Friendly Messenger

November 2026

Beloved Sardis,

Reformation is something more than just to remember or celebrate, we remember the courage and faith of those who came before us. We remember Martin Luther and the call to return to the heart of the Gospel: that we are saved by grace through faith, not by our own works, but through the gift of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ that call us to make disciples by love and relationship.

But the Reformation is more than a moment in history that we remember once a year. It is a living reminder that God's love continues to work in us, through us, and among us. The Church is always being called back to Christ, back to grace, and back to the love that holds us together as the body of Christ.

Reformation reminds us to ask whether our lives, our words, and our actions reflect the love of Christ. Are we loving our neighbors, welcoming the stranger, caring for the hurting, and sharing the grace we ourselves have received? Our hope does not rest in our perfection or our traditions, but in Christ, whose love continues to shape and renew us.

And that love is what keeps the Reformation alive.

We see this love at work in the life of Sardis whenever we come together as one church, the body of Christ. When we take time to encourage a fellow member, offer a prayer to someone facing a difficult season, welcome someone who may feel like a stranger, or serve a neighbor in need, we become living witnesses to the Gospel. These simple acts may seem small, but they reflect the transforming love of Jesus. They remind us that being the body of Christ is not simply about gathering in the same place; it is about caring for one another and carrying Christ's love beyond our church doors.

The glory of Christ shines when we forgive one another, extend grace, and make room for others to experience the love of God. As the Church, we are not the source of this love. We are its recipients and witnesses. We gather around the Word and Sacraments to receive the gifts of Christ, and then we are sent into the world to share those gifts with others.

Beloveds, the Reformation is not over because God's work in us is not over. There is still healing to be done, love to be shared, forgiveness to be offered, and neighbors to be served. May Sardis continue to be a congregation where God's grace is experienced, Christ's love is shared, and the Holy Spirit continually reforms our hearts to reflect the One we serve.

This Reformation season, let us give thanks for those who have gone before us and for the grace that sustains us still. May God strengthen our faith, deepen our love for ALL, and guide us to live not for our own glory, but for the glory and love of Jesus Christ.

God loves you and so do I,
Pastor Oscar Shepherd

YOUTH

Youth Christmas Service "Sound the bells, the Savior's born" will be Sunday December 20th at 6 pm. If you are interested in participating in this service, please let April Fulbright or Nena Babb know ASAP. Practice/review of service will be during Sunday School in December.



Save the Date! Wednesday, November 25.

The Thanksgiving Eve service will be held on Wednesday November 25, with Sardis hosting this year. We will be providing soup with the other participating churches bringing sandwiches, drinks and deserts. A sign up sheet for bringing soup for the meal will be placed in the Narthex beginning November 1. We are requesting volunteers for 10 pots of soup and as we normally have a large crowd. If you have any questions please seek out a member of the committee.

Thank you

The **Fred T. Foard Senior Citizens** group meet on the first Wednesday of each month for lunch and a program. The seniors will meet in November on the 4th at Plateau. Annual picnic, do not bring covered dish). All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



Music and Worship Committee 1 Question Survey

Several members of the Congregation have approached us about our Christmas Eve Service and the time it begins. They have stated that they feel it begins too late for many of our members. The Music and Worship Committee would like you to complete a 1 question survey on November 15th while voting on the budget and council, nominating, and scholarship committees. The survey would be similar to the following:
Please check your preference on the 15th.

_____ I prefer to leave the Christmas Eve Service at 10:30 with music beginning 15 minutes before.

_____ I prefer to change the time of the Christmas Eve Service to 8:00 with music beginning 15 minutes earlier.

Sincerely,
Music and Worship Committee

Congratulations to Cash Fulbright for receiving his Junior Black Belt 1st Dan from the World Kadake-Ryu Martial Art Association in October. Cash trains at Kim Duncan Martial Arts Studio in Lincolnton.



Sardis Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
September 20, 2026

In Attendance: Gene Biggerstaff, Joe Biggerstaff, Jon Gladden, Darrell Jarrett, Rick Johnson, Mike Midgett, Zachary Stuart, Kristin Teague, Jennifer Whitener, Tim Whitener and Pastor Oscar Shepherd

Gene brought the meeting to order at 7:00pm with 10 council members and Pastor Oscar in attendance.

Mike provided the devotions and opening prayer. He spoke about the struggles we all experience with sin and that we should stop pretending that we can fix ourselves and let Jesus show us the way.

The minutes for the two meetings held in August were reviewed with no changes or additions noted. Jennifer brought forward a motion to accept the minutes as written and Joe provided a second to the motion. All were in favor of the motion.

The financial reports for August were reviewed. Gene asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the August reports. No concerns were brought forward. Joe brought forward a motion to accept the financial reports as submitted and Kristin provided a second. All were in favor of the motion.

Pastor Oscar provided a summary of his activities over the past month:

- Described encounters with 4 individuals at our blessings box and what a benefit it is to the community. He encouraged all of these individuals to join us for a service at Sardis.
- Praised the work Sardis does with the backpack program.
- Provided communion and conversation with multiple shut-in/homebound members during the past month.
- Provided an overview of his activities serving as a local representative for TEC.

OLD BUSINESS

- Security Cameras: After multiple unsuccessful attempts to secure an electrician to provide power and install the cameras, the Property committee brought forward a recommendation that battery powered cameras be installed instead. The Property and Technology committees will work together to order, install and maintain the cameras. Updates will be provided to the council as this project moves forward.
- Church signs: The signs have been ordered and a 50% deposit has been submitted. The estimated date for installation is early November.

NEW BUSINESS

- Room in the Inn: Jennifer gave a brief overview of this program and stated that the leader would like to make a short presentation of the program at a service sometime in October. She will work with the Pastor and the Worship and Music committee to coordinate this.

AED: A grant has been approved through Grant.com to help with the cost of this equipment (approx. $1,500.00). Jon made a motion to purchase the AED along with any accessories needed. Zachary provided a second to the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Kristin will work with Jane M. to move this purchase forward asap.

The Safety committee will prepare a brief information/training session to present to the congregation once the AED is received. The presentation will also include Fire/Tornado exit plans, etc.

Up-coming events:

Propst Fire Department Fall Festival: Will be held on September 27th from 2pm – 6pm. April and Donna B. will coordinate having a booth representing Sardis at the festival.

Golden Age banquet: Will be held on October 11th following the service. This event is for individuals 75 and older. WELCA will organize the banquet and the youth will help serve the meal.

Trunk or Treat: Will be held on October 31st. Everyone is encouraged to have a trunk and come dressed in their best Halloween costume.

Thanksgiving Eve service: This will be held at Sardis this year. The Worship & Music committee will work on the planning for this event.

Youth Christmas play: April F. is looking for ideas for an alternative option versus a traditional children's play since we have a limited number of youth at Sardis. A "Cookies & Carols" format that would use hymns to tell the Christmas story was suggested and well received by everyone. The Youth and Worship & Music committees will work together on a plan/format for the Christmas program.

Tim brought up several items from the Property committee:

He asked about the plans for the extra gravel remaining at the site of the outdoor worship space. It was decided that we should keep this for now in case it is needed at a later date.

He is looking into what is required to paint the ceiling in the Narthex.

With no other business to discuss, Joe made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Kristin seconded the motion and the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Darrell Jarrett is the church council contact for September and Rick Johnson will provide devotions at the next meeting scheduled for Sunday, October 11th at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Midgett (Sardis church council secretary)

Information for NL's and Bulletins

Committee meetings or events by the congregation should be communicated to Jane directly. This needs to be done in time for newsletters (Wednesday before the last Sunday in the month), or the bulletin (by Wednesday evening each week.)

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1 **ALL SAINTS DAY** **Bring Food for Blessings Box** 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 **Annual Congregational Meeting opens Budget presented and nominations are open to the floor** Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 5:00 WELCA	2	3	4 12:00 FTF Seniors at Plateau, Annual Picnic	5 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	6 Pastor's Sabbath	7
8 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 7:00 Church Council	9 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	10	11 **VETERANS DAY**	12 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	13 Pastor's Sabbath	14
15 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 **Continuation of congregational Meeting and Voting** Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live Golden Age Banquet immediately after Worship Service	16	17	18	19 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	20 Pastor's Sabbath	21
22 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 2:00 Trinity Ridge	23 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	24	25 Thanksgiving Eve Service Sardis hosting 6:00 Soup and Sandwich. (Sardis to furnish soup) Sign up sheet in lobby	26 **THANKSGIVING** OFFICE CLOSED No Chancel Choir Practice	27 Pastor's Sabbath	28
29 **ADVENT CHANGE FOR CHANGE SUNDAY** :30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 6:30 LMM	30		**Inclement Weather decisions will be announced on our Phone Tree by Saturday evening or early Sunday morning. Please make sure your phone information is up to date with the Secretary. In the event of a Tornado during service please exit Sanctuary and proceed to the hallways, (1) back of Sanctuary to the left and (1) is the Fellowship Hall to the right of the Narthex. Remain in hallways, not in rooms**			

BIRTHDAYS

November

11/16 Evan Lail
11/19 Rhiannon Farnsworth
11/20 Andy Ruggles
11/21 Rebecca J. Ritz
Ray Whitener
11/22 Tryston Sylvester
11/24 Osama Yousef
11/27 Tommy Hoyle
11/28 Megan Roseman
Roger Teague

Anniversaries
Bennie & Edna Fulbright 11-18
Joe & Phyllis Biggerstaff 11-23

COUNCIL CONTACT ASSISTING MINISTER

Zachary Stuart

USHERS

Rick Johnson/Darrell Jarrett

COMMUNION PREPARATION / CLEAN – UP
Sharon Sigman
Kristin Teague
Offering Counter: Dwayne W.

VOLUNTEER November	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
ALTAR FLOWERS	Tim & Barbara	Rita Lutz	Ray Whitener	Sandra Roseman	Mike & Felicia```
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER	Shuford/Marshall	Rick/Joe	Graysen/Ian	Marahall/Shuford	Ian/Cayden
COMM. ASSISTANT	Bruce S.	Ben W.	Gene B.	Ray W.	Marshall W.
GREETERS	Benny & Edna	Shuford/Roger	Annette/Kristin	Kay/Roger	Bruce/Rita
LAY READER	Olivia S.	Gene B.	Jennifer W.	Jow B.	Ray W.
TECHNOLOGY	Terry Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry Ben,Joe,Samuel
SECURITY	Ralph S.	Ben W.	Darrell J.	Roger T.	Ralph S.
SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER	Combined—April	K-6 Sherrie/Mike 7-12 Nena	K-6 April 7-12 Rick	K-6 Sherrie/Mike 7-12 Dawn	K-6 Susan 7-12 Nena
BACKPACK PROGRAM	11/5 Roger & Marilyn	11/12 Dwayne & Barbara	11/19 Mike & Sherrie	11-23 Monday Joe & Phyllis	12/3 Mildred
FRONT YARD SIGN	Tim W.	Nena B.	Jennifer W.	Tim W.	Nena B.
MEAL DEL.	10/31 Donna	7th no meal	14th Nena	21st no meal	28th Sylvia
BLESSINGS BOX	Jon's Class	Disciples of Christ	Church Council	LMM	Jon's Class

Sardis Lutheran Church; Sardis Lutheran Church | Facebook ; https://instagram.com/sardislutheranchurch...

If you have a birthday or anniversary and they are not listed please let the office know. Thank you.

OUR MISSION

Sardis Evangelical Lutheran Church serves together as disciples of Christ, teaches the word to invite people into a life of knowing Jesus, encourages each other in faith and personal mission through reaching out to the needs of the community and individuals.

REMEMBER: you can find this NL, the weekly calendar and Sunday Sermons on the website: https://sardislutheran.com/ **mark it as a favorite and check it out often.**

SARDIS LUTHERAN CHURCH
6103 W NC 10 HWY
HICKORY NC 28602



Sardis Leaders Contacts Pastor: Rev. Matthew Oscar Shepherd (C) 828-228-3078 pastor@sardislutheran.com Pastor Office Hours Wednesday,11am – 3pm Remember, you can always call the Pastor anytime from 8am to 7am in case of emergency.
Organist/Director of Music: Nena Babb
Council Chair: Gene Biggerstaff (C) 828-381-0039 genebiggerstaff@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer: Jane Moretz, (C) 828-302-8458 secretary@sardislutheran.com