

In 1985 Lutheran lay-leader, Dave Anderson, and a group of LCMS clergy, counseling professionals, and lay leaders, founded what became an RSO, Cathedral Rock Centre, Inc. For eighteen months, this ministry provided 2-week counseling retreats for 27 LCMS individuals—mostly pastors and spouses. The counseling was done by one therapist at each retreat. One of those therapists was Dr. William Knippa.

The Cathedral Rock Centre ministry was halted due—not to the need—but due the failing's of the ministry director and the resulting lack of funding.

In 2006, a group of LCMS clergy, counseling professionals, and lay leaders gathered in Phoenix, Arizona to once again seek God's direction for a ministry of healing and hope for Lutheran professional church workers and their spouses. From that meeting a core group met several times to discuss the need for an updated version of what the Cathedral Rock Centre ministry provided years before.

In the Fall of 2007 the ad hoc group decided to proceed with plans to establish a new ministry providing eight-day counseling retreats for pastors, teachers, missionaries, and others in full-time ministry. A nation-wide search began for Lutheran therapists/counselors with experience in counseling professional church workers. Another search began for suitable retreat locations.

In January and March, 2008, 15 Lutheran therapists from Nebraska, Washington, Iowa, Minnesota, Colorado, Texas, and Indiana, met in Phoenix to talk and pray about this emerging counseling ministry.

In January, 2009, Shepherd's Canyon Retreat, Inc. received IRS recognition as a 501 c 3 organization.

In March, 2009, the first Shepherd's Canyon Retreat was held at Bison Ranch in Northeast Arizona. Since then, eleven retreats have been held at Heartwood Conference Center, Trego, Wisconsin, seven retreats have been held in Arizona retreat centers, and in January, 2012, a retreat was held in Florida.

In February, 2012, the SCR Board of Directors voted to purchase an acreage in Arizona's high desert, 90 minutes Northwest of the Phoenix airport. This place will become the home-base for Shepherd's Canyon Retreats by August, 2012. Please check out www.ShepherdsCanyonRetreat.org and www.StandingStonesAZ.org