

PASTORAL PROFILE OF OUR NEXT PASTOR AT PALM CITY NEW HOPE

(Developed by the Church Board Members with the District Superintendent, as of Jan. 26, 2026)

The Lord has richly blessed Palm City New Hope for more than two decades with the leadership of senior pastor Dr. Gary Durham. As he moves on to new avenues of ministry, we believe the Lord will provide a new senior pastor who will lead us pursuing the following vision:

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of New Hope is to be a Christ-centered community that is a light of the gospel to Martin County and beyond. We seek to do so by developing a tight-knit, family-oriented fellowship of believers rooted in Scripture, growing in the love and knowledge of Jesus, and dedicated to serving others as our Lord came to serve us.

GIFT MIX OF THE NEXT PASTOR

Recognizing that no pastor can possess all the gifts and be all things to all people, and that gift mix needs for leadership change as a congregation develops and grows and as a community changes, the local church board has identified the areas of priority they believe the next pastor will need.

Our District Superintendent has summarized pastoral gifts generally as five that can be prioritized in developing a profile for a pastoral search. The board has prioritized these as follows (in order of critical importance for Palm City New Hope's next chapter):

1. **Preaching/Teaching/Discipleship Gifts** -- a commitment to Scriptural teaching and taking believers deeper in their faith journeys.
2. **Administrative Leadership Gifts** to be exercised in empowering ways, in collaboration with staff and board. New Hope has a large campus with multiple ministries and a large staff. While some administration may be delegated to staff, our next senior pastor will need to have their hand on the pulse of the life of the church and guide and steward our resources wisely. A significant effort will need to be made to lead the congregation in debt elimination so that financial resources can be focused on ministering more effectively to more of our community's families.
3. **Shepherding Gifts**. While a shepherding spirit is crucial, a senior pastor of a large church cannot possibly touch all the lives of the flock intimately, thus the need to build a shepherding team with staff and lay leaders.
4. **Evangelism Gifts** to attract non-believers to the Cross of Christ, to experience His saving, sanctifying and life-transforming grace. This happens both from the pulpit and outside the pulpit in community life.
5. **Leadership in Worship** -- While a senior pastor leads in worship by example, we expect staff and lay leaders to facilitate our worship times and lead us into God's presence, in preparation for the Word of Life to be shared with us by the lead pastor.

Some additional expressions of the perceived need in abilities/gifts/commitments by the next senior pastor include:

- A strong commitment to teaching and preaching the Word of God. evangelistically as well as leading us in deeper discipleship journeys.
- Hands-on administrative and management skills to oversee a large campus and a variety of ministries, including a preschool, a hybrid school, a martial arts program.
- The ability and willingness to work with the church board as a leadership/servant team to develop and empower greater lay leadership in the church.
- A commitment to building up and meeting the needs of families, especially families with children still at home.

The local church board believes Palm City New Hope has the potential to grow in numbers of conversions, in baptisms, in sanctification experiences, in biblical discipleship and in holy living, in church membership, in financial health, in pastoral team-building, as well as growth in unity and in commitment to missionally training the Body of Christ to serve our Lord as His ambassadors to those outside the church, both in Palm City/Stuart and around the world. We are trusting that the Lord has already prepared a senior pastor with a calling to lead us boldly as we pursue the stated vision of the church. We invite the congregation to pray in united fashion, and to submit the names of candidates they feel match the profile presented.

To submit names to the district superintendent for consideration, please email names to

transition@pcnh.church

Along with names of candidates, please indicate where they are currently serving, and why you think they fit the profile developed.

Please submit names by February 15, 2026.

CHURCH PROFILE OF PALM CITY NEW HOPE CHURCH

(Developed by the Church Board Members with the District Superintendent)

HISTORICAL PROFILE

New Hope Fellowship began in 1974 as Stuart Nazarene Church. Under the leadership of Pastor Dr. Gary Durham, the church acquired a 21-acre parcel on Citrus Boulevard in nearby Palm City in 1988. The congregation immediately planned to construct a building on the land, but it took 10 years of prayer and overcoming obstacles – sometimes miraculously – before the building was completed and dedicated in 2001. In the meantime, Pastor Durham was called to ministry in Washington state, and three other senior pastors served the congregation. Pastor Durham was called back to the congregation in 2002 and has served as senior pastor since. The church constructed a worship center, completed in 2015. The original building now serves as a Family Life Center that includes the church offices, a preschool, and a gymnasium used by the church's Haitian congregation for worship services in Creole. That building and the newer building are also offered to other groups and create an additional revenue stream for the church's ministries.

MINISTRIES PROFILE

The church currently has **one Sunday morning worship/preaching service** on Sunday from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. **Discipleship classes** convene from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., including in-depth studies taught by Pastor Durham. Weekly worship services currently attract an average of 200 to 300 worshippers. A talented worship team, led by Pastor Ryan Durham, offers lively contemporary Christian music as well as hymns. Pastor Durham's messages normally last 45 minutes to an hour. Members and visitors enjoy coffee and fellowship in the church's atrium for half an hour between the discipleship hour and the worship service. The church also holds a **Sunday evening family service** called Families on Fire at 6 p.m. on Sunday with a meal provided beforehand.

New Hope has **Life Groups** that meet throughout the week, led by both pastors and lay members, ranging from Bible Study to prayer meetings to fellowship activities. Pastor Gary Durham leads a weekly book study and a writers group called **Red Inklings** that has published both Christian fiction and non-fiction under the church's **Veritas Resurgence** imprint.

The church's ministries include **The Master's Martial Arts** school, led by Pastor Steve Morris, a black belt in Taekwondo, that attracts scores of children each week. The church also has a hybrid school, **New Hope Academy**, that educates 80 children. The pre-school, **High Hopes**, educates 45 children.

New Hope has a variety of family ministries discipling men, women, young adults, youth, and small children. It holds three major outreach and discipleship events each year for the community: **The Grand Miracle** at Christmas, **Vacation Bible School** during the summer, and the **Harvest Blast** in October. Hundreds of volunteers and thousands of people visit the Grand Miracle, which includes live nativity scenes and a First Century village with Biblical characters. The Vacation Bible School attracts 200-300 children every evening for a week. The Harvest Blast serves as an alternative to Halloween. In addition, the church holds **a women's retreat** and a family retreat every year at Lake Placid Camp and Conference Center.

Once a year, the church holds a weeklong **Faith Surge**, which includes an evening meal and teaching from a visiting pastor.

Transformed, while not technically a ministry of New Hope, is a ministry led by Pastor Steve Morris who, along with many of the church's men, conducts **three men's weekend retreats a year** at Lake Placid under the Transformed ministry. In 2026, Transformed also held a combined men's/women's retreat.

A Haitian Creole-speaking Nazarene congregation (of around 100 in average attendance) is part of the PCNH ministry, led by Markenson Etienne (not currently district-licensed). This congregation, along with others in the PCNH congregation, help support a Nazarene school in Haiti. This congregation meets in the Family Life Center at 8:30 AM on Sundays. This congregation operates rather independently of the English-speaking congregation, but is not a separately organized church. They do not currently have representation on the church board, but rather have their own board leadership. This may be an area for future development and further integration/collaboration of ministries.

An independent, non-Nazarene, Spanish-language congregation (of around 80 in average attendance) meets in the Family Life at 11:00 AM on Sundays. Their children and youth integrate into the PCNH Sunday School classes.

MOTTO

New Hope's motto is "Love God. Change the World." Under Pastor Durham's leadership, the church has focused heavily on discipleship and Christian growth.

VISION STATEMENT

The local church board has developed the following Vision Statement: The vision of New Hope is to be a Christ-centered community that is a light of the gospel to Martin County and beyond. We seek to do so by developing a tight-knit, family-oriented fellowship of believers rooted in Scripture, growing in the love and knowledge of Jesus, and dedicated to serving others as our Lord came to serve us.

MEMBERSHIP AND AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

Membership and Average Attendance Figures are being finalized and will be presented at the Annual Local Church Meeting in February

STAFFING PROFILE

Current staffing at the church includes the following 13 staff members:

1. **Dr Gary (Sheryl) Durham**, Lead Pastor and Teacher
2. **Gary (Irene) Merritt**, Executive Pastor

3. **Eric Addison**, Youth Ministries and Front Porch (welcoming ministries)
4. **Nancy Bruno**, High Hopes Preschool
5. **Ryan (Colleen) Durham**, Worship Pastor
6. **Marckenson (Carine) Etienne**, Haitian Creole Language Pastor
7. **Michael Grant**, Creative Director
8. **Rick and Nancy Harmon**, Community Relations and Young Adults Pastor
9. **Steve (Brianne) Morris**, Family Life Pastor and TMMA (The Master's Martial Arts)
10. **Samuel Nemeth**, Production Intern
11. **Diana (Steve) Rudd**, Church Life Pastor and Office Manager
12. **Christi (Tim) Williams**, Children's Ministry Director

FINANCIAL PROFILE

While some ministries connected to the church have their own separate operating budgets, the local church Executive Finance Committee has initially proposed an annual operating budget for PCNH for Fiscal Year 2026 of roughly \$1,468,000 in revenue and \$1,693,680 in expenditures (\$225,680 deficit). This budget proposal provides for a reasonably aggressive approach to paying off the church debt (currently \$1.98 million) and with 61% of the budget to be expended for staffing. However, the Finance Committee prefers to NOT submit a deficit budget proposal, and wishes to cap staffing at 50% of the overall budget (as requested by the Board), but also believes we need to retain our current staffing level.

In order to more aggressively approach the debt of the church, and to solidify support for our staff team, the Executive Finance Committee prefers to recommend to the church board the implementation of a three-purpose giving campaign, led by lay leadership, to raise funds by the congregation above and beyond the regular tithes and offerings, with the goal of raising an additional \$480,000 in revenue each of the next three years. This would move us out of a deficit budget to operating in the black, and would allow the congregation to meet the following financial goals:

- Raise an additional \$150,000 required annually to retain our current level of staffing with the 50% cap requested by the Board. We do not want to reduce the size of our staffing team.
- Reduce our debt by \$1M at the end of three years (\$333,000 each year)

The giving campaign will be publicly presented in February by church leadership, and response evaluated in May to make sure there are enough commitments to additional giving to maintain staff and reach our goals. While such a vision is lay lead, our new lead pastor will need to be willing to take on this challenge alongside lay leadership and will need to have the gift mix and leadership skills to empower others to see this goal accomplished.