

# Friendly Messenger

JANUARY 2025

***Dear Beloved Church Family,***

**Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year!**

**Christmas reminds us of the glorious light that entered the world through Jesus—light that brings hope, peace, and salvation.**

***Christmas Eve we read. John 1:5 , "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." What a beautiful promise to carry with us as we step into the new year. No matter what challenges or uncertainties lie ahead, we can move forward with confidence because the light of Christ guides our path.***

**This Christmas season, we are reminded that we are not just recipients of God's light—we are called to be bearers of it and Christ. Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "You are the light of the world." As we reflect on His birth and the joy it brings, let us also commit to sharing His love and light remembering the invitation to live out the Advent themes of hope joy peace and love, all year long.**

**May this coming year be a season of growth, blessing, and love in our church and in our lives. Together, let's shine brightly for Christ, knowing that His light in us can transform the world.**

**I would also like to thank you all, for the amazing cards and gifts to our family, as well as the generous gift from the church! Words truly cannot express our thanks and gratitude to God for all of you, your love, and generosity! Thank you!**

***God loves you and so do I!***  
***Pastor Oscar***

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 January on the 2nd Wednesday the 8th at Wesley Chapel. All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



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## **THE FRIENDLY MESSENGER**

Effective with the January NL, copies will only be placed in the mailboxes of those without an email address and anyone that requested on the Time and Talent sheets. Those boxes are marked with a yellow name tag. This is a recommendation of the Finance Committee and approval of the Church Council in order to save on copier cost.

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### **Save the Date: 2025 Synod Assembly**

The NC Synod will convene for a business assembly at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro from **May 29–31, 2025**. This gathering will address essential matters, including the election of a new synod bishop. Key details are already available on the synod's website to support congregations and rostered ministers in their planning, with information on dates, times, costs, and pre-assembly conference meetings. The assembly webpage will continue to be updated as more details are finalized.

Registration opens on **Tuesday, January 7**.

<https://nclutheran.org/event/synoassembly-2025/>



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Thank you to my Sardis Family for acknowledging me at our Christmas Play. My work at Sardis is a joy and I love each and every one of you.

Jane

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## **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.)**

## NC Women of the ELCA One-Day Retreat

**WOMEN—Just for you!** When you read your Bible do you truly understand what you are reading? Are you biblically illiterate? Are you hungry to know and understand the God of the Bible? Reading the Bible can sometimes seem daunting. There are difficult passages, any interpretations, and so often there is little time to read thoroughly.

Jen Wilkin recognizes this and through her book provides tools to help us navigate through the Bible. *Women of the Word* gives us a blueprint for Bible literacy.

Join us and others for a one-day retreat to explore ways to make your Bible reading more fruitful. There are two locations this year. **Register by January 10, 2025.**

Check-in/Fellowship – 9:00 a.m.      Program – 9:30 a.m. until around 2:30 p.m.

\$12 Registration Fee – Includes: Continental breakfast, lunch, & program materials

Please bring your Bible!

### **Locations are:**

Mt. Zion Lutheran on February 8, 2025 with Snow date: February 22, 2025  
4420 County Home Road, Conover, NC 28613

Trinity Lutheran on February 22  
2700 Trinity Church Road, Vale, NC 28168

Pick up a Brochure in the Narthex. Registration Form included on the brochure

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## **Start the New Year with WELCA!**

**Sardis Women of the ELCA** meet bimonthly on the first Sunday of the month. In 2025 our first meeting will be on February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5pm. Join us for a devotional and business meeting. We will be planning events for the upcoming spring. Each meeting we have the opportunity to give a small offering that is used to support projects at church, in our community or at the state level. A portion of our offerings are sent to the statewide Women of the ELCA for use in carrying out the planning of retreats, committee days travel expenditures, the annual gathering, and support of the Churchwide Organization of WELCA.

Mark your calendars for meetings in February, April, June, August, October and December. We would love to have you come to one, some, or all of our meetings! We welcome new ideas and input!

## PENNIES PROJECT

WELCA would like to thank everyone who donated pennies (almost \$18.00--that's 1800 pennies!!) and other coins and bills to the Pennies Project for Sleep in Heavenly Peace. We really appreciate the **\$128.05** that was contributed by Sardis members and sent to the state WELCA treasurer. This provides lumber for beds and bedding items. THANK YOU!!

Across North Carolina, donations have been coming in from many other ELCA congregations. Since February 1, 2024, a total of \$4,985.12 has been collected and sent to the NC Women of the ELCA state treasurer. SO many beds for children!! Each bed is assembled at the child's home, and the mattress, sheets, pillows and blankets are provided with the bed. Your contribution helps make it possible for more children to sleep in beds and not on the floor. Thank You!!

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**Beginning February 1, 2025, the Pennies Project will be the Diaper Bank of North Carolina.** Here's their mission from their website [www.ncdiaperbank.org](http://www.ncdiaperbank.org)

***Our vision is every family in North Carolina will have access to basic necessities to support their dignity, health, and quality of life.***

*Most of us do not spend a lot of time thinking about diapers. But if you are a parent, grandparent, or caregiver without enough of them, they can become a major source of stress, guilt, and desperation. Public safety net programs such as The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, previously known as Food Stamps) **do not cover the purchase of diapers**, often leaving families with a difficult decision between buying diapers and other necessities with their limited funds. For families in need, something as small as a diaper can have a significant impact.*

According to their website, "Our relationships with wholesalers and corporate donors make your donated dollars go further. **For each diaper you buy at a store, we can purchase three through a wholesaler.** Diaper Bank of North Carolina is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit and our EIN is 32-0401621"

So, by raising money instead of buying diapers, we can support 3 times the number of diapers!! Let's start collecting those pennies for a collection later this year. Stay tuned!!



**NO KID SLEEPS  
ON THE FLOOR  
IN OUR TOWN!**



## Angel Tree Benefits Children from Western North Carolina

**WOW!!** Thanks to everyone who donated ALL the toys, games, puzzles, and books for BeLoved Asheville! They were so appreciative of the donations delivered December 12<sup>th</sup> at their warehouse. Over 100 items were brought in to support the children of the Asheville area! As I was leaving another car was also delivering items to BeLoved Asheville. So many people have come together to help in some way for all the devastation that area has experienced. Many thanks from Sardis WELCA for all the many gifts under the Angel tree. Glory to God for the way He works in our lives!



Council Minutes  
Sardis Lutheran Church  
November 10, 2024

Members present: Dwayne, Jane, Joe, Jon, Ken, Kristin, Nena, Ray, Rick, Roger, Terry, Pastor Oscar

Correction to October minutes...The monies from the Ronnie Weaver Estate to the Memorial Fund is \$5,544.95.

Terry called the meeting to order at 7 PM with 11 members and the Pastor present. Jane had devotions. The October minutes were discussed and a motion by Dwayne was to accept the minutes as presented, Kristin seconded, and the motion carried.

Dwayne presented the financial report. With no questions, Jon motioned to accept as presented, Rick seconded, and the motion carried.

## **Pastor's Report**

It has been a short time since our last council meeting so this will be a short pastors report.

Visitations and sharing the Sacrament with our shut-ins continue. If anyone wishes for visit please reach out to pastor and invite him. Believe it or not, he does not read minds.

We kicked off confirmation and find ourselves ahead of schedule with our beautiful children, being very engaged and excited.

I was able to meet the new pastor of Grace Lutheran (Pastor Hefner) at the senior luncheon. He seems very excited to reengage Grace Lutheran in activities in and with the joint faith community activities.

I continue to praise God for what the Holy Spirit is up to here at Sardis.

Faithfully Yours's  
Pr. Oscar Shepherd

## Old Business

- Terry advised that the LED light bulbs had been installed in the sanctuary. A special thank you to Terry and Laythe Yousef for doing this.
- Dwayne met with the Scholarship Committee. The committee motioned those changes recommended and approved by the Church Council to the Louie D. and Alma Hilton Baker Scholarship Endowment Fund be approved, seconded by Jane and the motion carried. These changes will be discussed and presented at the Annual Meeting in February 2025 to be voted on and then be sent to the Synod for approval. Discussion was also made that the Synod meets in May so the recommendations will be presented to the congregation in November 2025.
- Joe volunteered to drive a truck to Asheville with supplies and has had no response yet. Pastor Oscar will be following up on this.

New Business

- Nena announced that WELCA will be taking up toys for Christmas for Asheville. Fairview Lutheran Church will be taking the toys to a group formed called “Dear Ole Asheville”.
- Nena also presented the dates in December that Christmas events will take place. Christmas Caroling on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a Blue Christmas Service on the 19<sup>th</sup> was added. It was discussed that the Candlelight Service be moved up earlier and council decided to leave at 10:15.
- Jane brought up the Time and Talent Sheets for updating.
- Rick announced the next Sardis Blood Drive will be December 2<sup>nd</sup> , 2pm – 5pm.

The next Council Meeting is scheduled for December 1st, at 7PM. New Council members will be present at this meeting.

Meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted  
Jane Moretz, Secretary

November 17, 2024  
Continued Congregational meeting

Terry called the meeting to reopen. Dwayne presented the Budget and explained reasons for increase. Mostly due to items that are out of our control. Ballots were handed out to the congregation, voting on 2025 Budget, Church Council, 2025 Nominating Committee, and Scholarship. The results are:

2025 Budget, Passed: Church Council, Gene Biggerstaff, Darrell Jarrett, Mike Midgett, Tim Whitener; serving out vacant term of two years, Zachary Stuart: Nominating Committee, Nena Babb, Roger Lutz, Sherrie Midgett, Robin Stuart, Kristin Teague, Ray Whitener: Scholarship Committee, Phyllis Biggerstaff, Dawn Covington.

Respectfully submitted  
Jane Moretz, Secretary

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**The Corner Table** COMMUNITY SERVICES • EDUCATION PROGRAMS • FOODS NEEDS Date: Dec 2 2024  
Staff Signature: Jane Moretz

Thank you for your donation of  
Socks and Tabeggans

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to The Corner Table

☐ Backpack Program ☒ Community Kitchen ☐ Food on Wheel Program

by Sardis Lutheran Church

*Many people in our community will benefit from this gift.  
Thank you for helping us Feed the Needs of Catawba County.*

122 North Main Avenue | P.O. Box 1051 | Newton, NC 28658  
828.464.0355 | thecornertable.org

**Thank You!**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1 Office Closed	2	3 Pastor's Sabbath	4
5 <b>Bring Food for Blessings Box</b> 9:00 Confirmation 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live	6 School re-opens 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	7	8 12:00 FTF Seniors meet at Wesley Chapel	9 6:00 Youth Planning Meeting 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	10 Pastor's Sabbath	11
12 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 6:00 All Committees Meet 7:00 Church Council	13	14	15	16 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	17 Pastor's Sabbath	18
19 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live	20 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM	21	22 5:00 Articles due for February NL	23 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	24 Pastor's Sabbath	25
26 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live 3:00 Trinity Ridge Youth Assisting 6:30 LMM	27	28	29	30 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	31 Pastor's Sabbath	
<p align="center"><b>**NOTE**</b></p> <p align="center"><i>If you have a birthday or anniversary and they are not listed please let the office know. Thank you.</i></p>						



## BIRTHDAYS JANUARY

### COUNCIL CONTACT

### ASSISTING MINISTER

Tim Whitener

### USHERS

Wayne J., Rick J., Marilyn T., Bruce S.

### **COMMUNION PREPARATION / CLEAN – UP**

Donna Biggerstaff / Sherrie Midgett

**Offering Counters:** Dwayne/Tryston

1/3 Mildred Fulbright  
1/4 Catherine Houser  
Thomas Gregory Smyre  
1/8 Graysen Whitener  
1/14 Dianne Nail  
1/18 Bryon Hollar  
1/24 Ralph Stallings  
1/28 Kipton Jennings  
1/29 Sharon Sigmon  
Anniversary:

**Ralph & Sheila Ramsey 1-11**

<i><b>VOLUNTEER January</b></i>	<b>5th</b>	<b>12th</b>	<b>19th</b>	<b>26th</b>
<b>ALTAR FLOWERS</b>	Catherine H.	Kathy W.	Ben & April F.	Carolyn H.
<b>ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER</b>	Tryston/Nena	Keaton/Austin	Hayden/Shuford	Rick/Cash
<b>COMM. ASSISTANT</b>	Ray W.	Bruce S.	Dawn C.	Jon G.
<b>GREETERS</b>	Edna/Marshall	Dianne/Ken	Kay/Rita	Jill/Donna
<b>LAY READER</b>	Marshall W.	Nena B.	Tim W.	Al K.
<b>CHILDREN'S CHURCH</b>	Susan J.	No Children's Church	Jennifer W.	No Children's Church
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel
<b>SECURITY</b>	Zachary S.	Roger T.	Ralph S.	Darrell J.
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER</b>	Pre-K Jennifer EL Sherrie/Mike MH Nena	Pre-K Jennifer EL Donna MH Rick	Pre-K Jennifer EL Phyllis MH Dawn	Pre-K Nena EL Jane MH April
<b>BACKPACK DELIVERY</b>	9th Gene & Donna	16th Joe & Phyllis	23rd Roger, Marilyn, Jane	30th Tim & Barbara
<b>MEAL DEL.</b>	11th Susan J.	18th No Meal	25th Carolyn H.	1st No Meal
<b>BLESSINGS BOX</b>	Disciples of Christ	Church Council	LMM	Jon's Class

## 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. Oscar (C) 828-228-3078 [pastor@sardislutheran.com](mailto:pastor@sardislutheran.com)

Organist/Director of Music: Frank Griffin, [tfgriffin59@gmail.com](mailto:tfgriffin59@gmail.com)

Council Chair: Terry Bledsoe (C) 828-455-4103 [terrybledsoe@charter.net](mailto:terrybledsoe@charter.net)

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