. I believe both of these worship experiences are effective for holistic ministry.

Central's program staff continues to tirelessly serve as pivotal persons of our church in the growth, development, spiritual formation, and educational vitality of Central. Throughout the year, our various ministries involving children, youth, young adults, older adults, women, men, married couples, single persons, and Central Preschool continue to provide exciting and innovative ways to encourage everyone to participate in the ministries of the church. Indeed, we are blessed to have superb programs leaders and staff which include, Linda Segars, Sharon Tanner, Adriane Reynolds, Nate McMurphy, Jennifer Walters, Brandie Love, and Tara Ballenger. I am grateful for their leadership.

Finally, on behalf of my wife, Chasie, and our sons, Tyler, Chase, we are grateful to be connected to a wonderful church family. It is evident that Central is serious about our vision and the global mission of the UMC. We praise God for the commitment of the members, staff, and volunteers of Central for their faithful service and witness, which exemplify the examples of Jesus. Go Team Central!

Respectfully submitted,



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