

Friendly Messenger

JUNE 2026

The Spirit was blowing so I thought I better listen.

Beloved Sardis Church,

As summer begins and calendars quickly fill with vacations, camps, cookouts, family gatherings, and travel, we know summer has arrived. The days are longer, the schedules fuller, and already many of us are also looking toward the sky hoping and praying for rain. The ground is dry, gardens are thirsty, and the earth itself reminds us of something important: we are not as self-sufficient as we sometimes think ourselves to be.

Rain has a way of interrupting us.

It changes plans, celebrations, graduations. It delays games. It rains on parades, so to speak. It cuts across our carefully organized schedules and reminds us that creation does not move according to our calendars. And yet, rain is also a gift. It cleanses. It nourishes. It sustains life. Without it, the world becomes dry and brittle.

Perhaps that is why rain can also become a holy reminder for us.

In the busyness of summer, when life becomes crowded with movement and noise, God continually calls us back to Shabbat — to stop, to be still, and to rest. Not simply inactivity, but holy rest. Sacred pause. Time to breathe deeply of God's grace and remember who and whose we are.

We are people washed in the waters of baptism.

In those waters we were marked and named, claimed by Christ forever, and set aside for God's purposes in the world. Before we were workers, travelers, planners, consumers, or even church members, we were beloved children of God.

And we still are!

Summer can tempt us to hurry from one thing to the next without ever slowing down long enough to notice God's presence among us. But Christ continually invites us beside still waters. To rest. To listen. To remember.

And from that place of rest, God sends us back out again — not exhausted and empty, but renewed — to be the hands and feet of Christ for a thirsty world. A world desperate for compassion. For mercy. For gentleness. For grace. For radical love.

So when the rains come this summer, perhaps pause for a moment. Listen to the sound against the roof or the pavement. Smell the freshness it brings. Let it remind you of the baptism you were washed in and the grace that continues to fall upon you day after day.

May this summer be one not only of activity, but of renewal. And may the love of Christ pour through you like rain upon dry ground for thirsty souls!

God loves you and so do I,
Pastor Oscar Shepherd

A Graduation Blessing

By Barbara D. MacAdam

Embarking on a journey which began some time ago, how could you have imagined all the things you'd come to know. You learned to use each challenge as an opportunity, to overcome each problem—despite adversity. It wasn't always easy keeping up with things at school, but YOU held on to your beliefs, and followed "the golden rule." You found your voice and chose a path that honors who you are, and that, I think, may be your greatest lesson learned thus far. For no one could be prouder of the person you've

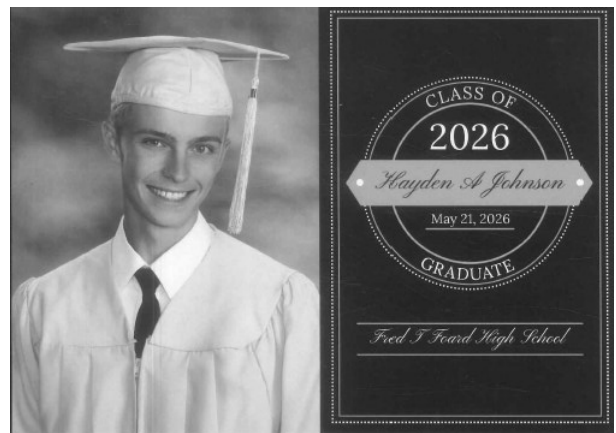
become, and that is why we're confident that the best is yet to come. May you never waste a moment wishing life was not unfair. Rather use the gifts God gave to you, to change the world out there. Your Graduation signals us that you are on your way. So spread your wings and fly my dear, Forever and a day!

***Samuel Biggerstaff:** Son of Joe and Phyllis Biggerstaff. Graduating from Catawba Valley Community College with an Associates in Arts Degree, with Honors. Phi Theta Kappa. Plans to attend a 4 year college to complete a Bachelor's degree in Psychology.*

***Cooper E. Carroll:** Son of Ethan and Heather Carroll, Grandson of Rick & Patsy Johnson and Great Grandson of Betty Jo Weaver. Cooper will be leaving Banoak Elementary and going to Jacob Fork Middle School in the fall. Cooper played basketball and baseball for the Banoak Recreation during his elementary school years. He loves fishing and hunting.*

***Kammie Gladden:** Granddaughter of Hope Gladden. Graduating from NC State University. Kammie received her degree in 3 years graduating with a B.A. in Criminology.*

***Hayden A. Johnson:** Son of Chris and Dakota Johnson, Grandson of Rick & Patsy Johnson and Great Grandson of Betty Jo Weaver. Cadet in school JROTC Program for three years. His senior year he was Executive Officer of the JROTC and in the Color Guard. He was also in the Rifle Club and Raiders Club. He has enlisted in the US Marine Corp and if all goes as planned he will go to boot camp the end of this summer.*



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 June on the 3rd at Grace. All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



Gabriel Levett Shepherd: Son of Matthew Oscar and Olivia Shepherd. Graduating from Alexander Central High School. He received the President's Scholarship at the University of Mount Olive, which he will attend for an Aviation and Business Management dual degree.

Dr. Kristin A. Teague: Daughter of Roger and Marilyn Teague. Graduating from the NC Synod-ELCA. Receiving honors for a Commissioned Lay Minister (CLM) or licensed Lay Minister (LLM)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Sardis Lutheran Youth
BBQ To Go Plates
Fundraiser
For National ELCA
Youth Gathering**

**AUGUST 8TH
11 AM- 3 PM**

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR DAY

SATURDAY, MAY 30
12:00 PM-3:00PM

AT TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH IN VALE

Come join us for a fun-filled, family-friendly afternoon! All are welcome!

Activities and resources will be available for all ages. Stop in, grab some lunch and check it out! Featuring the West Lincoln Library STEAM bus!

FREE HOT DOG & HAMBURGER LUNCH
**WHILE SUPPLIES LAST

ACTIVITIES

- West Lincoln Library STEAM bus
- Donation drive (bring/take gently used items)
- Bake sale
- Fix-It clinic (bring small appliances, electronics, toys, clothing that need a small fix and we will do our best to help!)
- Kids activities
- Local businesses/organizations participating
- Pray with a local pastor
- Free blood pressure checks

DOOR PRIZES!!!

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.)



**SUMMER CONCERT
ON THE LAWN
SARDIS LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

WILLOW CREEK

JULY 11th 5 PM

**Hamburger/Hotdog
Cookout**

Donations Welcomed

Offering will be taken to benefit Sardis Youth and Advisors who will be going to the National Youth Gathering in 2027. This is a free event and will be open to anyone who wants to attend. Thank you to the Sardis Men's Group and to the Evangelism Committee for your sponsorship.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1 VBS continues till the 4th	2	3 12:00 FTF Seniors at Grace	4	5 Pastor's Sab- bath	6
7 Bring Food for Blessings Box 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 6:30 LMM	8 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	9	10	11	12 Pastor's Sab- bath	13
14 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 7:00 Church Council	15	16	17	18	19 Pastor's Sab- bath	20
21 FATHER'S DAY 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live	22 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	23	24	25	26 Pastor's Sab- bath	27 Tubing/ Canoeing— Catawba River Outdoors, Morganton NC
28 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 3:00 Trinity Ridge 6:30 LMM	29	30				

BIRTHDAYS

6/1	Meredith Gladden		
6/2	Leevada Young Wood		
6/3	Chelsea Midgett	6/27	Michelle F. Little
6/7	Rylan Johnson		Rita Lutz
6/10	Jamie Shiffman		Bruce Sigman
6/12	Wayne Jarrett	6/30	Phyllis Biggerstaff
	Lexi E. Little		Rebecca Wilson
	Roger Lutz		
6/13	Kay Whitener	Anniversaries:	
	Margaret Ham	Bryan & Phyllis Hood 6-1	
6/20	Daniel Whitener	Oscar & Olivia Shepherd 6-1	
	Marshall Whitener	Mike & Sherrie Midgett 6-10	
6/23	Garry Richard	Mike & Felicia Hollar 6-16	
6/24	Alan Jarrett	Bruce & Sharon Sigman 6-16	
6/25	Betty Nail	Al & Sylvia King 6-19	
	Kerby W. Smyre	Gene & Donna Biggerstaff 6-29	
	Greg Smyre		

COUNCIL CONTACT ASSISTING MINISTER

Robin Stuart Jon Gladden

USHERS

Darrell J. / Bruce S.

**COMMUNION PREPARATION /
CLEAN – UP**

Marilyn T.

Donna B.

Offering Counter: Dwayne W.

<i>VOLUNTEER June</i>	7th	14th	21st	28th
ALTAR FLOWERS	Dwayne & Barbara W.	Leevada W.	Rick & Patsy J.	Terry & Jill B.
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER	Hayden/Cayden	Gabriel/Ian	Marshall/Ray	Paisley/Hayden
COMM. ASSISTANT	Sandra R.	Dawn C.	Tim W.	Marshall W.
GREETERS	Kay/Roger	Bruce/Rita	Dianne/Shuford	Benny/Edna
LAY READER	Jennifer W.	Joe B.	Dawn C.	Tim W.
TECHNOLOGY	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel
SECURITY	Ben W.	Rick J.	Darrell J.,	Zachary S.
SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER	EL Sherrie/Mike MH Rick	EL Donna MH Kristin	EL Hayden MH Nena	EL April MH Dawn
FRONT YARD SIGN	Tim W.	Nena B.	Jennifer W.	Tim W.
MEAL DEL.	13th Susan	20th No Meal	27th Phyllis B.	July 4th No Meal
BLESSINGS BOX	LMM	Jon's Class	Disciples of Christ	Church Council

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: Kenan Chronister (C) 828-582-3489 kenanthemusician@gmail.com

Council Chair: Gene Biggerstaff (C) 828-381-0039 genebiggerstaff@gmail.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Jane Moretz, (C) 828-302-8458 secretary@sardislutheran.com