

May 16, 2004
“Charter Sunday”

This is a special celebration for us at Shepherd’s Creek. Today we become officially recognized as a church of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod with all the rights and responsibility of such a congregation. In a sense, little will change of what we are doing. We will continue to share the great news of Jesus Christ with our community, family and friends and through God’s Word see our lives empowered. But today we pause to give thanks for what the Lord has given us and how he has blessed us in guiding us in establishing this mission. So

“Let us begin in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit”

↑ **Songs (Rise and sing)**
“Holy, Holy, Holy”

Opening Pray - **George**
God’s Word

ORDER FOR THE RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Pastor Dan: We have come together to officially form Shepherd’s Creek Lutheran Church of Bradenton Florida, whose purpose in this place is to empower lives through knowing Jesus Christ as their Lord, Savior and Friend. We will through God’s Word and Sacrament empower the, lives that are hurting,

depressed, frustrated, searching and confused, with God's love, acceptance, help, hope, joy, forgiveness, guidance, and encouragement. People will say "I know God has a plan for me!" It is a place that changes people's lives through our confession of faith, fellowship of worship, learning, witness, service, and the Sacraments.

St. Paul says to us in his letter to the Romans:" May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This morning we gather together to join hands in ministry, to extend God's Kingdom in the Bradenton area and throughout our Circuit, District, Synod, and the world, by officially organizing as a congregation. The following persons have responded to the call of the Holy Spirit and are eager to be fellow ministers of Shepherd's Creek Lutheran Church and will be signing the charter.

(Names of Charter Members are now read by the Secretary of our Church)

We want everyone to be a part of the celebration today. We at Shepherd's Creek have understood from the beginning that there are many friends of the church, as we describe them. You are closely related to us through prayer or ministry or passion for the unreached in the community. We invite you to sign the document, Friends of the Church, so we may record your fellowship with us

in worship and praise of God today and your participation in this special event.

So, now as we sing the following songs, we ask all who either desire to become charter members and have signed a covenant or those who are friends of the church to come forward and sign the appropriate document.

Also, as you come forward, you will be given 2 links of chain. After you have signed the charter or friends' document, please take two links, one for each hand and form a large circle around the room. Following the signing, we will link these together.

**Song (Sung during the signing) “Forever”
“Ancient Words”**

RECEPTION OF CHARTER MEMBERS

Pastor Dan : I now ask those of you who have affixed your signatures to the charter to form this new congregation of the Florida-Georgia District, of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: conscious of our Mission to “Empower People for Life!” and aware of Christ’s command to extend His Kingdom,

Do you wish to be a part of this community of faith called Shepherd’s Creek Lutheran Church? If so answer **“Yes, with God’s Help!”**

Charter Members: “Yes, with God’s Help!”

P: Do you promise as fellow ministers, faithful support and

active participation to insure and further the goals of this congregation that together we may express through our life in His Church, the love and faith of Jesus Christ? If so answer, **“Yes, with God’s Help!”**

Charter Members: “Yes, with God’s Help!”

P: We have committed ourselves to be responsible and dynamic disciples for Jesus Christ that His Kingdom may be increased. Therefore, we are now joined together in Christ in the fellowship of this congregation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Each person has been given individual links. If you examine it, you will discover it is a “C” shape, standing for Christ, the Rock on which Shepherd’s Creek is built. The opening in the link is significant because we affirm in our charter statement that we must remain open to meet the changing needs of the church, community, and the world—never becoming a clique or a closed group where others may not enter. Open to new ideas, but never straying from God’s Word, and open to new people that we might grow and mature as God’s family.

The opening also plays a part symbolically, in our understanding of what results when we slacken upon our responsibility to each other and our mission to those who are at present not in fellowship with Christ’s Church. Some may fall out and the chain broken, thus making our witness less effective.

Also, symbolically, as with the chain which is as strong as its weakest link, so is the church with respect to its members. We must strive to keep the chain taut by developing the individual ministries of all our members. And always wanting others to become more empowered in their walk with Christ. As a symbol of our coming together, link your chain link to that of your neighbors.

P: As a minister of Christ's Church, in the words of St. Peter, I declare you to be "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him Who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were no people. . . but now you are God's people" and fellow ministers one of the other.

We pray:

We give You thanks, Almighty God, that You have called us together in the fellowship of the Gospel, and have bound us in love, brotherhood and service in Your holy church. We pray that we who are this day united together in the establishment of Shepherd's Creek Lutheran Church, may be one with You. Grant that all of us present this day may grow in grace, be fruitful in every good work, and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; that at the day of Jesus Christ, we may be welcomed in the Church Triumphant, there ever to glorify You with Your Son Whose name we proclaim, in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God bless us now and forevermore.

Amen.

Greet one another.

Announcements

Message - ***Pastor Doug Kallesen, Mission Executive for the Florida - Georgia District***

THE RITE OF RECEPTION OF THE CONGREGATION INTO THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

The Florida-Georgia District Mission Executive will address the congregation by commenting briefly on its history and implications of Synodical membership. He then continues:

Pastor Doug Kallesen : The Constitution and Bylaws of Shepherd's Creek Lutheran Church having been approved, and the application for membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod accepted by the Board of Directors of the Florida-Georgia District, I now ask you, the people of Shepherd's Creek, are you willing to join us as we live together under the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to His mandate, and in accordance with the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod? If so, answer: *Yes, with the help of God.*

Congregation: Yes, with the help of God.

Pastor Doug Kallesen : Will the President and Recording Secretary of the congregation please come forward and sign the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The signing completed, the District Mission Executive presents the President of the congregation with a Certificate of *Membership and addresses the congregation:*

Pastor Doug Kallesen : On behalf of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, I joyfully receive Shepherd’s Creek Lutheran Church as a member of the Florida- Georgia District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Pastor Doug Kallesen : Let us pray... Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank You for bringing Shepherd’s Creek Lutheran Church into The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Continue to send Your Holy Spirit ever to strengthen this bond, that with one heart and one mind we may serve You and one another as we worship and witness to the glory of Your holy name, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

THE LORD’ S PRAYER

THE LORD’S SUPPER

Song “Wonderful Cross”

Prayer following Communion

☐ Amen

Prayers for the Church

Closing Song “Forever”

THE BENEDICTION

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you His peace.

↑ **C: Amen.**