



### Voices from the Shepherd at 50 Team

February 6, 2017

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As the Feb. 26 congregational vote on Shepherd at 50 nears, I invited leaders in the planning process to describe reasons behind their enthusiasm for the project. Here's what they wrote in relation to their areas of responsibility - building project, church plant, finances, or planning oversight. I thank God for the time and expertise each of these individuals has contributed over the past year in creating a plan for the congregation's prayerful consideration!

If you've not yet viewed a summary of the Shepherd at 50 plan, I encourage you to visit [shepherdlutheran.com/shepherdat50](http://shepherdlutheran.com/shepherdat50) for all of the important documents. The comments below will make the most sense if you're familiar with the general scope of the plan.

Please watch your inbox next week for a brief summary of the Shepherd at 50 plan and the voting ballot for you to preview.

God's blessings,  
Pastor Chris

#### **"Why I'm excited to recommend Shepherd at 50 to you, especially from the perspective of the building project."**

I have the unique privilege of being an SHLS alumna. I can remember when I was 6 years old, and walking into the new sanctuary to have chapel for the first time with Pastor Dan. The excitement was high and the love of God was beaming from students and families. I attended chapel services in that building for the next five years. I loved my school so much that I came back to be a part of this special family as a first grade teacher. I am honored to be working on the Shepherd at 50 project; mostly because it is an opportunity to return the excitement I felt when I was 5 years old to the students in the school and the families of the church, which to me

are one and the same. The school is more than just an extension of the church - it is the church, by virtue of the teaching of Jesus' love for us. It is so rewarding to teach students about Jesus because for many it is the first time they are ever hearing about God. While we know the magic that happens in these walls, a major update to our facilities will show the community around us the magic that happens here! We are thriving and growing, we are excited and ready, we are Shepherd at 50!

*-Lauren Murawski, Shepherd at 50 alumni relations committee chairwoman, SHLS first grade teacher, SHLS alumna*

My involvement with Shepherd of the Hills as both parent and 21-year employee provides insight to limitations and joys of the current facilities. Everything from narrow hallways, evacuation choke-points in case of emergencies, to an undersized gym with very little spectator opportunities. But that same insight glows with joy over the Christ-filled, caring education being provided every day. Facility-wise, we are challenged. With multiple expansion projects over nearly 40 years, there are obvious differences in age of the building. We have children scattered across campus from the portables to the church and the school building with multiple entries and limited entry control. The school roof has started leaking again; some windows leak and many have become drafty. What a blessed opportunity we now have to provide new learning environments enhanced by technology that are safe through a secure central entry; all sustained by state-of-the-art utilities (lights, climate control, etc.). The first phase - new construction of the gym - will provide opportunity for follow-on phases to "build" into the current gym, and so much more with the addition of a stage and other community-use areas.

*-Dave Kottwitz, Shepherd at 50 building committee chairman, former Shepherd property manager*

**"Why I'm excited to recommend Shepherd at 50 to you, especially from the perspective of the mission church":**

Maybe it's because my grandparents were missionaries, but I can't think of anything more exciting ministry-wise than taking the Gospel into new territories. And whether those new territories are the jungles of the Amazon like Grandpa Tilt, or the asphalt jungles of suburbia - we are privileged to take the Gospel into every land. The reality is the very best tactic for taking to Gospel into new places is planting new churches - no program or project in existing churches can match the effectiveness of new churches. Where there are people, there are people who need Jesus - and there are lots of new people in far west Bexar County - so let's go make disciples!

*-Rev. Aaron Tilt, Shepherd at 50 church planter committee chairman*

"It's a joy to be a part of the exciting Shepherd at 50 effort. Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church is a faith community filled with what San Antonio needs. The DNA of our congregation is both caring and mission-focused, lifting up families and children, proclaiming the Gospel faithfully, and opening its arms to all people. To share these gifts with the greater San Antonio community by planting churches is faithful stewardship of God's grace and generosity. What a

blessing it will be to see Shepherd of the Hills make its Gospel imprint on more neighborhoods so that many might know Jesus and share in the gift of eternal life.”

*-Rev. Michael Newman, LCMS Texas District mission strategist, Shepherd member*

**“Why I’m excited to recommend Shepherd at 50 to you, especially from the perspective of the financial plan”:**

When the Lord commanded us to “go and make disciples,” He never said it would be easy. Instead, He expects us to be bold for His kingdom and to have faith that His ultimate plan(s) will be accomplished. As we plan for the future of our small part of His kingdom (and contemplate the resources our plans will require), we must be realistic but also bold and have faith that God will provide all that we need, when we need it. We are on a mission to share the Good News with many more people, and the other “good news” is that we have viable tools for generating the funds to do so. Positive support for a capital campaign (that need only generate “average” results), from which we can use funds to then grow comfortably over time into added debt, will enable us to get the job done. We did this successfully with our new sanctuary some 20 years ago, and we can do it again. The numbers will ultimately add up - literally and, more importantly, with respect to the number of souls we touch as Shepherd of the Hills enters its second half-century.

*-Chris Bannwolf, Shepherd at 50 finance committee chairman, CFO of Broadway National Bank, former board member of Texas District Church Extension Fund (our lending company)*

Seldom has a college, university or a school such as Shepherd of the Hills successfully completed a building project without the help of a financial institution and a major fundraising campaign. In the eight years of my fundraising experience, it was always a pleasure to see the joy of prospective donors when they were asked to contribute to a major fundraising campaign to share their wealth. I think the prospective financial plan for Shepherd at 50 is a great one and a very doable one!

*-Dale Stein Sr., Shepherd at 50 planning oversight committee member, former Shepherd head elder, former fundraiser for Texas Lutheran University*

**“Why I’m excited to recommend Shepherd at 50 to you as a comprehensive plan for our congregation’s future”:**

We have an opportunity to use our faith as the foundation for Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church and School’s combined future to achieve our collective vision. The plan encompasses both stewardship of the gifts that God has given to each of us as well as evangelism through the sharing of the Good News of Jesus Christ with others in our community. The Shepherd at 50 Master Plan enables us to establish sanctuaries based on faith, hope and love in this fallen creation while leading ourselves and others into a prayer-filled, life-changing relationship with our Savior. The plan is receptive to the “wants” of our church, responsive to the “needs” of our school, and contributes positively to our surrounding San Antonio neighbors. Finally, in order to mitigate any financial risk as well as accommodate the circumstance or condition of the

congregation and its resources, we control the execution of every phase of the plan - nothing will happen until Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church and School says so!

*-T.J. Redmann, Ph.D., Shepherd at 50 oversight committee chairman, retired military planner*

As a Shepherd at 50 oversight committee member and a retired USAF military training instructor/supervisor, it gives me great pleasure to physically see our young Shepherd of the Hills students grow both spiritually and academically through the efforts of fantastic teachers as they progress through our school grades. Therefore, it is imperative that we the congregation approve the Shepherd at 50 ministry motion on February 26 to enhance the school, bring it up to standards ... allow for growth for a greater learning environment coupled with starting a mission church in the outer west/northwest San Antonio area.

*-Ron Sipe, Shepherd at 50 oversight committee member*

We're a church that's all about leading people into a life-changing relationship with Jesus. While a building can't share the Gospel, *people* can share God's truth, and a building provides space for that to happen. The church plant does that even more directly, by empowering a new church to reach a community that Shepherd is too far away to reach. We may be talking about "Shepherd at 50," but what this plan really does it set up Shepherd for success at 60 and 70 and beyond.

*-Nick Arnold, Shepherd at 50 mission and vision committee chairman, Shepherd student ministry director*

What a joy it is to work with individuals committed to making the best place possible for children and their families to grow up in the knowledge and love of Christ. As Shepherd approaches its 50th birthday in 2019, it is a lofty goal of our congregation to begin a building program which will enhance, remodel, and add to the facilities of the church, school, and child care. And at the same time we are seeking to reach out in our community with a church plant to allow additional people the chance to be touched by the Gospel. In the past 37 years, Debbie and I have been privileged to see much wonderful growth at Shepherd of the Hills. The church has grown from 200 members to approaching 1,200. The school and child care had 41 students back in 1981 when we arrived. There are now over 410 students in infant to eighth grade and an additional 150 students in Lutheran High School, of which the congregation is an association member. Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church, School, and Child Care has come such a long way its first 50 years. Now is such an exciting time to see where God will continue to lead it as together we seek to share His saving Gospel in new and wonderful ways.

*-Tim Eickstead, Director of Operations*