

Friendly Messenger

June 2025

Pastor's Report

Submitted by: Pastor Oscar Shepherd

Date: May 18, 2025

Ministry Overview – April 2025

April was a full and meaningful month of ministry. With the Lenten services, hospital visits, and pastoral care, it was a spiritually rich and active season. Additionally, I was navigating the realities of tax season, adding to the general busyness in my life.

Lenten Services and Inter-Church Fellowship

I was deeply encouraged by the strong participation from Sardis in this year's Lenten services. Our congregation was well represented, and the rotation of services among different Lutheran churches created meaningful opportunities for worship and fellowship. The collaborative spirit among our local Lutheran congregations was uplifting, and I believe these joint services strengthen our witness and unity in the faith.

Pastoral Care

Lent brought many opportunities for spiritual care and reflection. Despite the demands of the season, we ensured that our shut-in members were visited and received Holy Communion. I'm also grateful to those who reached out to request pastoral visits. These one-on-one times are a joy for me and an important part of nurturing faith and relationships within the congregation.

Congregational Life and Committees

I remain thankful for the faithful work of our church committees. Attending committee meetings and supporting their efforts continues to be one of the most encouraging parts of my role. I've observed a deep commitment and energy within these teams, and it's evident that the life of Sardis Lutheran Church is thriving.

Youth and Fellowship Events

One notable event in April was our youth hike. Although weather caused us to shorten the hike with closed trails, it was still a wonderful time of fellowship. I'm especially grateful for the intergenerational participation—members of all ages joined us, and the joy of being together in nature was a clear reminder of the strength of our community.

Synod Assembly

Looking ahead, preparations are underway for the North Carolina Synod Assembly, to be held in Greensboro. This year, the Synod will vote on a new bishop, a new Synod president, and several key leadership positions. I look forward to representing Sardis and engaging in the broader mission and governance of our Synod.

Cont. Pastor's report

Upcoming Mission Trip – June 2025

In June, Sardis will participate in a mission trip alongside three other congregations to support hurricane recovery efforts in Western Carolina, following Hurricane Helene. This is an important opportunity for us to extend Christ's love through hands-on service and care for our neighbors in need.

Reflections on One Year of Ministry

This month marks one full year since I began serving as your pastor. It has been a true honor to walk with you in ministry—to preach, teach, worship, and grow together in faith. In many ways, it feels like I've been here much longer—because this church feels like home. And in other ways, it feels like the time has flown by in the blink of an eye.

Additional Ministry Roles

I am grateful for the congregation's support as I continue to serve as a Scout leader and Chaplain, and as a spiritual director with Teens Encounter Christ. These roles extend the ministry of Sardis into the broader community and provide meaningful opportunities for outreach and spiritual formation.

Closing Thoughts

I continue to find hope, joy, and inspiration in the love and spirit of Sardis Lutheran Church. Our shared ministry—through worship, service, and fellowship—is a true testament to the living presence of Christ among us. I look forward to the continued journey of faith and service we will walk together.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Oscar Shepherd

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 4th at Ebenezer. All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



Father's Day Brunch

Sardis 'ELCA will host a Father's Day Continental Breakfast on Father's Day, June 15th at 8:30 in the Fellowship Hall to honor the males in our congregation. Please bring a favorite picture of you and your dad, unframed if possible. Please plan to attend. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex to plan accurately.

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.)

From The Social Ministry Committee

June will have a FIFTH SUNDAY NOISY OFFERING

Are you saving your coins? On June 29th, there will be the usual “noisy” collection pot in the narthex for all your spare coins. The final Fifth Sunday Noisy Offering will be in July. *As usual, folding money is welcome also.*

School is out for the summer!!!! Time to plan for 2025-2026

The Sardis Social Committee will be collecting school supplies/backpacks for Banoak and Blackburn during June, and July. We know there are families in our communities who cannot afford the necessary items. Schools will need stocked supply closets to furnish needy students’ supplies like crayons, paper, and scissors. Below is a list of needed supplies.

- * Composition Notebook-100 sheets (marble design)
- * Colored pencils-12 pack
- * # 2 yellow pencils
- * Crayola Washable Markers 8 pack
- * Large glue sticks
- * Pack of pencils topper erasers or large pink block erasers
- * Loose leaf notebook paper (wide ruled 100 sheets)
- * Primary Notebooks (wide ruled)
- * Pencil Boxes
- * Fiskars Scissors
- * Inexpensive earphones
- * Book Bags (Back packs)

The following items are also welcome for classroom use.

- o Band aids
- o Facial tissues
- o Ziploc bags
- o Copy paper (white)
- o Liquid soap
- o Hand Sanitizer

Please bring any items you can donate to the church and place in the church narthex during June and July. . The items will be shared between the two schools.

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!

Brian Coffey: grandson of Roger and Elaine Lutz, graduating from Fred T Foard High School.

Laney Craig: granddaughter of Wayne and Elaine Jarrett, graduating from Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute. She will be attending Tusculum University in Tusculum, TN on a Volleyball Scholarship.

Lincoln Farnsworth: Daughter of William and Lindsie Farnsworth graduating Pre-K from Maiden Elementary.

Bonnie-Lynn Gladden: Granddaughter of Hope Gladden, graduating from Lenoir-Rhyne University with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Nursing. Bonnie-Lynn will be an IMCU nurse at Caromont Regional Medical Center in Gastonia.

Cayden Hood: Grandson of Bryan and Phyllis Hood, graduating from Lewisville Middle School, Winston-Salem NC.

Emma Hood: Granddaughter of Bryan and Phyllis Hood, graduating from Great Mills High School, Great Mills, MD. She held the titles of VP of her Senior Class and leader of the Fellowship for Christian Athletes.

Eli Lail: Grandson of David and Mildred Fulbright, graduating Pre-K from Newton Methodist .

Macy Landis: Granddaughter of Bryan and Phyllis Hood, graduating from Lenoir-Rhyne University with a Bachelors of Arts in Finance. Macy graduated in 2 1/2 years and is working on her Masters. Degree She chose to go with a group of teachers and students to London for 10 days. She is an Executive Board Member of First Generation Students Association.

Graduates cont.

Andrew McIntire: grandson of Kay Whitener graduating from Fred T. Foard High School. Andrew is in the top 10 of the class of 2025, Summa Cum Laude, President's Award, top male scholar athlete award. He will be attending UNC Chapel Hill, planning to major in Business.

Gabi McIntire: granddaughter of Kay Whitener graduating from UNC Chapel Hill with a Bachelors of Science degree in Biology with a minor in Neuroscience and will be pursuing a Masters of Public Health with a concentration in Nutrition at UNC Chapel Hill.

George Propst: Grandson of Kenneth and Margaret Propst, graduating from Fred T. Foard High School. Ken says, he is a very active student at FTF.

Clay Smyre: Son of Greg and Kerby Smyre, graduating from Christ Church Child Development Center as a Pre-K Graduate.

Caleb Trogdon: grandson of Kay Whitener, graduating from Northwest Guilford High School, Caleb will be attending High Point University where he will major in Business and play on the men's soccer team. An awards ceremony has not been held yet.

Skylar Waldrop: Granddaughter of Bryan and Phyllis Hood, graduating from Fred T. Foard High School.

Anderson Wyant: Sister of Bailey Stuart, graduating from Fred T. Foard High School. Honor Graduate, Cum Laude, Anderson will be wearing a Cord from CVCC for a Strong Leadership Program. Bailey states how proud she is and loves her sister very much.

Zayde Yousef: Grandson of Terry and Jill Bledsoe and is graduating from Jacob's Fork Middle School.

Please advise if we have left someone off...

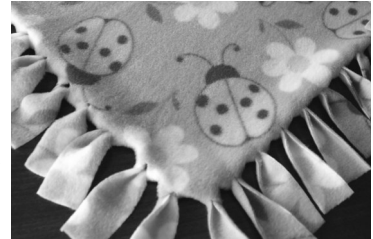


OUR YOUTH, PLEASE SUPPORT THEM



WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA DISASTER RELIEF:

June 1st after Worship Service, Youth will be provided lunch while making blankets to go to WNC. Ask if you can assist.

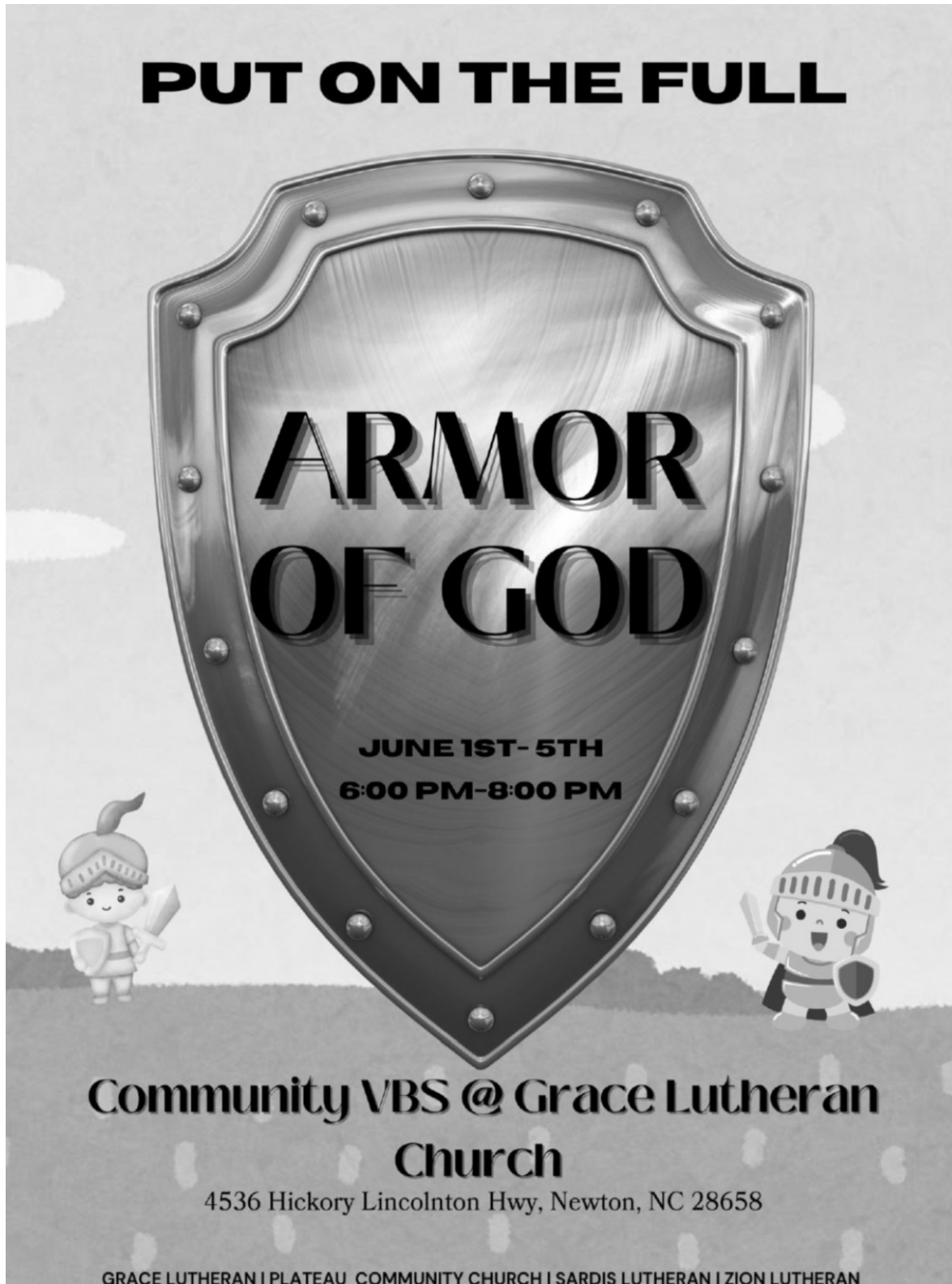


HICKORY
CRAWDADS

June 22, Youth Crawdads game, PU lunch on way to game / *everyone invited.*

VBS at Grace Lutheran June 1 - 5

5:30 meal, 6:00 VBS



Council Minutes
Sardis Lutheran Church
April 13, 2025

Members present: Darrell Jarrett, Dwayne Whitener, Gene Biggerstaff, Jane Moretz, Joe Biggerstaff, Jon Gladden, Kenneth Propst, Rick Johnson, Terry Bledsoe, Zachary Stuart, Mike Midgett, Pastor Oscar Shephard

Joe called the meeting to order at 7pm with 11 council members and the Pastor present. Rick had devotions and discussed Psalm 16: 1-11. The January minutes were previously approved. Dwayne provided an overview of the financial reports for March stating that there are no issues or concerns. and that \$4k was taken from the Parsonage funds to supplement the benevolence paid to the Synod. With no further discussion, Rick made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented and Jon seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor Oscar reported the following:

- Had an eventful Lent with good communication between everyone.

- Homebound visitations are on schedule

- Very encouraged by the mission of the church and seeking ways to be the Body of Christ.

- Actively involved in the Land Use Committee meetings and ongoing project.

- Stated the Easter egg hunt and activities was very successful with approx. 15 youth attending the event.

- Need to continue to work on ways to do more to reach out to the community.

- Pastor Oscar closed by thanking everyone for their support throughout the past month.

Old Business:

- Reviewed the issue of potential roof leaks in the Narthex. Rick sealed the seams on the flat roof over the Narthex and no leaks have been observed recently. Jane and Pastor Oscar will continue to inspect the ceiling during wet periods and communicate if any potential leaks are observed.

New Business:

- Land Use Committee:

- The committee brought forward a motion to use the Miscellaneous Memorial funds of approximately \$2600 to install a fire pit/worship space in a small section of the land that was purchased behind the church. This project will be completed by Josh Alling for his Eagle Scout project. The motion to use Misc. Memorial funds was approved unanimously.

- Joe asked if there would be any electricity needs that would be required for this project. None will be required at this time.

- Dwayne asked about the ability to move the fire pit if future projects required this. The fire pit and benches could be easily moved if needed in the future.

- Dwayne also asked if the committee could provide a drawing of the fire pit/worship space to be presented to the congregation for transparency.

Land Use Committee continued:

The committee also discussed the possible addition of a walking track to be constructed in the future. No actions are currently taking place for this project. The council requested that the Land Use committee develop a plan or overview/ layout of future projects for the land behind the church so that it could be used to keep the congregation informed and up to date moving forward. There was also a discussion around the issues relating to the church septic tank which is currently located under the back parking lot. Terry noted that the land was originally purchased for any future septic tank upgrades. The future site of a new septic system will need to be considered before any future projects are started on the land behind the church since a portion of this land will be needed for any future septic tank upgrades.

2025 Committee needs were discussed. All committee heads should contact Dwayne asap if any financial needs arise.

Hazardous Weather Policy:

Joe brought up the evacuation "Safe Zones" need to be identified. The group determined that the best location for this is the main hallway in the Sunday school area. Jane will add this information and instructions to the next newsletter.

Rick brought up the Blessings Box and stated that we need a better way of notifying groups/individuals of when they are responsible to maintaining the blessings box. This information is currently included in weekly bulletins and the monthly newsletter.

Worship & Music committee update:

The search for a new organist / choir director is still ongoing. The group will keep the church council updated on any new developments.

Fire Inspection update:

All items identified on the inspection report have been corrected. Zachary inspected all fire extinguishers and exit lights. Mike removed the screen door at the exit in the storage room of the old Sunday school building. Terry, Mike and the pastor removed all excess drop cords in the choir room and at the organ/piano area.

Easter morning breakfast: Joe informed the group that the church council and men's group members will be responsible for serving and clean-up.

The May Church Council meeting will be moved to Sunday, May 18th due to Mother's Day on May 11th. Gene Biggerstaff is the May Council contact/devotions.

With no other items to discuss, Dwayne made a motion that the meeting be adjourned, and Darrell seconded the motion.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Mike Midgett, Church Council Secretary



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
OUR WEBSITE AT

cheknot.com/stephenfoundadrienne



I have posted a signup sheet in the Narthex to respond if you are going. I will contact Pastor Adrienne with a count. Also can someone take the responsibility of forming a carpool...



We are excited to share some joyful news from the Whitener household. Our sons, Marshall and Shuford, have recently been recognized for their academic achievements and personal character, and we couldn't be more proud of them.

Marshall, currently a student at Mill Creek Middle School, was honored with the A Honor Roll Award for his outstanding academic performance. Beyond the classroom, he was recognized for his dedication to both the middle school robotics and archery teams. In addition, Marshall demonstrated leadership and a servant's heart by volunteering to help coach the elementary school robotics team, guiding and encouraging younger students in their STEM journey.

Shuford, who attended Balls Creek Elementary, received the A/B Honor Roll Award, celebrating his consistent academic effort. He was also chosen for the Principal's Award, a special recognition given to just one student per class for exemplary academic performance and exceptional character. Shuford was also an enthusiastic member of the elementary school robotics team, where he learned valuable teamwork and problem-solving skills.

We give thanks to God for these achievements and for the values of faith, service, and perseverance that have helped shape our boys. We're also deeply grateful for the continued love and support of our church family. Your prayers and encouragement mean more than words can express.

As a family, we are reminded of Proverbs 22:6:

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Please continue to keep Marshall and Shuford in your prayers as they grow in wisdom, character, and faith.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1 Bring Food for Blessings Box 9:00 Confirmation Class 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live WELCA meet after Worship 12:00 Youth Service Project, lunch provided	2 7:00 Prayer group via ZOOM 5:30 VBS	3 5:30 VBS	4 12:00 FTF Seniors at Ebenezer 5:30 VBS	5 7:00 Chancel Choir rehearsal 5:30 VBS	6 Pastor's Sabbath	7 8-3 Pottery Festival Wesley Chapel UMC, with BBQ, HD's and Hamburgers. Baked items and homemade ice cream
8 PENECOST 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live Members leaving for Mission Trip to WNC. June 8-12. 7:00 Church Council	9	10	11 6:00 Youth Planning Meeting	12 7:00 Chancel Choir rehearsal	13 Pastor's Sabbath	14 FLAG DAY 6:00 Concert on the Grounds: The Sigman Stringers will be performing, Hamburgers and Hot Dogs being served. A Love Offering will be collected to support Mission Trip to WNC.
15 FATHER'S DAY 8:30 Father's Day Continental Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/Holy Communion and FB Live	16 7:00 Prayer group via ZOOM 7:00 Church Council	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 3:00 Trinity Ridge 12:00 Youth Crawdads game, PU lunch on way to game / everyone invited.	23	24	25 5:00 Articles due for July NL	26 7:00 Chancel Choir rehearsal	27 Pastor's Sabbath	28
29 NOISY OFFERING SUNDAY 9:30 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				
<i>If you have a birthday or anniversary and they are not listed please let the office know. Thank you.</i>						

BIRTHDAYS

6/1	Meredith Gladden	6/25	Betty Nail
6/2	Leevada Young Wood		Kerby W. Smyre
6/3	Chelsea Midgett		Greg Smyre
6/7	Rylan Johnson	6/27	Michelle F. Little
6/8	Austin Propst		Rita Lutz
6/10	Jamie Shiffman		Bruce Sigman
6/12	Wayne Jarrett	6/30	Phyllis Biggerstaff
	Lexi E. Little		Rebecca Wilson
	Roger Lutz	Anniversaries:	
6/13	Kay Whitener	Bryan & Phyllis Hood 6-1	
	Margaret Ham	Oscar & Olivia Shepherd 6-1	
6/20	Daniel Whitener	Mike & Sherrie Midgett 6-10	
	Marshall Whitener	Mike & Felicia Hollar 6-16	
6/23	Garry Richard	Bruce & Sharon Sigman 6-16	
		Al & Sylvia King 6-19	
		Gene & Donna Biggerstaff 6-29	

COUNCIL CONTACT

Terry B.

ASSISTING MINISTER

Hayden Johnson, June 8th
Ray Whitener

USHERS

Ben W., Robin S.

COMMUNION PREPARATION / CLEAN – UP

Marilyn T. Donna B.

Offering Counter: Dwayne W.

<i>VOLUNTEER June</i>	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
ALTAR FLOWERS	All & Sylvia	Dwayne & Barbara	Leevada Wood	Rick & Patsy	Terry & Jill
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER	Rick/Shuford	Shuford/Joe B.	Ray/Cash	Paisley/Marshall	Keaton/Rick J.
COMM. ASSISTANT	Kristin T.	Kathy W.	Jennifer W.	Roger T.	Marshall W.
GREETERS	Kristin/Kathy	Darrell/Roger	Dianne/Wanda	Felicia/Bruce	Al & Sylvia
LAY READER	Marshall W.	Jennifer W.	Dawn C.	Jon G.	Kathy W.
CHILDREN'S CHURCH	Susan J.	No Children's Church	Jennifer W.	No Children's Church	No Children's Church
TECHNOLOGY	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel
SECURITY	Darrell J.	Ben W.	Rick J.	Roger T.	Ralph S.
SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER	Pre-K Jennifer EL Donna MH April	Pre-K Jennifer EL Donna MH Nena	Pre-K Jennifer EL Sherrie/Mike MH Rick	Pre-K Nena EL Sherrie/Mike MH Dawn	Pre-K Jennifer EL Donna MH April
FRONT YARD SIGN	Nena B.	Gabriel/Ian S.	Robin/Cynthia S.	Tim W.	Nena B.
MEAL DEL.	7th No Meal	14th Phyllis Hood	21st No Meal	28th Nena B.	7/5 No Meal
BLESSINGS BOX	Church Council	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](tel:828-228-3078) pastor@sardislutheran.com

Organist/Director of Music: Nena Babb, (C) 828-238-5700 nhbabb@gmail.com

Council Chair: Joe Biggerstaff (C) 828-323-5809 biggerstaffjoe@gmail.com

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