

JULY 2022 SPECIAL EDITION

FRESH Start

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT CHARLOTTE SDA CHURCH



Saying Goodbye

This special issue of the newsletter is to inform our church that our pastors, and their families, will be moving this summer to serve in other areas, and to pay tribute to their ministry here.

You will have an opportunity to say goodbye personally on July 30 for the Halls and August 20 for the Pombos.

Editor: Laura Dancek

Until We Meet Again

BY LAURA DANCEK

Ecclesiastes 3:1 begins “To everything there is a season...” This summer our church finds itself in a unique season of its history. This will be our first time to be without a senior pastor and associate pastor simultaneously since we became a two-pastor church.

On July 30, Pastor Dustin Hall will preach his final sermon as the senior pastor of the Port Charlotte SDA Church. He recently accepted a call to the Union Springs SDA Church in New York. This move will allow his children (Adelle, Deacon, Ainsly, and Canaan) to attend Union Springs Academy. The Halls are from the state of New York, and this location has the added benefit of placing them much closer to their extended families.

Beyond pastoring a church, the New York Conference of Seventh-day Adventists has asked Pastor Hall to

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.”

Hebrews 13:7, ESV



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July 30

Pastor Hall's sermon followed by a farewell potluck.

August 20

Pastor Pombo's sermon followed by a farewell potluck.

develop a training program for innovative evangelism. He will also be involved with online media outreach, preaching, and training lay pastors.

The Halls arrived in August of 2020, but even prior to their physical move, we were able to connect with them virtually on Friday evenings for vespers on Facebook – something they continued far into their ministry here. Pastor Hall played his guitar and led in singing. Kelly engaged our minds with Bible quizzes.

Pastor Dustin officially began his ministry in Port Charlotte amidst global crises of health and economy due to the pandemic which began five months earlier. Political controversies were exacerbated during this time, with the pandemic and upcoming election. Some of these controversies and unrest found their way into our church. Decisions on social distancing, masking and live streaming continued well into his first year.

Despite those challenges, he quickly initiated the revitalization of our campus, with new exterior signs, new AV equipment for live streaming, and



Photo credits: Top - Barb Goffin, Bottom - Laura Dancek

"During Pastor Dustin's ministry at PCSDA church, we have been blessed with a view of the gospel of Jesus Christ that has caused us to refocus current events, our world and nation in this literal, constant cosmic battle of good and evil. We have seen Pastor Dustin's willingness to follow God.

Whatever part of God's vineyard the Lord places Pastor Dustin and his family, may the Lord lead him and the Holy Spirit continue to enlighten him and bless his family."

Wave Williams, Assistant Head Elder and Property Manager

"A guitar, hugs, and games with kids, forever full of energy -- this is my picture of Pastor Jaime. Making memories for the children of our church through VBS, Kid's J.A.M. and Sabbath School classes are priceless gifts you have given to our Children's Ministry. I thank you with all my heart."

Donna Judy, Children's Ministry Leader

improvements in landscape and our overall building. He saw the need for improved communication within our church and was very supportive as we established the newsletter, in which he was a regular contributor as well as a guide on our monthly topics. He also saw the need for improved communication with those outside of our church via our church website.

His passion for meeting the needs of the community led our church to research what needs around us are unmet, and to the decision to develop a family resource center, which we now refer to as "Kids' World." This major project, still underway in its construction, was also a passion of Kelly's, and she was to be its director. Kelly also served as the kindergarten teacher at PCAS during part of their time here, and taught earliteen SS.

A gifted speaker, Pastor Dustin's sermons were inspiring and thought provoking. He challenged us to view old concepts and theology in new and deeper ways. He cared deeply about making our church a place where anyone can worship safely, without judgment or criticism. He invited us to see beyond the earthly political controversies and realize that we are citizens of God's kingdom rather than members of a political party.

This year, Pastor Dustin taught the Adventist Foundations Sabbath School class, especially for members who are

new to our faith, as we have had approximately 40 recent baptisms. This class also benefited members who were in need of a refresher course on our core beliefs.

There will be a fellowship luncheon on July 30, their last day here. Plan to attend so you can say your personal goodbyes to the Hall family.

On August 20, Pastor Jaime Pombo will preach his final sermon as the associate pastor of the Port Charlotte SDA Church.

The Pombos moved to Port Charlotte in August of 2018 from the Gulf States Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Four months later, Michelle gave birth to Joshua, the first of their beautiful sons. Pastor Brian Cassell left in the summer of 2019, leaving Pastor Jaime to assume the responsibilities of the senior pastor on an interim basis. The Covid-19 pandemic began during this time. The difficult tasks of navigating how to keep our church going while quarantining fell on Pastor Jaime and the church staff. Live streaming vespers, Sabbath School and the worship service became the norm for months, until they deemed it safe enough to return to church in person with social distancing and masking. The pandemic impacted our church, school and preschool. The latter was shut down permanently during the quarantine. Sadly, Pastor Jaime also lost his father to Covid-19 during this

"We moved to Florida about 1.5 years ago and the first thing on our minds was finding a church we can call home. Port Charlotte SDA welcomed us with open arms and Pastor Jaime made our transition very easy. We will always remember his very warm welcome and the support we received from Pastor Jaime. His home visit and a talk he had with our kids about baptism had profound results with Victor, Jr. and John. They decided to get baptized and say 'YES' to Jesus in their lives. We pray that God will bless and guide Pastor Jaime and his family in the future so that they may always be a blessing to people in search of God and shine His light to people around them in the way that will bring more young souls to say 'YES, I am ready!' Philippians 4:19."

Viktor Poperechnyy, Deacon

"One thing that I appreciate about Pastor Dustin is how he encourages us to not focus on things of this world that tend to divide us, but to focus on Jesus who unites us as a church."

Vic Meliti, Elder

time. Following those challenging months, in July 2021, they welcomed their youngest son, Caleb.

Pastor Jaime is known for his warm smile and hugs. His friendliness and expressions of love and care won hearts in our church. He endeared himself to members when he visited them, and reached out when they were in need.

Pastor Jaime's passion for young people is obvious, and he specifically had a burden for our church school. He frequented the school often, and developed relationships by doing fun activities with the kids, participating in special events, leading in worships and

ministering to the students there, eventually baptizing many young people. Michelle shared his interest in young people and spent time as a contract teacher, a volunteer, a substitute teacher and a teachers' aide at our school.

At church, Pastor Pombo was involved with Youth Sabbath School, children's Sabbath School classes, and children's ministry events such as Kids' J.A.M. and Vacation Bible School -- always a cheerful presence, and often toting his guitar. He was very supportive of all of our church children's ministries, including the Adventurer and Pathfinders Clubs.

"We really appreciate Pastor Pombo for his enthusiasm every time he visited our school. Our students were so excited to see him because he invited them to play sports such as soccer, volleyball, etc. I really appreciate that he has been involved in the chapel activities as well as going to each classroom to say 'hi'. The part that I appreciate the most is that he led so many of our students to a relationship with Jesus and some of them decided to be baptized. PCAS wishes the the best blessings for Pastor Jaime Pombo."

Almibar Cruz, PCAS Principal

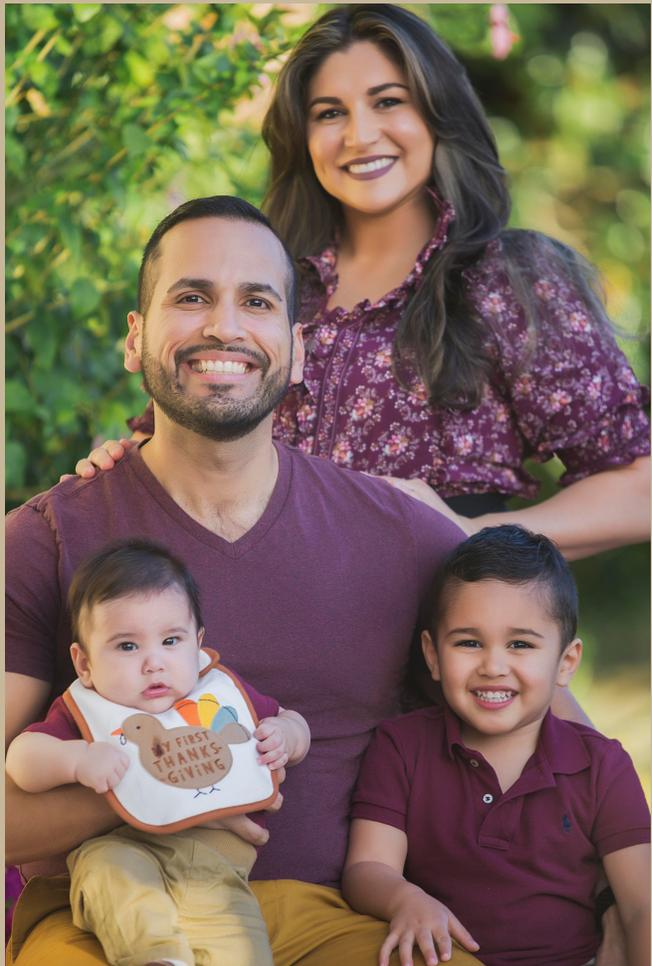


Photo credit: Emmanuel St. Cloud

The Pombos also had a heart for young adults and young families. They spent much time working with, creating friendships with, and enjoying time in both of these groups, who are vital to the sustainability of our church.

Pastor Jaime loved to preach and he loved to sing and play the guitar. He and Michelle often provided us with musical worship in church, as duets or solos.

At the time of this writing, Pastor Pombo continues to be in transition. Our prayers are with their family as

"I have gotten a lot of significant blessings from Pastor Hall's ability to lay out Biblical truths and principles in a unique way that I haven't thought of before, and I deeply appreciate that. And I have enjoyed a variety of sermon series that he's put together for us. I appreciate his passion for his children. Watching his children grow has been something, as an outside observer, I understand what it takes to occur. So I appreciate both he and Kelly and what they are doing for their family and who their children have become."

Ed Dancek, Elder

they make decisions regarding their future ministry.

There will be a fellowship luncheon on August 20, their last day here, to give you an opportunity to see the Pombos personally.

Our church will form a pastoral search committee to work with the conference in the selection of a new senior pastor, and then we will do the same to choose an associate. In the past, there have been times we found a pastor relatively quickly. At other times it has taken many months.

The rest of Ecclesiastes 3:1 says "...a time for every purpose under heaven." This is our time to pull together and to grow in recognition of God's purpose within each of us and to leverage that purpose to serve our church as unique members of one body. This can be a season of love and unity as we support each other, as we care for each other's needs, and as we meet the needs of our community. Jesus is the head of our church, just as He always has been. It is time, and it has always been time, for all hands to be on deck.

Thank you, Hall and Pombo families, for the time we shared. You will be missed. May God abundantly bless you as you continue to serve Him... until we meet again.

God be with you.



"I have appreciated Pastor Dustin's hard work ethic, his vision for reaching our community and his phenomenal ability to reach people through his amazing preaching skills. He has really inspired my family."

*Crystal Salyer, Clerk,
Children's Ministries
Assistant Leader*

"Pastor Jaime was a friend and a leader. He always supported the Adventurer Club and the youth. We will have a place for him and his family in our heart and will pray for God to continue to guide them in their plans."

*David Molina, Adventurer
Club Leader*

"I appreciate that Pastor Hall was not afraid to speak exactly what was on his mind with upmost authenticity. A trait many people lack these days. He will be sorely missed! "

*Dima Poperechnyy, Young
Adult Sabbath School
Leader and Deacon*

"Pastor Jaime Pombo's heart is his greatest gift. And he freely gave this gift to my family and this church as a whole. I appreciated how he honed in on people's strengths and brought them together in small groups in a natural way. I admire his ability to be with those in crisis and speak to them as if they are the only person in the world and empowers them to walk away in the identity of being a cherished child of God. Thank you for being my pastor and teaching us what brotherhood is. Please remember you are irreplaceable and we love you."

Emmanuel St. Cloud, Elder

