

Friendly Messenger

October 2026

*“For flesh and blood has not **revealed THIS** to you but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on **THIS** rock I will build my **CHURCH**, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.” Matthew 16:17–18*

Isn't it interesting, that the Word says that Jesus taught in their Synagogues, as was his custom? And not churches?

The word Jesus uses in Matthew 16 conveys a deeper meaning, abiding, and relationship that transcends buildings. Jesus says “Ecclesia” (or ekklesia). It is a Greek word that means an assembly, gathering, or “called-out” group of people. Called-out!

How are we called-out? That phrase in itself carries some baggage for us, doesn't it? And not one in a positive connotation. It means to be called to the floor, to be challenged, or to having one's perceived “authority” questioned.

But this is not what Jesus is meaning in this word, or in that understanding that we call Church, the body of Christ, for whom all authority lies in loving kindness.

We are called out to be the body. We are called out of our comfort zone. We are called out to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We are called out to be holy, set apart, a city on a hill, a gathering, an assembly of His Body of love, mercy, and grace. To all the nations, all peoples.

This is not an authority of power or position over or above. It is an authority, a permission—to be centered in, to be guided by, to be filled with a love that transforms us and those around us in our community—into the assembly, into the Kingdom of God/Heaven.

Christ's authority always leads with loving permission. “Let there be light,” “Let Us create them in our image.” The God who is Love, who made us one in the Body of Christ and calls us out! Marked, named, and claimed to love and be loved, ever growing and becoming in that Permission and promise of His Body. Jesus.

So this month, let us remember whose authority we walk in, whose permission of Love we grow in, and who and how we are called out to be the church, the Body of Christ, into a world that is so thirsty, hungry, and in such need of the good news of Jesus Christ.

God loves you and so do I,

Pastor Oscar Shepherd

Sunday, October 4 at 2:00 pm

Invite your neighbors and friends to have their animal blessed. Animals should be caged or leashed.



St. Francis of Assisi died 800 years ago on October 3. He was born into a wealthy family but rejected those ways and lived a life of poverty. He was also a leader of the movement of evangelical [poverty](#) in the early 13th century. His evangelical zeal, consecration to poverty, [charity](#), and personal [charisma](#) drew thousands of followers. Francis's devotion to the human [Jesus](#) and his desire to follow Jesus' example reflected and reinforced important developments in [medieval](#) spirituality. In 1979 Pope [John Paul II](#) recognized him as a patron saint of [ecology](#). He is also revered as the patron saint of animals.



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Save the Date! Wednesday, November 25.

Sardis is the host of the 2026 Thanksgiving Eve Service. Join our neighbors in thanking God for the many blessings He has provided over the past year.

Soup and Sandwich Supper begins at 6pm with the service beginning at 7pm. As host, we are to provide SOUP. Get those crockpots and recipes ready!!

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 October, on the 7th at Sardis (bring drinks). All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



From the Social Ministry Committee

A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped pack lunches for the unhoused on Homecoming Sunday. On the Monday after Homecoming members of the committee took one hundred and twenty (120) lunches to The Hickory Soup Kitchen, and another 120 (120) lunches to The Corner Table in Newton. Both organizations were incredibly grateful. Indeed, Sardis had great food and fellowship on that day and thanks to your efforts, we also used “Our Hands to do God’s Work.”

The months of October and November are when Sardis collect wintry weather clothing for the unhoused. Please go through your closets and gather up any gently used coats, sweaters, hoodies, gloves, and hats that you or members of your family no longer wear. Cold weather apparel is needed for all ages and sizes. Items can be brought to the narthex or placed in the Backpack/Blessing Box room (the last room on the front side of the Fellowship wing.) The donations will be split between The Corner Table and The Hickory Soup Kitchen. Those items are taken to those two locations by members of the committee because they GIVE the clothing to those in need versus selling the items to them.

The Committee will also be taking donations of new socks. As with the clothing all sizes are needed.



Annual Golden Age Banquet is coming!!!!

The Sardis WELCA will be hosting the annual

***Golden Age Banquet
Sunday, October 18
12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall***

A gourmet meal of country style steak, chicken pie, green beans, cream potatoes, cranberry salad, slaw, rolls and a variety of desserts will be prepared by the women of the church. All those 75 years young are invited – even urged – to attend. This meal is to recognize and thank our senior members for all the foundational work they have done and continue to do at Sardis. Mark your calendars.

PS All chauffeurs are invited to enjoy the meal as a thank you for providing transportation on a regular basis.





TRUNK or TREAT



SARDIS LUTHERAN CHURCH HWY 10 WEST

OCTOBER 31 530-700 PM

HOTDOGS & CANDY, BEST TRUNK AWARD



Trunk or Treat - Saturday October 31st

Please plan to set up your trunk for our annual Trunk or Treat, we will again have the "Best Trunk" award with one of a kind trophy so start getting creative. This event is an opportunity for our entire congregation to join together and give back to the community. If you are unable to host a trunk, join with others and help at their trunk or donate candy! Candy donations can be placed in Orange Tote in Narthex.

WELCA

WELCA THANKS YOU for your generous donation for your 5th Sunday donation to Change for Change! Over \$180.00 was donated. The NC WELCA will be donating the money raised statewide to Fuller Disaster Rebuilders and the Robeson County Church & Community Center. There is ONE more 5th Sunday to raise money. Bring any loose change or paper money to church on November 29th. Thank you for your generosity!!



BIBLE



THINK FAST

The first player to name 3 answers for each category wins!

Disciples of Jesus	_____	_____	_____
Books in the Old Testament	_____	_____	_____
3 of the Ten Commandments	_____	_____	_____
Kings in the Bible	_____	_____	_____
Cities in the Bible	_____	_____	_____
Plagues of Egypt	_____	_____	_____
Animals in the Bible	_____	_____	_____
Beatitudes	_____	_____	_____
Fruits of the Holy Spirit	_____	_____	_____
Parables of Jesus	_____	_____	_____
Named Angels	_____	_____	_____
Women in the Bible	_____	_____	_____
Names of God	_____	_____	_____
Books that start with 'J'	_____	_____	_____
Items gifted to Jesus	_____	_____	_____



Sisters in Christ **Fall Gathering**



October 10th at 3 o'clock
in the St. Stephens Lutheran Church, ELCA
Fellowship Hall

Hosted by the Thursday Women's Ministry Group.



ALL WOMEN & GIRLS INVITED!

Come for a relaxing afternoon filled with refreshments served by the Men's Ministry followed by musical entertainment by the talented Pastor Michael Collins!

Dress is casual.

Grab your friends, mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters, nieces, aunts, co-workers, neighbors to join us!

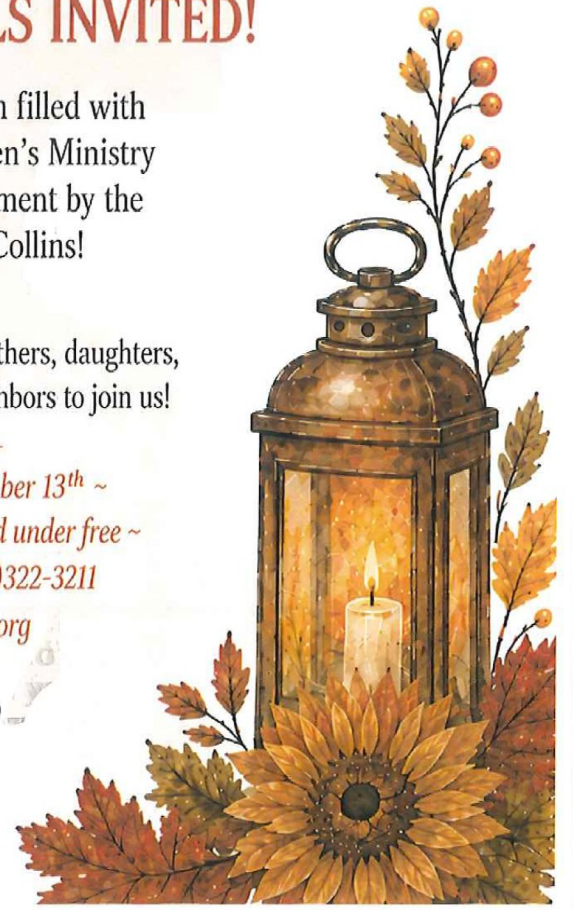


~ Tickets will go on sale September 13th ~

~ Women - \$ 5 ~ Girls - ages 10 and under free ~

Contact for Purchase: Call (828)322-3211

or Email office@sselcahky.org



All proceeds will go to
Safe Harbor

Sardis Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
August 9, 2026

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

Gene brought the meeting to order at 7:00pm with 12 council members and Pastor Oscar in attendance.

Kristin Teague provided the devotions and opening prayer. She stressed working together and blending the abilities of each other to reach our goals stating that “Christianity and life are team sports”.

The church council meeting scheduled for July 12th was cancelled due to no agenda items to discuss.

The next order of business was a review of the monthly financial reports for July. Gene asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the July reports. Tim asked about a line item for “Outstanding disbursements 1177 for Republic Services for \$872.75. Gene will discuss with Dwayne and provide an explanation for this charge. No other issues were noted from the financial reports.

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

- He described a pastoral visit to Alan Fulbright and encouraged others to visit him and deliver food to him whenever possible.

- He provided an overview of the mission trip to western North Carolina for hurricane Helene recovery and stressed that there is still plenty of work to do.

- We celebrated the life of Rick Lutz.

- Discussed the youth BBQ fundraiser stating that it was a huge success and specifically thanked April Fulbright for her work with the fundraiser.

- Stated that he has been working with 4 individuals in the community providing pastoral support and has encouraged them to attend services at Sardis.

OLD BUSINESS

- Security Cameras: The Property committee received a quote of \$15k from Precision Electric for the electrical work required for this project. Mike has another company scheduled to provide an additional quote for this work.

- Church signs: Per feedback from the Technology committee, there is no significant cost reduction for slightly smaller screens (approx. \$37k). This project will be tabled until funding becomes available.

- National Youth Gathering (2027): Kristin reported that the cost for priority registration is \$450 per person (4 youth and 2 adults). April Fulbright provided a list of itemized costs for the entire group with the total amount needed being between \$8k - \$12k. The summer concert raised approx. \$850 and the BBQ fundraiser netted approx. \$1,100.

NEW BUSINESS

Homecoming:

Will be held on Sunday, 9/13/2026.

A “pot-luck” meal will be held outside, weather permitting.

Pastor Anna Merritt will be the guest speaker with Frank serving as the organist.

Everyone is encouraged to help with bagging lunch bags for the “unhoused” after the meal.

Tim challenged everyone to invite guests, family friends, etc. to attend Homecoming festivities.

Up-coming events:

The Regional NC WELCA committees will meet at Sardis on 8/15.

Senior Citizens group will meet at Sardis on 10/18. (75 & older)

School supplies collection will be held during August for Banoak & Blackburn Middle Schools. Ray W. and Rita L. have Thrivent grants to help fund this.

Coat donations will be collected during October and November.

Jennifer gave an overview of the “Room at the Inn” ministry program sponsored by First UMC Newton. This ministry provides an emergency shelter to those in need during the winter months when the temperature drops below 25 degrees. Volunteers are needed to help set-up, cook and stay overnight. Training is provided to all volunteers. Anyone interested in this program should notify Jennifer.

Kristin brought up a concern from a member of the congregation concerning the Guidelines for Funeral Services which currently state that “Military honors, fraternal tributes and rites, and organizational rituals... are discouraged...” Zachary will take this concern to the Worship and Music committee for review, discussion and possible modifications to the policy that the committee determines are needed.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED): Jennifer asked about the status of obtaining an AED. There are currently no funds allocated to purchase this device. Kristin had reported that grants may be available in 2027 to fund this. Kristin will continue to update the council as she gets more information.

Safety Team: Zach reported that the volunteers for the Sardis safety team will receive training in first aid, CPR, fire safety, AED, etc. on 9/5/26.

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

Mike Midgett is the church council contact for September and will provide devotions at the next meeting scheduled for Sunday, September 13th 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.)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
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.				1 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	2 Pastor's Sabbath	3
4 Bring Food for Blessings Box 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 2:00 Blessing of the Animals 5:00 WELCA	5 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	6	7 12:00 FTF Senior Citizens at Sardis...bring drinks 6:00 Youth Committee meeting	8 6:00 Worship and Music Committee meet 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	9 Pastor's Sabbath	10
11 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 7:00 Church Council	12	13	14	15 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	16 Pastor's Sabbath	17
18 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live Golden Age Banquet immediately after Worship Service	19 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	20	21	22 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	23 Pastor's Sabbath	24
25 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 2:00 Trinity Ridge 6:30 LMM	26	27	28	29 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	30 Pastor's Sabbath	31 HALLOWEEN 5-7 Trunk or Treat

BIRTHDAYS

COUNCIL CONTACT ASSISTING MINISTER

10/1 Daniel Rueff
 10/7 Lauren Speagle
 10/13 Jill Bledsoe
 Evelyn Fulbright
 Alisa Truitt
 Dwayne Whitener
 10/21 Donna Biggerstaff
 10/22 Ben Fulbright
 10/23 Donald Fulbright
 10/24 Elaine Evington
 10/25 Bryan Hood
 10/26 Kathy Weaver

Darrell Jarrett Rick J. 4th and 18th
 Ben W/ 11th and 25th

USHERS

Shuford/Marilyn

**COMMUNION PREPARATION /
 CLEAN – UP**

Jane M.
 Sandra R.

Offering Counter: Dwayne W.

Anniversaries:

Steven & Ashley Yow 10/2
Teresa & David Starkey 10/3
Ben & April Fulbright 10/11

<i>VOLUNTEER October</i>	4th	11th	18th	25th
ALTAR FLOWERS	Andy & Anita R	Evan L.	Gene & Donna B.	Jane M.
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER	Tryston/Shuford	Ray/Caden	Marshall/Joe	Graysen/Shuford
COMM. ASSISTANT	Tim W.	Gene B.	Mike M.	Bruce S.
GREETERS	Annette/Kristin	Kay/Roger	Bruce/Rita	Dianne/Marilyn
LAY READER	Marshall W.	Dawn C.	Tim W.	Nena B.
TECHNOLOGY	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel	Terry,Ben,Joe,Samuel
SECURITY	Zachary S.	Roger T.	Ralph S.	Bruce S.
SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER	K-6 Susan 7-12 Rick	K-6 Sherrie/Mike 7-12 Nena	K-6 April 7-12 Dawn	K-6 Susan 7-12 Dawn
BACKPACK PROGRAM	3rd Joe & Phyllis	10th Mildred Fulbright	17th Gene & Donna	23rd Tim & Barbara
FRONT YARD SIGN	Jennifer W.	Tim w.	Nena B.	Jennifer W.
MEAL DEL.	3rd Phyllis B.	10th no meal	17th Nena B.	24th no meal
BLESSINGS BOX	Jon's Class	Disciples of Christ	Church Council	LMM

[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