

COUNCIL NOMINEES



Tamara
Allen

My dad was transferred to Bergstrom Air Force Base in 1971, and when he retired we put down roots in Austin. I married my high school sweetheart 18 years after we first met in the Westlake band. Charles is a physics professor at Angelo State University, and I've spent my career in public service - most of it working for the state in the area of behavioral health services.

I was a senior in high school when Steve Youngdahl knocked on our front door and told us about the new congregation he was organizing in Westlake, and Shepherd of the Hills has been my home and my family ever since. Over the decades I've served in many roles, but in recent years most of my focus has been with the care-giving ministries.

Looking back, I see tremendous continuity in who we are: a welcoming, supportive, and generous community seeking to live out our calling to love and serve all of God's children. **I feel such gratitude to have the opportunity to serve on the Council during this period of transition, and I feel called to continue in this role as we complete the transition and begin writing the next chapter of our life together.**



John
Robertson

I'm John Robertson. My wife, Melissa and I are native Texans and we are raising two amazing daughters, Keaton (13) and Natalie (10). We've enjoyed living in South Austin for the past 15 years and have been members of ShepHills for 9 of those.

After two decades of a career in Marketing and Operations for the Senior Living Industry, Melissa and I decided to start a new path by opening our own independent insurance brokerage. We launched the agency in August of 2023.

I enjoy watching my Dallas sports teams, traveling with the family, trivia games, playing softball and comedy. Life is busy and we are enjoying the ride.

I've enjoyed serving on the Shepherd of the Hills Church Council for the past two years and I would be honored to serve another term. **I feel this is one of the best ways I can use my talents to serve the people of ShepHills. I enjoyed being a part of such a wonderful group of people.**



Denise
Seidel

My name is Denise Seidel. I'm a lifelong Lutheran - in part, because my dad was a Lutheran Pastor...at least that's where it started! I graduated from the University of Kansas with a bachelor's degree and then attended graduate school there and earned an Educational Specialist degree in School Psychology. I worked in many schools, but after our second child was born, I decided to retire from the public school setting.

My husband Brad and I have three children: Andrew, Ella, and James. All three of our children were confirmed here at Shepherd of the Hills. I am currently part of the Stephen ministry team here at ShepHills and sometimes play the flute during worship.

Since my time joining church council, we have navigated a transition period, a retirement, and a call to a new associate pastor. This is a fantastic group of leaders who have worked well together throughout many changes. It has been my privilege to serve alongside these members on council. **I believe that by serving a second term, my time and talents can continue to support a smooth and thoughtful process, building on the work we've done together.** I look forward to seeing what God has planned next and using my experience to benefit our church as we enter this new chapter.



Michael
Watt

I am Michael Watt. I moved to Austin from Northern California with my family in 1997. My wife, Ann, and I joined Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in 1998, and our children, Brian and Lauren, were confirmed here. I am currently in the second year of my two year term on Council, serving now as Chairman. I previously spent three years on Council with Pastor Steve and three years on the Butterfly Preschool Board, as well as two different rotations on the Finance Committee.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving with Pastor Lauren on Council for these past two years and am willing to serve for another two years as we continue to help guide her transition to Senior Pastor with an Associate Pastor under her leadership.

I am currently employed by VWater, a next generation water treatment company. I have previous experience with several SaaS companies and with the high tech industry with companies like Tech Data, Dell Financial Services and Hewlett-Packard.

I love being outdoors, golfing, hiking, biking, and snow skiing. I also enjoy engaging in conversations about challenging topics and seek to learn and grow every year of my life.