

THE *Dillon* FAMILY

Missionaries to Portland, Maine

Dear Pastors and Prayer Warriors,

Greetings from The Wild Adventures of the Deputation Trail! As we enter into this season of life, I am reminded of our Lord's letter to the church in Sardis; specifically, Revelation 3:2 which says, "Be watchful, **and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die**: for I have not found thy works perfect before God." Strengthen the things that remain has been a common occurrence throughout our deputation ministry; it has been the theme of many Missions Conferences, the subject of several sermons, and prevalent conversation amongst pastors and myself. In my presentation I note multiple alarming statistics regarding the State of the Union of America's Independent Baptist Churches, two of which include:

- For every church that is being planted/started in America, 4.4 established churches are closing their doors.
- For every 100 vacant pulpits, only 60 qualified candidates are filling those vacancies.

It is heartbreaking to drive throughout New England and see the multitude of historic Baptist churches who have closed their doors and become bars, restaurants, hotels, apartment buildings, or synagogues of Satan- not including the many still in existence who are without a Pastor and have been for quite some time.

The Process:

With that in mind, I bring you to late July where I reported to a supporting church and gave my testimony at a men's fellowship. Upon arrival I noticed the theme "Strengthen the Things that Remain". I gave my testimony, had a wonderful time of worship and fellowship, and the next morning presented the ministry. We then enjoyed a question-and-answer session where a dominant portion addressed what could be done to slow the closing of churches, men leaving the ministry, and how to help fill vacant pulpits.



Sharing our burden for the state of Maine with West Sumner Baptist Church.

After the service I cut on my phone and was greeted by two emails about a church one hour north of Portland currently looking for a pastor. "We know you are headed to Portland to plant a church; would you at least pray about this opportunity", was the crux of both messages. I spent that Sunday and Monday in fasting and prayer, and the next morning was put into contact with the interim pastor. Following a long conversation of doctrine, ministry philosophy, and logistics I was asked if I would be willing to meet the church in person. The next two weeks our family worshipped with the church, I preached the services, met with the pulpit committee, had several one-on-one conversations with the interim and deacon, ate meals in the homes of the members, and had an open question and answer session with membership. To say our hearts mended together during that process would be an understatement. Seven days later I received a call informing me that the church had voted unanimously to call me as their Pastor.

Our family has accepted the call to West Sumner Baptist Church in Sumner, Maine (Oxford County). Please understand that this decision was not taken lightly; it was a process of much prayer, fasting, and sought out counsel. My Pastor, Michael Johnston, was involved in the entire process; we spoke on the phone, met in person, and he spoke with the interim/pulpit committee. He is very excited about the opportunity and encouraged me to walk through the door. He then brought it before the men who sit on our board (PBM), at our annual conference and board meeting, and we are all in one accord. Meanwhile, I sought the counsel of nearly fifty seasoned pastors (many who have served longer than I have been alive); including our supporting pastors/churches. *(continued)*



Trey & Ashlyn
Everleigh, Kaeleb,
Kaeden, Kaenan

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? Romans 10:14

Contact Us:

Trey Dillon
336.590.2439
lighttoportland@gmail.com
www.lighttoportland.com



Mission Board/Support Address:

Prayer Baptist Missions International
Memo: Dillon Family
PO Box 160849
Boiling Springs, SC 29316



Sending Church:

Open Door Baptist Church
Pastor Mike Johnston
3995 Roanoke Street
Christiansburg, VA 24073

THE *Dillon* FAMILY

Missionaries to Portland, Maine

The Particulars:

West Sumner Baptist Church has been without a Pastor for three and a half years; it consists of a small but faithful congregation of around ten wonderful people who have fought hard to hold the work together. The interim pastor, Dr. Arthur Maricle, has served since June of this year and expressed because of age, mobility, and the harsh New England winters, there was no desire for permanent placement. Due to the size of the congregation and current state of the church, this will function as a **church replant and rescue effort**. Because the church is not presently able to fully support me financially as their pastor and our plans to establish other churches in the region, we will continue depending upon the existing prayer and financial partnership of our supporting churches. We will also pursue the partnership of other churches while we labor to strengthen WSBC and reach the surrounding communities with the gospel. Our family will celebrate our last service at Open Door Baptist Church on Sunday September 20, and we will pull out for Maine on September 21. My installation service as pastor will be held on October 4.



Enjoying a beautiful sunset overlooking the church property following a Sunday evening service!

The Plan:

Our immediate burden is to see WSBC strengthened, growing, and again become a thriving Gospel lighthouse in Oxford, County. The preeminent aspect of ministry will be the preached Word of God. We will be aggressive in reaching the lost with the gospel and will be faithful to disciple existing believers and new converts. Christ says "...and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matthew 16:18. I simply believe that when you put Biblical principles into practice, they will produce. We will work tirelessly to establish a strong and healthy local church.

As the Lord strengthens the work in Sumner, our long-term burden remains church planting throughout Maine. Just as we sought to do in Colorado, we desire to reach neighboring communities through soul winning and evangelism, gather believers, and establish other New Testament Local Churches. Once WSBC is strong, my plan would be to remain the Pastor, start a second church plant simultaneously, and when the Lord allows the new work to become established, healthy, and autonomous to then turn that work over to a qualified man. We then will begin the process all over again. With Portland only an hour away, we will still look to have a gospel presence in the city, ultimately praying to establish a church within South Portland. There are several other towns and communities within the county that do not have an Independent Baptist Church, including two churches who have recently closed their doors, and two more without a Pastor- the need is great!

Though this is a little different than originally anticipated; **the ministry remains the same: planting churches. The field just got larger.** God has simply allowed this process to begin differently and sooner than we imagined. Rather than arriving in Maine after an extended period of deputation and beginning with no congregation or facility, He has opened the door for us to begin immediately with a church building, a faithful group of believers, a place for my family to live, and a community that desperately needs the Gospel. We do not take that opportunity lightly. We are deeply grateful for every church and individual who has prayed for our family, encouraged us, and supported us financially. Your partnership allows us to step into the work now and give ourselves to reaching Maine with the Gospel. We count it an honor and privilege that God would allow our family to serve Him in this way, and we are tremendously excited about what He has ahead. My wife and children are very thrilled about this opportunity! We rejoice together at the opportunity to minister and serve WSBC.



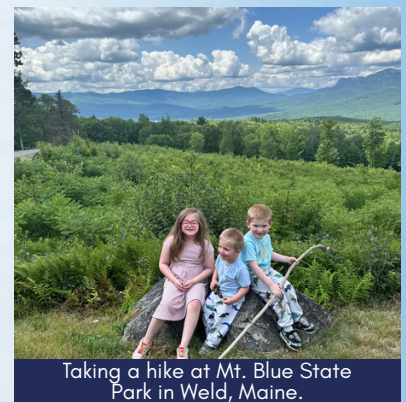
Going on a scenic drive in search of a moose!



Squirrel hunting with a dear friend in Virginia before the move.



Ashlyn spent much time creating an organization system for packing!



Taking a hike at Mt. Blue State Park in Weld, Maine.

THE *Dillon* FAMILY

Missionaries to Portland, Maine

Family Update:

Ashlyn recently had surgery and is recovering nicely; though the timing has proven to be difficult as she cannot lift more than 20 pounds. Lord willing, she will be able to lift the babies again soon, as she desperately misses those precious moments. She has begun developing close relationships with the ladies of West Sumner and is ecstatic to walk into her new role.

Kaenan (8-month-old) was taken to the emergency room for an allergic reaction. Unfortunately, the allergy is serious affecting his respiratory system and skin. Thankfully we got him there quickly and we were able to reverse the reaction. He went home with a new EpiPen, and two parents who are now even more cautious of what he eats. He also had his latest medical check-up, and the doctor is concerned he may have asthma and another unspoken medical condition. Please pray for clarity and direction as we navigate these new conditions along with quickly setting up medical care with specialists in Maine.

Evie, Kaeleb, and Kaeden are all doing great and growing like weeds! They've enjoyed time helping mom with baby brother and packing all their things. The boys are climbing walls, wrestling, and their favorite activity is hunting. Kael is convinced he's going to shoot a moose and turkey as soon as we step back on property, and Kaed wants a "bobcat rug" for his room- he's going to harvest it himself!

The Petitions:

- One of our emergent needs is for God to provide the needed funds for our transition. With Ashlyn's surgery and other urgent matters, we cancelled or rescheduled several meetings. We estimate the cost of our move and establishment as residents in the state to be between \$4200 - \$4700.
- Health of Ashlyn and Kaenan during their recovery (specifically to find out exactly what Kaenan is allergic to)
- The previous pastor of WSBC went home to be with the Lord; several of our congregants are hurting. WSBC honored him and celebrated his homegoing this morning (9/14/26)
- The transition and growth of WSBC, and our family
- Tim Tilley (Ashlyn's father); medical needs

Thank you all for your continued prayers and support; we have been blessed by your outreach of love during this time. If you have any questions about the ministry or transition, please do not hesitate to reach out. We are humbled for the opportunity to be your representatives in Maine.

Because of Christ, *Brother Trey Dillon*



Evie found some Maine wild blueberries on one of our family hikes.



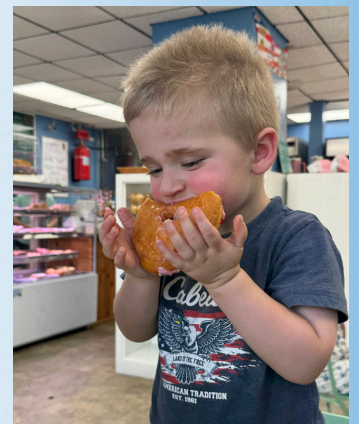
West Sumner surprised Trey with a birthday party on our last Sunday there!



We are so thankful for the medical staff who treated Kaenan so quickly during his allergic episode.



Kaenan helping mom finish a crochet project while she recovered from surgery.



Kaeden enjoying a donut from a local bakery/coffee shop.



Contact Us: 336.590.2439
lighttoportland@gmail.com
www.lighttoportland.com