

what's new.

April 2026 UPDATE

Happy Spring! Over the past several months, we've been making progress on several building projects around Shepherd and wanted to share a brief update about each.

New Single Family Homes

Our first of nine single family homes, in partnership with Arbor Homes, has officially been completed. Neighbors who complete Shepherd's HomeOwner University - a three-year program designed to equip them with the skills, coaching, and resources for successful homeownership - will have the opportunity to purchase these homes at cost. We are currently slated to complete two more before the end of the year.



“The Porch” Launching Center

Last July, Shepherd acquired the former Advance Auto Parts store at the front of our campus - an acquisition we had been praying about for 19 years. Over the past nine months, we've been transforming this space into the *Rev. Dean and Cheryl Cowles Launching Center* - nicknamed “The Porch” as the space will serve as a front door to the neighborhood. The porch will include a barbershop, offices, and classroom space.



Future Lobby of "The Porch" (Rendering)

Warrick Place Apartments

We are weeks away from breaking ground on Warrick Place Apartments - an 11 unit affordable housing development with an additional 3,000 square feet of flexible grey space. Located just three blocks from our main campus, this project will expand access to quality, affordable housing in our neighborhood.



Warrick Place Apartments (Rendering)

We are excited to see how the Lord will use each of these spaces to create opportunities, strengthen our community, and support neighbors in meaningful ways!

.....

A Shepherd Story

A mom with six children received a call from Shepherd Community Center - simply to check in.

"I ain't gonna lie... we don't have anything," she said.

Within hours, my team coordinated with the food pantry and delivered multiple boxes of food to her home. As her children carried the bags inside, we sat together on the porch, and she began to share her story through tears.

Because of a past felony, she has struggled to find steady employment. Again and again, she applies for jobs, only to be turned away. As Scripture says, "hope deferred makes the heart sick," and she was living that reality - discouraged, worn down, and unsure of what was ahead.

But that wasn't the whole story.

As we talked, she shared that she believes in God and has placed her faith in Jesus. I was able to tell her that her oldest daughter - who participates in Young Life through Shepherd - had recently renewed her own commitment to Christ. Her face lit up as she began to describe the change she has seen.

This same daughter is also supported through Shepherd's Reset Room at Arsenal Technical High School, where she receives trauma-informed care, and she participated in our Summer Youth Employment Program. Today, she is working in Shepherd's after-school program each day.

Mom shared that not long ago, her daughter was withdrawn - going straight to her room after school, disconnected from the family. Now, she is opening up, rebuilding relationships, and growing in both confidence and faith. Recently, she even asked her mom if they could start attending church together and be baptized.

Meanwhile, Shepherd is also walking alongside her younger daughter through our Education to Employment (E2E) program, helping her stay on a positive path.

What began as a simple check in call became an opportunity to meet an immediate physical need, build a deeper relationship, and witness how God is at work in a family's life.

Today, that same mother speaks with gratitude and renewed hope. Her oldest daughter was just accepted into college and is looking forward to the future. And Shepherd will continue walking alongside this family - trusting that through consistent care, trusted relationships, and the truth of the Gospel, transformation will continue.

Jackie Cissell

.....



5th Annual Day of Engagement 2026

You Can Make an Impact. Sign Up today!

5th Annual Day of Engagement

Shepherd's 5th Annual Day of Engagement is a great opportunity for small groups, families, and individuals of all ages to help with service projects in the neighborhood and impact the community – together!

Learn more and register [here](#). Anyone who RSVPs by Monday, May 11 will receive a free hat!

Save the Date

Rev. Dean & Cheryl Cowles Launching Center
"The Porch" Grand Opening Open House
Friday, July 24 • 5 - 7 pm
More details coming soon!

Young Adult Year-Long Fellowship

Our one-year **Fellows** are a big part of Shepherd accomplishing its mission and living out our values. This paid Fellowship offers opportunities for them to grow and learn with hands-on experience in ministry and includes housing. Would you share this opportunity with the college students and young adults who are a part of your church? We also have a **bridge-student** affordable higher education option for students looking at how to afford a Christian college! Students can learn more about these opportunities and apply online by visiting shepherdcommunity.org/internship.

Questions? Contact Allen Southerland at allens@shepherdcommunity.org.



breaking the cycle of poverty **shepherd**
community center