

# SPECIAL EDITION

## New Pastor August 1

*On August 1, the Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin will begin work as pastor of our church. He will be installed at a special combined worship service on August 13. This special edition of the newsletter will help you learn more about him, as well as things happening in our denomination.*

## The Pastor I Want to Be

by David C. Mauldin

“Chaplain, I am so glad I can talk to you. I have to tell somebody about this, and I can’t tell my pastor . . .”

I heard those words surprisingly often in my work as a volunteer chaplain. Sincere believers who were trying to follow Jesus found themselves facing a problem. It could be a personal struggle, a relationship issue, or a family matter. It was always embarrassing in some way. People never hesitate to tell their pastor if they have cancer. They rarely share their struggle with porn or marital infidelity.

I understand their reticence. If you are a leader in your church, you want your pastor’s respect and confidence. Plus, you see your pastor often and that could become awkward if he or she knows your darkest secrets. The company chaplain is not such a presence in your life.

I understand, but I also worry. A pastor should be someone with whom you can be open and honest. You should be confident of a grace-filled reaction. If you can’t tell your pastor, whom can you tell—especially if you don’t have a company chaplain? Moreover, the degree to which a pastor is approachable is an important indicator of the health of a church. Either we are honest with one another about our need for grace, and we help one another follow Jesus, or we are pretending. We pretend that we have our lives together when we don’t. We pretend that we are holier than we are.

Pretend holiness poisons a church’s mission. People in the world are hurting. They are broken. They need grace—just as we do! If we pretend that we have no problems or failings, many will conclude that our fellowship has nothing to offer them. We will send a subtle but unmistakable message: “You must be at least this holy [picture a cartoon animal holding a ruler five feet tall] to enter.” The more astute among those outside our church will know we cannot be so near perfect, and they too will turn away.

I want our church to be a community where people respond to one another with grace. Yes, we will hold one another accountable to the high standards Jesus set for us. That’s part of loving and helping one another. We will do it the way Jesus did, though, with gentleness.

I want to be the kind of pastor you can come to with anything. Being Presbyterian may give us an advantage. We believe in total depravity. That doesn’t mean we are as bad as we could possibly be. It means nothing in us is untouched by sin.

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## The Pastor I Want To Be (continued from page 1)

I already know that you are so sinful and broken that your only hope is the grace of God. (You already know that about me too!) Plus, I've been at this long enough that nothing shocks me and very little surprises me.

At the ECO National Gathering in January, John Ortberg preached. In his sermon, he shared about his experience with an accountability partner. When they started, Ortberg told this guy everything bad he had ever done. He aired all his dirty linen. When he finished he was trembling. He feared the man would reject and condemn him. Instead, the man said, "I appreciate you telling me this, and I want you to know that I have never loved you more than I do right now." His grace-filled response set Ortberg free, and it became the foundation for a relationship that made Ortberg a better disciple of Jesus Christ. That's how I strive to respond, especially when someone shares a painful or heavy burden.

I want to be an approachable pastor. I also want you to see two things in me: God's grace and growth. You will learn quickly that I make mistakes. I like to say, "When you are right 99.95% of the time, you are wrong 0.05%." Just between you and me, though, my accuracy is not that high. I don't know everything. I am not always spot-on. And I have my share of spiritual struggles. I avoid the flashy sins, but that doesn't mean I'm not a sinner. When you see me, I don't want you to imagine perfection. I don't want to be on a pedestal. What I want you to see is God's grace.

As you get to know me, I want you to think, "Hey, God has done something remarkable in his life." Or, "God's got his hand on that guy." Especially I would want you to say, "He reminds me a little bit of Jesus." If you can tell that I know Jesus and spend time with him, I'll be happy.

I want you to see the grace. I also want you to see growth. Look for two kinds of growth, professional and personal. I want to grow professionally to become a better and better pastor. One of my strengths, I believe, is that I am constantly learning. I know I am a better pastor now than I was even two years ago. Coming to Palm City sets me on a steep learning curve. Try to be patient, but expect growth. The promise of growth makes this call exciting to me. God is at work in our church and in me, and being part of that invigorates me. I hope it energizes you too. I come expecting God to do amazing things.

More important than my growth as a pastor is my growth as a disciple of Jesus. We are all on a journey to become more like him. Ironically, the closer you get, the more you realize how far you still have to go. At times, our lack of progress can be frustrating. We can take comfort, though, knowing that he will never leave us alone. He will keep prodding and pushing. Our growth toward holiness is God's work in us, but he graciously allows us to participate in it. I hope that after a few years you will say, "Pastor David has continued to grow in Christ, and I can see it." Because if you see me do it, you will know that you can do it too.

When God calls us together as a church family, he gives us a beautiful gift. He wants us to love one another enough to be honest, to respond in love, to hold one another accountable, and to encourage one another to grow. We are all so broken that our only hope is God's grace, and he gives us that grace through Jesus Christ. Let's celebrate his grace and live into it together. ■

## Q & A with Pastor David

One of our intrepid staff reporters recently sat down to interview our new pastor. Here are the juicy details.

Palm City Reporter (PCR): First of all, what should we call you? Dr. Mauldin? Pastor David?

David Mauldin (DCM): David is fine. People who are significantly younger than I am usually call me Pastor David. Youth and children do. Some people prefer Pastor David, and that's fine. But for most people, simply David will do.

PCR: What do you like to do when you are not doing church stuff?

DCM: I like to read. I'm a big reader. I have also become a fan of the arts, especially music.

PCR: You're a nerd?

DCM: Never suspected, did you?

PCR: What kind of music do you like?

DCM: All kinds. Nearly all kinds. I enjoy classical. My wife is a pianist, and our boys play violin and cello. We go to the symphony often. Never miss a good violin concerto or solo cello.

PCR: What about books? What have you been reading lately?

DCM: I like theology and history. I have recently read a history of Florida. I just finished John Grisham's newest, *Camino Island*. Grisham grinds too many axes, but he is an excellent storyteller. I am reading the new book by Condoleeza Rice, *Democracy: Stories from the Long Road to Freedom*. I recommend that last one, by the way. Rice, former Secretary of State under George Bush, is a Presbyterian. She's going to be speaking at the ECO National Gathering next January in Houston.

PCR: What's your favorite genre?

DCM: Definitely the short story. I took a class on it in college and got hooked.

PCR: What's your favorite short story?

DCM: "Revelation" by Flannery O'Connor. It's about a self-righteous woman who comes to see herself as she really is. As O'Connor said about it, "It takes a mighty big woman to yell at the Lord across a hog pen."

PCR: Who's your favorite writer?

DCM: For novels, Dostoevsky. My favorite is *The Brothers Karamazov*. In it, Ivan tells his brother Alyosha that he (Ivan) cannot believe in God because children suffer. He lists horrible examples that Dostoevsky took straight from the newspapers. "How could God allow that?" he demands. Thus, he rejects belief in God. Alyosha is a devout believer. He cannot answer Ivan philosophically, but as they are walking along, they see a group of boys picking on a weaker boy. Alyosha intervenes. Eventually he reconciles the boys, and the group becomes a support for the weak boy, who is sick. Alyosha demonstrates the power of love. →

PCR: What would you have said to Ivan?

DCM: I would have invited him to consider Jesus as God's answer to evil and suffering. Radical evil cannot be explained away. If it could, it would not really be evil. So I cannot with words make everything OK. The only answer to radical evil is action, specifically God's action. I believe God can bring about a future that will justify the world we live in now. This is exactly what Ivan could not believe. But I would give him a reason to try: the cross and resurrection of Jesus. If God can take the worst human sin and make it the means of our salvation, what else might God be capable of? I admit I cannot see how God might do it, but why should any human being expect to be wiser than God?

PCR: Other favorite authors?

DCM: For short stories, Flannery O'Connor. I once led a discussion group that met weekly in a coffee house. Each week we read one of her stories and discussed its religious themes. I am slowly collecting a list of powerful stories. Someday I'd like to write a curriculum around them. If we have any English teachers, English professors, or English majors in the church, I'd love to talk with them about using literature discussion groups for outreach.

PCR: What's your favorite movie?

DCM: *A River Runs Through It*.

PCR: Isn't that about a Presbyterian pastor who has two sons?

DCM: Yeah, but they live in Montana, not Florida. And it was my favorite before I became a father. It's based on a true memoir, and I find it powerful on many levels.

PCR: What's the last movie you've seen?

DCM: *The LEGO Batman Movie*. It's been a long time since I've seen a movie that isn't animated.

PCR: What's your favorite Bible verse?

DCM: Psalm 86:11, "Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name." I love that idea of an undivided heart, a heart wholly given to God. That's our basic problem, you know, a divided heart. Sin does that. It divides our hearts. There is a tension inside us. On one hand, we are drawn to God and to truth, beauty, and goodness. On the other, we are selfish and want our own way. The modern world fragments our hearts. Compartmentalizes them. We are pulled in so many different ways. When we submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ, he unites our hearts. He resolves the tension and makes us whole and offers us to the Father.

PCR: Who are your heroes?

DCM: Two big ones: John Calvin and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. I love Calvin for two reasons. First, he figured out the Lord's Supper. For a long time, Christians argued about how Jesus was present in the Supper (or if he was). Unfortunately, they still argue about this. Calvin recognized the Holy Spirit as the answer. Christ is present in the sacrament through what Calvin called "the secret power" of the Holy Spirit. Second, he was a refugee. Calvin was French, but he lived nearly all of his adult life in Geneva and Strasbourg. The happiest years of his life were spent as a pastor to refugees in Strasburg, but he went back to Geneva because he believed God wanted him there. Calvin married and had a son. Then both his son and wife died. He had a difficult life, but he never lost his passion for Christ. →

Bonhoeffer I admire, not simply because he was a martyr, but because he saw the gospel so clearly despite his circumstances. Think about this: He came of age in a liberal German university system that was a spiritual desert. Then all around him was Nazi ideology. And yet, in 1940 he wrote *Prayer book of the Bible* about the Psalms. In it he said the Psalms are about Jesus, and when we pray them, we pray them with Jesus. Where did he get that? Not from his professors, who did not believe it. The Nazis hated it so much that they prohibited him from publishing anything else. He got it by reading the Bible and praying the Psalms. And he learned it from Martin Luther. That shows the importance of reading the great Christians of the past. Bonhoeffer overcame so much, and what he wrote still speaks forcefully today.

PCR: Any non-theologian heroes?

DCM: Peyton Manning.

PCR: So you are a football fan?

DCM: Absolutely.

PCR: Do you root for the Gators, Seminoles, or Hurricanes?

DCM: No. I grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee. You can guess my favorite college team. I also pull for Samford, in Birmingham, where I got my doctorate. In Mobile, I didn't take sides in the whole Alabama-Auburn rivalry. I'll stay out of the Noles-Gators-Canes rivalry here.

PCR: One last question: Are you excited about living in Florida?

DCM: No doubt. We've always loved Florida. South Florida has a unique charm. People come from all over to live here. I'm looking forward to exploring the area. Coming from Mobile, we are accustomed to semi-tropical heat, beaches, high humidity, and so on. South Florida is different, though, in a good way. Hopefully after living here for a while I will be able to articulate that difference. I definitely feel it. ■



*PASTOR MAULDIN AND FAMILY WITH PCPC PASTOR SEARCH TEAM*



## Meet the New Pastor's Family

### Rosalyn Soo Mauldin

David and Rosalyn married on July 28, 2001. Rosalyn is a Canadian, born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. She has sworn off snow, however, and every move has been farther south.

Rosalyn is a concert pianist and professor of piano performance and pedagogy. She earned her master's degree from the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, and her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Oklahoma University. Once in Palm City, she will be teaching at Palm Beach Atlantic University. She enjoys photography, baking, and traveling.



### Joseph Mauldin

Joseph was born on July 18, 2005. He will be entering the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Hidden Oaks Middle School. He plays the violin and is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. He also enjoys sports and is a fan of the NFL's Chargers.

### Daniel Mauldin

Daniel was born September 11, 2008. He will be entering 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at one of the elementary schools in Palm City. He plays cello and won runner-up in his age division at the Gulf Coast Talent Showcase earlier this year.





## ECO NEWS

Welcome the newest churches to join ECO:

Pyung An Presbyterian Church | Auburn, WA  
 United Church of Cohoes | Cohoes, NY  
 Washington Presbyterian Church | Washington, GA

**This brings the total number of ECO congregations to 343!**

Celebrate ECO's newest church plants:

Trinity Presbyterian Church | *Dawsonville, GA*  
 Dunwoody Presbyterian Church | *Dunwoody, GA*  
 Kirk of the Live Oaks | *Surfside Beach, SC*  
 Christ Community Church of Barnwell | *Barnwell, SC*

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## ECO NATIONAL GATHERING

**January 23-25, 2018**  
**Hilton Americas Hotel**  
**Houston, Texas**



ECO, get ready to RENOVATE!

When we renovate, we make something new again.

We believe that God does not just want ECO to be a re-creation of the way denominations have always done things. God is calling us to renew and revitalize...to renovate...how we approach our congregations, presbyteries, covenant communities and our hearts.

Keynote speakers include: Ed Stetzer, Condoleeza Rice, and Kyle Strobel

Registration begins August 1, 2017. Space fills quickly, so sign up early.

Pastor David says, "I plan to participate in the 2018 ECO National Gathering. These events are powerful and moving. You will be comforted, challenged, and energized all at once. I hope a good number of our leaders will go."

For more information visit: <http://econationalgathering.org/>

**PALM CITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
 A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians – ECO  
**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES**  
 Traditional Services 8:30 – Chapel 11:00 – Sanctuary  
 Contemporary 9:30 – Family Life Center



**OUR MISSION**  
 “To unite with Christ and make Him known”

**OUR STRATEGY:**

We accomplish our purpose and our vision through five strategies:

1. **WORSHIP:** We honor God through both our corporate worship and our individual lives.
2. **FELLOWSHIP:** We relate to one another and to Christ through gospel-based community.
3. **EDUCATION:** We learn about the person and work of Christ through Bible study, prayer, and corporate worship.
4. **MINISTRY:** We serve God, our fellow Christians, and those who don’t know Christ through our spiritual gifts.
5. **MISSION:** We reach out to a world in need through charity, giving, witness, and time.

*Additional information may be obtained at [www.palmcitypres.org](http://www.palmcitypres.org)*

**Church Staff**

- Rev. Dr. David C. Mauldin . . . . . Senior Pastor  
 Rev. Dr. Brad D. Klostreich . . . . . Associate Pastor  
 Rev. Dr. Ray Gamble. . . . . Founding Pastor and Pastor Emeritus  
 Rev. Richard W. Anderson . . . . . Pastor Emeritus  
 Kristie Baldwin . . . . . Children’s Ministry Director  
 Joanne Raulin . . . . . Principal Organist

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 Dr. LaBarbara Chenault  
 Al Hastings  
 Robin Henn  
 Sue Henrich  
 Valerie Mudge  
 Robert Shubert

**Class of 2018**

- Dorothy Blake  
 Jim Hill  
 JoAnne Kerr  
 Don Metz  
 Carol McCarthy  
 Dr. Sara Wilcox

**Class of 2019**

- David Bates  
 Mike England  
 Diane Graczyk - Clerk of Session  
 Timothy Helderman  
 Ruthann Hewson  
 John Lillich

**Leadership – Deacons**

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 Marcia Jakeway  
 Carole Peterson - Moderator  
 Thomas Rosendahl  
 Jane Shubert  
 Phyl Sullivan

- Carolyn Benninger  
 Carolyn Herman  
 Debbie Sahlberg  
 Tammy Steckler  
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- Debbie Artman  
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