

Our History

In July 1987, Pastor David Osborne came to Woodstock, Georgia as a pastor/developer for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Pastor Dave knocked on doors and networked with people in the community, inviting them to the exciting opportunity of beginning a new congregation in the developing Towne Lake Community. Many local citizens caught Pastor Dave's enthusiasm and passion for the gospel, and by 1988 Sunday morning worship services and Sunday School classes were being held in rented space at a local office park complex located on Highway 92.

On December 11, 1988, Charter Sunday, "The Living Charter of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Woodstock, Georgia" was signed. The charter proclaimed:

We believe—that we are called and chosen by God and through faith accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Led by the Holy Spirit, we gather together to become the people of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and commit ourselves to: worship, praise, honor, and glorify God, grow in our personal understanding of Jesus Christ, share in the Good News of Jesus Christ with others, and responsively care for those who are in need. We promise—to faithfully support and participate in the life of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church through our time, talents, treasures, and prayers, so that we, the members of the Body of Christ, may demonstrate God's love in the world.

One hundred and thirty-one adults and children signed the charter.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church was officially recognized as a congregation of the ELCA on April 9, 1989. By that time the congregation, in addition to weekly worship and Sunday School, had added to its ministries Confirmation classes, First Communion Classes, youth activities for 3rd – 6th graders, Vacation Bible School, an Altar Guild, and choirs for adults and children. That same year a Building Committee was formed to plan for a church building at the corner of Eagle Drive and Rose Creek Drive.

A design for the physical structure, which included a sanctuary, fellowship area, classrooms, and administrative offices, was approved in 1991 and a capital fund campaign was initiated. The building was completed in 1992 and dedicated in 1993. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church hence became a permanent presence in

Towne Lake. The congregation began to serve the community by offering meeting space to community groups. As ministries, programs, and responsibilities continued to expand, a building expansion to increase fellowship, education and music space began in 1998. The building expansion was completed and dedicated in 1999.

As GSLC grew, the need for another pastor became evident and Pastor Kari Parsons was called as an associate pastor in 1998 and served until 2006.

After leading GSLC from its beginning, Pastor Dave resigned in 2002. The congregation entered an interim phase that lasted until 2004, when Rev. Dr. Paul Baumgartner was called. Pr. Paul brought with him a thoughtful approach to worship, Bible study, and congregational life.

In 2005, the congregation completed an intense Long-Range Planning Process, including the development of a congregational mission statement: *We are called, gathered and blessed to be a community and instrument of grace for all sheep of the Good Shepherd.*

In 2006, Pastor Justin Lind-Ayres was called and served until 2009. Pr. Justin was known for his passionate sermons, in depth Bible studies, and his “Water of Life” project which featured a flowing stream at the altar.

In 2006, GSLC member Michelle Angalet became our Associate in Ministry, where she focused primarily on our youth and educational ministries until 2012 when she accepted a role at the Southeastern Synod office.

In 2009, Pastor Justin Ask (affectionately known as “PJ2”) was called and served until 2016. He oversaw the development of GSLC’s youth mission trips to various cities such as Nashville, Milwaukee, Washington D.C., and Savannah.

In May of 2021, Pastor Paul, our pastor of 17 years, retired. We embarked on a yearlong journey to reevaluate our vision and goals. In July of 2022, we extended a call to Pastor Rosy Rivera. Pastor Rosy was installed as Pastor of GSLC on September 25, 2022, and served until June 2023. Pastor Karen Boda was then appointed by the Southeastern Synod to lead our congregation as Interim Pastor during this liminal season. In June 2025, Pastor Karen was called as Pastor of GSLC, where she serves with joy and gratitude.