



Shepherd's Canyon Retreat
Chaplains' Handbook

Revised 10/17/22

Dear friend in Christ,

Thank you for offering your time and talents to serve as Chaplain for a Shepherd's Canyon Retreat! To make your ministry a positive experience for everyone concerned, Shepherd's Canyon has developed this handbook to assist you in being at your best for those who are coming to the Retreat.

Please carefully read this document with the intention of following it to the best of your ability. If you have any questions, desire clarification, or have concerns, please feel free to contact me. As Coordinator of Chaplains, I am at your service!

When you are called to this ministry, understand that this is not an accident. This is a calling by God and rest assured that He has qualified and equipped you for this task. He has empowered you with unique gifts. With the Holy Spirit, know that your participation in the Retreat will immensely aid in the recovery and restoration of our "Honored Guests"!

You have been blessed to be a blessing!! And I also know that you will be blessed to be a part of this ministry.

In His Service!

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Shepherd's Canyon Retreat

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Retreat Overview

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat offers seven carefully designed days of individual, couple, and group Christian counseling for any combination of couples and singles up to eight total. The emphasis is upon Christian professional church workers including, but not limited to, pastors, missionaries, rostered teachers, directors of Christian education, deaconesses, and their spouses.

Two Christian therapists – a male and a female – are on staff providing counseling services at each Retreat. These counselors may include Clinical Psychologists, Licensed Professional Counselors, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists. A retreat Chaplain leads daily worship and partners with the therapists to address additional spiritual issues.

During the seven-day retreat, each person is offered up to twenty-five hours of counseling including individual, couple, and group counseling. Initial hours are spent in assessing the participant's history and needs. Based on issues identified, subsequent counseling is designed to deal with those concerns.

The retreat has been designed to pursue four basic goals:

- Allow each participant to safely *unburden* the hurts and pressures of life and ministry in a safe, non-judgmental, and loving environment.
- Assist each participant to *understand herself/himself* more completely.
- Encourage each participant to *develop new levels of self-acceptance* as well as more effective relational skills. This often includes evaluation of expectations, reordering of priorities, improving communication skills, and bringing a new perspective concerning their life and ministry.
- Assist each participant to *develop an action plan* for positive change upon returning home.

For clients who are married, spousal participation is strongly suggested. Participants are asked to be in a place of readiness for the difficult work of self-disclosure and self-awareness. To further enhance the experience, clients are required to totally suspend their ministry responsibilities, including sermon or teaching preparations, for the duration of their session.

Pain and suffering are unfortunate. Yet these are critical components common to all who seek services at Shepherd's Canyon Retreat. Suffering, of course, accompanies life and is especially true for those who serve in the Church. People come to Shepherd's Canyon Retreat with complaints of overwhelming personal, marital, and congregational conflicts, ministry burnout, depression, marital discord, infidelity, and struggles with addictive behavior.

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat helps people alleviate their suffering and also strongly encourages participants to both describe and identify their suffering and, even more importantly, to learn from it.

Paul says in Romans 5:3-5: "*...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*" The scripture is clear: suffering, while not to be sought after, is, nevertheless, purposeful and has the enormous potential to deepen our relationship with God and with each other. This is at the heart of what occurs at Shepherd's Canyon Retreat.

Chaplain Role

The Chaplain's role is to love, support, and address the *spiritual* needs of the participants. The Chaplain works hand-in-hand with the Counselors, retreat director, volunteers, and others to conduct the week for the participants. While beautiful and healthy relationships will develop with everyone during the week, the Chaplain is to always remember that the mission of the week is directed first and foremost to the participants. The primary goal of the Chaplain is the spiritual health of the participant and those relationships take priority over any others.

The Chaplains accomplish this by conducting morning and evening devotions and by making themselves available during non-session times. During these times, participants who wish to privately visit, "just talk," request personal prayer time, or who desire private confession/absolution and/or private communion are served.

It is important that Chaplains avoid any attempt to do therapy. Shepherd's Canyon Retreat is a week-long program which has been specifically designed by Christian Licensed Therapists. These therapists have the overall and professional role to use their training, experience, skills and licensing to address the *interwoven psychological and spiritual* health of every participant. Please note that therapy is the assigned duty of these Counselors.

The Counselors, in turn, rely upon the Chaplain's theological and pastoral skills to provide additional support for additional spiritual needs as they arise.

PLEASE NOTE:

Many clergy are also trained to some degree in the arena of therapeutic counseling. If this is the case, the Chaplain lays aside this expertise during the retreat. Any attempt to provide therapy will almost always be counter-productive to the established goals of the licensed Retreat Counselors. If at any time the Chaplain perceives something that should be addressed, this should be discussed with the Licensed Therapist in a private conversation when feasible.

Chaplain Spiritual Health

It cannot be stressed enough that the Chaplain must be in good spiritual health prior to and during the retreat. It is encouraged that every Chaplain spend the weeks leading up to the retreat in private devotion, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines to "fill up their bucket" in preparation for the retreat. Should a Chaplain experience a life-event that would prevent them from devoting healthy time to the retreat, they should contact the Chaplain Director immediately for a replacement. It is much better to find a replacement than to further complicate the health of a Chaplain, participants, therapists, and volunteers during the retreat.

Other Roles

It takes an incredible amount of work to conduct the week-long retreat. Shepherd's Canyon Retreat has developed the following roles:

Licensed Therapists – The Licensed Therapists are in charge of the retreat. Because of the licensing and primary counseling responsibility for the weekend, the Therapists have the final say on all concerns that may arise.

Retreat Director – The Retreat director works behind the scenes to coordinate the logistics of the week.

Volunteer Director – There are many volunteers that will be on site during the weekend to address the physical needs of the participants. These volunteers cook, clean, and provide a friendly and loving atmosphere for the week. The Volunteer Director finds, trains, and coordinates the volunteers. At times, Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat is under construction and there may be volunteers on the campus for these purposes.

Devotions with non-participants – At times the volunteers and staff may ask the Chaplain to lead a devotion. This is at the discretion of the Chaplain and may be done. However, the Chaplain is to remember that the participants’ needs are primary.

Retreat Schedule

The Chaplain will provide a total of 9 devotions over a week’s period (4 morning devotions, and 5 evening devotions), plus the Sunday morning worship service. See below regarding the closing ceremony. Note that there are NO devotions on Friday (day off) of the retreat.

Monday	Arrival in early to mid-afternoon, no later than 5 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. Chaplain’s devotion after dinner Orientation, 7 p.m.
Tuesday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Chaplain’s morning devotion after breakfast Group sessions, including the chaplain Lunch, noon Afternoon free for the chaplain; counseling sessions for participants Chaplain’s devotion before dinner, 5:45 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. Evenings have some leisure activities such as group games, sometimes a movie or video.
Wednesday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Chaplain’s morning devotion after breakfast Group sessions, including the chaplain Lunch, noon Afternoon free for the chaplain; counseling sessions for participants Chaplain’s devotion before dinner, 5:45 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. Evenings have some leisure activities such as group games, sometimes a movie or video.
Thursday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Chaplain’s morning devotion after breakfast Group sessions, including the chaplain Lunch, noon Afternoon free for the chaplain; counseling sessions for participants Chaplain’s devotion before dinner, 5:45 p.m.

	Dinner, 6 p.m. Evenings have some leisure activities such as group games, sometimes a movie or video.
Friday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Free day, participants usually go into Wickenburg and see the town
Saturday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Chaplain's morning devotion after breakfast Group sessions, including the chaplain Lunch, noon Afternoon free for the chaplain; counseling sessions for participants Chaplain's devotion before dinner, 5:45 p.m. Dinner, 6 p.m. Evenings have some leisure activities such as group games, sometimes a movie or video.
Sunday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Morning worship led by the chaplain, 9 a.m. Evening ceremony in the prayer garden (see "Closing Ceremony" below)
Monday	Breakfast, 8 a.m. Departure

Daily Devotions

The retreat officially begins with dinner on Monday evening at 6:00 p.m. The Chaplain is free to use any subject or scripture that provides a broad context for the week and/or the daily devotions.

Many Chaplains have found that the Sonoran Desert is a great analogy to set the tone for the week. Consider the following:

- Jesus frequently used the desert when He was faced with momentous concerns/decisions
- Everyone goes through personal "desert" experiences.
- Our Lord made it a habit to bring His disciples to the desert for a time of rest and preparation, with no outside interference, to focus on life-changing issues.
- The Desert is a place to gain strength for the journey ahead. Jesus always prayed before big events.

We hope that each chaplain will prepare for the week by seeking direction from the Holy Spirit well in advance of the week. The daily themes are all decided by the Chaplain.

Two devotions are held every day during the week (M, Tu, W, Th, Sa), except for Monday, for which there is only an evening devotion. The morning devotion is at 9:00 a.m. after breakfast, immediately prior to the morning teaching sessions and lasts a maximum of 15 minutes. The evening devotion is conducted prior to the evening meal or in concert with the revised schedule agreed upon by the Counselors and Retreat Participants. Even though the devotion may not be read, it may be helpful to write out the devotion prior to the retreat to get a sense of the length. The evening devotion is slightly shorter than the morning devotion and is generally less than 15 minutes.

Daily Devotion Notes:

1. The Chaplain must be attentive to the time limits for the devotions. After many years in the pulpit, many pastors are not even aware of what constitutes a short devotion. It is extremely difficult for the Counselor to catch up when the devotion is too long. The single-most heard

complaint from Counselors is that the Chaplain consistently exceeds the allotted time resulting in massive changes to the schedule.

2. The devotion subject matter is completely at the discretion of the Chaplain. Examples that Chaplains have used in the past are:
 - a. The Psalms
 - b. The “I Am’s” of Jesus,
 - c. The Parables.
 - d. Object Lessons.
 - e. David and Goliath and the “giants” everyone faces.
 - f. The “great cloud of witnesses” of Hebrew 11

At times the Holy Spirit may inspire the evening devotions from the teachings or experiences of the day.

3. The Chaplain apparel is informal. No clerical collar, insignia, or robe is worn during the devotion, during the day, or on Sunday. Please remain casual. This is a purposeful part of the structure of the retreat. Many attendees come to the retreat believing that they have been “stripped” of the collar and ecclesiastical images often serves as a painful reminder to them. The Chaplain is a sinner in need of God’s grace like everyone else and must remain approachable during the retreat.
4. The Retreat Center has a copy machine available for printed materials to be handed out for devotions or the Worship Service. Staff members are very happy to assist in this. No retreat will ever have more than eight participants so the number of copies is typically not an issue. However the Sunday services are also frequently attended by the hosting staff and volunteers, so the numbers involved will vary from retreat to retreat and often includes another 6-8 people.
5. If the Chaplain plays an instrument or wants to sing acapella, songbooks are available at the center. Some Chaplains choose to sing a song and some do not. This is completely at the Chaplain’s discretion. Available Songbooks include
 - a. *Lutheran Book of Worship* Hymnal (LBW)
 - b. *The Other Song Book* by Dave and Barb Anderson (TOSB)
 - c. The Revised Version of *The Other Song Book* (TOSB)
 - d. *The Other Song Book 2* (The Best of the Best in Contemporary Praise & Worship);
 - e. *Glory & Praise*, vol. 1, 2, & 3.

When used, music is a powerful part of the week, but please note that many of our retreat clients are in their 30s to 50s and some arrive from non-Lutheran and/or non-liturgical backgrounds. It is highly encouraged to use a broad spectrum of musical and worship styles. The staff has found that using a style congruent with casual and relaxed worship helps in the healing process and reflects the intimate setting of the retreat.

Also, note that retreat participants may also have musical skills. If so, it is not unusual for them to volunteer to play the piano or other instrument. The Chaplain may invite, but not demand, their assistance. IF a participant desires, if the chaplain desires, and if the invitation will not unduly complicate a participant’s retreat experience, then a participant is welcome to use their musical talents.

Morning Counselor-led Group Teaching Sessions

The Chaplain attends all morning group teaching sessions, but not normally any afternoon sessions which are usually one-on-one or couples counseling. This is helpful to learn what the Counselors' teaching topics are and to get a sense of what is happening in the lives of the participants. When Chaplains attend they must be completely aware that the Counselor has a plan of action. During individual counseling sessions, the Counselors are learning about situations of which the Chaplain may not be aware. The Counselors may be using the group teaching time to direct the conversation in a natural and organic way to a desired goal. The Chaplain should normally remain silent and NEVER attempt to take the group conversation in any direction, though an occasional relevant comment or clarifying question is welcome.

Accommodations

You will have private accommodations in the building where the other participants will stay, including the two counselors. You will have a double bed, private bathroom, soap and towels, access to the swimming pool at any time of day (big towels are also kept at the pool near the hot tub), meals provided by the staff, and a walking trail around the perimeter of the retreat property. All sessions take place in this building (pictured to the right). There are other amenities, including a Keurig coffeemaker in the building plus a cold water dispenser. The staff brings a mid-afternoon snack each day, but they feed you so well that you don't likely need something at that time of day. The food is simply superb! You can use the washer and drier during the week if you need to. They are also located in the main building where the participants stay. Laundry soap is also provided. They provide a Wi-Fi password in that same building.



Accommodations

Meals

The Chaplain attends the retreat meals and plans for meal-time prayers. Meals are served in grand style in the administrative building which is located between the swimming pool and the main road (pictured here). If there is a group activity (such as a poolside dinner), the Chaplain participates along with everyone in attendance. Chaplains are present to build a trusting relationship with the participants so that they will become approachable during the week.



Main Building (above the pool)

Sunday Worship

The Sunday worship service can be either morning or evening depending on the wishes of the participants and counselors. This service is fairly informal and may or may not include liturgical format. The service is approximately 30 minutes in length, and can take place either inside the Retreat Center or outside in the Prayer Garden, depending on the weather.

Holy Communion

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat does not have a policy on Holy Communion. However, in preparing for the Sunday service please keep in mind that the Chaplain, Participants and/or Counselors are very possibly from various Synods or Denominations, and respecting Shepherd's Canyon's LCMS RSO status, Holy Communion is not officially a part of the Retreat Experience, unless it is expressly requested by any Participant(s). You are encouraged to respond to these requests in a manner that honors your own understanding of Holy Communion and those of the participants. Holy Communion brings God's grace, and in no case should any disagreement about it detract from the healing that God is providing during the week. You may bring your personal communion set for this possible use, or use the set available at the Retreat Center.

Closing Ceremony

There will be a teaching by the Counselors on leaving one's "pain/baggage" at the foot of the cross. The Participants will be given a marker pen and flat-surfaced "river rock" after the teaching to write down what they are leaving behind.

On the last evening together the Chaplain, Counselors, and Participants will meet in the outdoor prayer garden, weather permitting, which has seating, an altar, and the cross. The Participants will be invited to leave their rocks at the Cross, individually preceded with a private time at the cross for personal prayer. After meeting with the Counselors and together determining the process, you are asked to lead a prayer/healing time in which the Chaplain, Counselors, and the Participants pray over each Participant, along with a laying on of hands immediately after each respective Participant returns from leaving his/her rock at the cross.

Anointing each person individually before prayer is appropriate and quite effective. Some Chaplains regularly use anointing and others do not. This is completely at the discretion of the Chaplain. Should anointing be done, oil can be found in the drawer beneath the TV in the meeting room. If the oil is used, the Chaplain is requested to return it for future retreats.

Advertising

Any advertising is strictly forbidden. Clergy are frequently involved in other service organizations, mission endeavors, holy land tours, and other groups. The retreat is not the time to provide this information. The Retreat is for the participants. No sale of anything is permitted.

If the Chaplain desires to provide a gift to participants, this is allowed.

Inter-Denominational

The weekend is designed for Clergy and other church workers who are in need of this type of retreat. The retreat is open to any Christian. When someone is in crisis, denominational differences between participants are minor. Shepherd's Canyon Retreat has designed a program that makes denominational differences an insignificant part of the week. To maintain the integrity of the retreat, it is imperative that any reference to denominations is removed. The Chaplain is asked to keep all devotions generic with

respect to denomination. Phrases and acronyms unique to any church body should be avoided. For example, LCMS, ELCA, CTCR, and St. Louis should be avoided.

Spouses

Spouses are most welcome to accompany the Chaplain to the Retreat Center. They are always a refreshing and welcome addition to the volunteer staff. The spouse DOES NOT participate in the morning sessions or devotions.

Shepherd's Canyon Retreat does not provide reimbursement for spousal travel expenses. Lodging and meals are provided for the spouse. Typically the spouse blends in with the volunteer team serving the needs of the participants, especially at meal times.

Compensation

In addition to covering the cost travel to and from the Retreat Center, Shepherd's Canyon Retreat Ministries provides a \$400 stipend for the week as an expression of sincere appreciation for the ministry the Chaplain provides.

Communications

Standing Stones Retreat Center receives a signal from some cell phone carriers, but not all. Verizon seems to work, and AT&T is sporadic. However, Wi-Fi is available through a satellite connection. This is not always reliable either. Shepherd's Canyon Retreat has a landline, and this number should be provided for emergencies. This number is 928-685-5211.