



Summer 2024

A Week in the Desert

Excerpts of Reflections from Kristin Rathje, who volunteered for a week when her husband came as one of our retreat therapists.

"I've spent this week in the desert — the literal desert..."

"...Why am I here? Well, the chaplain and the therapists are allowed to bring a spouse for the week! When my husband suggested I come with him, I was thinking, that is the first week after school dismisses! Wouldn't it be great to escape to the desert to read, write, and recover from the school year? I can sit poolside, and simply let my body heal from the strain of the year. Great plan, right?..."

"I briefly flashed back to seasons in our lives when we could have used a week away in the desert, where someone else planned and prepared our meals, where we left dishes sitting on the table for someone else to clear, where snacks were mysteriously restocked, and refrigerators were continuously filled with cold drink. More than once in our lives of ministry, we would've benefitted from getting away from it all with some trained professionals who might've helped us navigate the unthinkable, process the traumatic, and begin to heal... Because of the careful confidentiality SCR practices, I don't know the names of the participants or, of course, the issues they are navigating, but I do know that most professional church workers suffer from overwork and unreasonable expectations and many have been betrayed by their leadership, suffered personal family trauma that they don't feel they can process in the public eye, or are journeying through their own personal struggles with mental or physical health."

"The five of us in the kitchen, two paid staff members (both professional church workers), and three volunteers (all of us educators and two of us pastor's wives), remarked early in the week that each of us have "been there", and then got busy with the task at hand, preparing and presenting meals, and attending to the associated housekeeping tasks — dishwashing, packaging leftovers, vacuuming floors, and quietly attending to the needs of the participants..."

"...Over the week, we have worked as a team, learning little known facts about Alaska, sharing stories of foods we like (or don't like) to make, and laughing at one another's silliness, and mostly making sure that the participants got what they needed when they needed it..."

"Come away with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest." Mark 6:31

To read Kristin's entire blog post, go to: <https://kristinsnextchapter.com/2024/06/24/a-week-in-the-desert>

*"I long to see you...that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."
Romans 1:11-12*

Pastors and ministry leaders are not just sharers of the Good News of Jesus to others, they are RECEIVERS as well and can be ENCOURAGED by YOUR words and actions



Shepherd's Canyon Retreat, Inc.

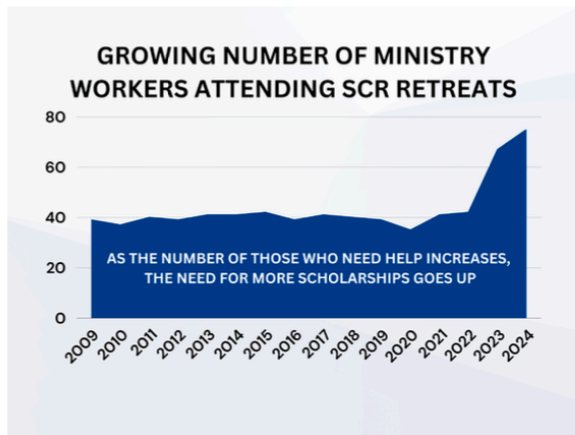
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From the Executive Director:

The Real Cost of Healing: Why We Rely on Your Generosity

God is truly blessing the work of Shepherd's Canyon Retreat and we are very grateful for your support! We've had so many FULL retreats this year and the rest of 2024 is already filling up. God be praised!



I was in a meeting with pastors recently and I reported to them that we were getting more and more pastors, ministry leaders, and spouses coming to our retreats, especially in 2023 and 2024. (see graph) One pastor spoke up and made the comment about how that must be really helping our finances. I almost laughed out loud, but instead I politely explained that **“Actually, the opposite is true...”**

The more people who come to our retreats, the more we rely on YOU, our faithful supporters! If we were to charge what it actually costs, we would have to charge over \$10,000 per person! There are very few pastors that can afford to pay \$10,000 for a week of help, hope and healing. Especially if they are like our son, who is a pastor in his mid-thirties who is still paying off his seminary loans!

I was a burned-out pastor and camp director 4 years ago and if I would have been asked to pay \$10,000 for my time of healing at Shepherd's Canyon Retreat, I would NOT be in ministry today. Instead of being the director of this ministry, you would find me greeting you at the entrance of a big building the size of my last church saying, “Welcome to Walmart!”

Did you know that for every pastor who leaves the ministry because they are burned out, it **costs over a quarter of a million dollars to train a new pastor to take his place?** It's far more cost effective to KEEP good pastors than to train new ones. Thank you for your support and for being like “faithful Aaron, holding up the prophet's hands.”

Kevin Bueltmann, Executive Director



“I just wanted to say thank you to the donors that make Shepherd's Canyon possible. My family was financially struggling when I found Shepherd's Canyon, and we didn't think I'd be able to attend because of it. But, because of the generosity of the donors, I was able to have the most restoring and refreshing week of my entire life. God bless those donors and God bless Shepherd's Canyon.”

– From a Pastor participant

“I cannot speak highly enough about Shepherd's Canyon. It was a very special experience that I consider to be one of the best experiences of my life... Thank you, dear donors, for your generosity. It was a great blessing and relief to me to receive the financial assistance to attend Shepherd's Canyon during a dark and difficult time.”

– From a Deaconess participant

Shade Sail Project

Shade sails were installed near several RV sites to make our trailers and vehicles cooler and therefore saving money in air-conditioning costs. We are very grateful for \$5,000 donated by the West Valley Lutheran Thrift Shop in Phoenix and also Neal and Judy Snider who gave \$3,000 towards this project! Also, thanks to the many staff and volunteers who spent countless hours making this a reality! The project went over budget, so if you have some money you were saving for a “rainy day,” this would be a great thing to support because the shade sails ALSO keep rain off of people that are walking by. 😊



Dave Anderson paints some of the poles. Jerry digging himself into a hole. Raine feels closer to heaven working at SCR.



Raine must be digging for gold to support the ministry. Many creative ways to raise & lower poles. Volunteer Tyler Schwab from Redeemer Lutheran Church Wickenburg.

“This retreat made a big difference in how we view ministry and our personal lives. It helped me and my husband to set our priorities straight and to find time to rest, even in the midst of all our busyness... We will be forever grateful for this opportunity to go. THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS.” - From a pastor’s wife



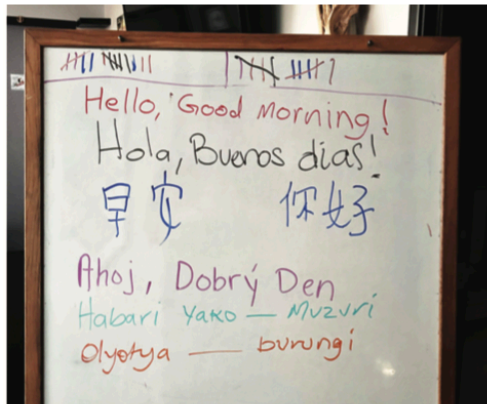
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

If you prefer to read this newsletter on your phone, go to:
www.ShepherdsCanyonRetreat.org/news



Note New Address

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Greetings to you in the primary (or secondary) language of some of the participants who came to a recent Shepherd's Canyon Retreat! Our June retreat had people from 4 different countries! In fact, they were from 4 different continents: Asia, Africa, North & South America!

Memorials - February-June 2024

Darlene Adrian in memory of Greg Werdin
David & Barb Anderson in memory of Ernest Matuschka
Kevin & Tawn Bueltmann in memory of Sarah Gillard
(daughter of former site managers Greg & Kathy Gillard)

Additional Gifts in Memory of Alice Tritsch

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church – Hutchinson, KS
Douglas & Vicki Caywood
Luann Happel
Roger & Mary Beisner
Jason & Kathryn Lindahl
Audrey Schmidt
Stephen & Kim Fisher
Barry & Michelle Smith
Robert & Dawn Hackerott
Dale & Karen Soderstrom

Dave Anderson's and Roger Walck's Concert Ministry Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin - August 2024

Please go to www.ShepherdsCanyonRetreat.org/concerts for details to find out more.

Wish List

We are looking for donations of new or used items or money for us to purchase the items below.

2 of our vans died. ☹️
Please help us
replace them ASAP! 😊



ShepherdsCanyonRetreat.org/donate



- Van, car, & minivan to transport food & guests
- Additional Commercial Refrigerator
- RV Park Model \$90,000 for staff housing
- Thrivent Action Team grants
- Money for new oversized King bedspreads
- Patio/Pool side furniture
- Gift cards (hardware, grocery, visa, Amazon)
- Skid steer

Dave and Barb Anderson send their greetings!