

Friendly Messenger

March 2025

Beloved Sardis,

We are entering the season of Lent, where we are invited into a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal. Too often, we think of Lent only as a season of personal sacrifice—a time to acknowledge our own brokenness, our own nails, our own sins. But Christ's journey to the cross calls us to something greater. It calls us not only to look inward but to move outward—to be the hands and feet of Christ in a world longing for justice, healing, and hope. Boy does our world need it!

Lent is not just about giving something up; it is about giving of ourselves. As we remember Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, let us also remember that His ministry was never about self-preservation. It was about radical love, about lifting up the lowly, about breaking chains and systems, setting captives free.

When we look around our world today, we see many who are suffering—those oppressed by systems of injustice, those crying out for dignity, those longing to be seen and heard. The nails of sin are not just personal, they are communal. If we truly seek to follow Christ, then our Lenten journey must lead us beyond our own sin and sorrow and towards our Neighbors.

May this Lent be a season where we do not simply dwell on what is lost but awaken to what is gained when we live out the Gospel more fully. May we be a church that does not just remember Christ's sacrifice but embodies His mission.

God loves you and so do I,
Pr. 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 March on the 5th at Laurel Hill Methodist. All are invited to join us for fun, food, and fellowship.



SARDIS YOUTH

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper -Tuesday March 4th at 6 PM - Sardis Youth invite you to come enjoy pancakes and toppings

Mark your calendar and invite your friends and neighbors - Easter Egg Hunt -Saturday April 12th 10 AM- 12 Noon.

Cash Fulbright received Kiwanis Terrific Kid for February at Union Elementary for demonstrating kindness. His teacher stated "Cash shows kindness each day to his teachers and peers. He is kind to everyone and shows it by holding the door, being a great friend, and treating everyone the same each and every day." We are proud of Cash and how he shows God's love through being kind.

Cash Fulbright has advanced in his belt rank in karate at Kim Duncan Martial Arts Studio! He is now a red solid belt! He has already mastered white, yellow stripe,, orange stripe, green stripe, and blue stripe, next will be red stripe and then he can try for Jr Black Belt.

April Fulbright



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.)

CONGRAGULATIONS ELAINE

Recognition included Best of the Best awards winners, DAISY award winners, our Annual Mercy Award winner, and employees who have been with Frye Regional anywhere from 5 to 50 years!

Elaine Evington was uniquely honored as she reached 50 years with Frye Regional Medical Center! She was presented with a customized plaque in gratitude for her exceptional commitment. Thank you, Elaine, for your continuous dedication and support for Frye Regional Medical Center and its community.

Congratulations everyone and thank you for supporting our mission of making communities healthier!



Food Drive for those in Need

Sardis WELCA will be collecting food for our local community and our Catawba County community with our annual food drive. We will collect food on Sunday, March 9, 16, 23, 30, and April 6. We will divide the food collected between ECCCM and our Blessings Box here at Sardis. Any and all nonperishable foods are appreciated but some ideas are;

Canned and boxed pasta (including spaghetti noodles, macaroni, etc.)

Pasta Sauce

Peanut Butter

Canned Meats

Cereals

Canned Fruits

Canned Vegetables

Please help as you can. Together we can make a difference!



OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

Each Sunday evening, during Lent, we will meet at 6:00 PM for Soup and Sandwiches, followed at 7:00 PM with our Lenten Service in the Sanctuary.

March 4th	Shrove Pancake Supper 6:00 PM
March 5th	Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 PM w/Holy Communion
WEEK 1 March 9;	Pastor Oscar, Sardis Lutheran Church — <i>SpongeScripture</i> Matthew 27: 45-51,54
WEEK 2 March 16;	Wayne Giese, St. Paul's Startown — <i>SignScripture</i> John 19: 16-22
WEEK 3 March 23;	Vern Kinard, Bethlehem Lutheran Church— <i>CoinScripture</i> Mark 13: 3-11
WEEK 4 March 30th	Marcus Ollis, Beth Eden Lutheran Church— <i>ThornScripture</i> Mark 15: 7-20
WEEK 5 April 6;	Andrew Miller, Old St. Paul Lutheran Church— <i>CupScripture</i> Matthew 26: 36-39
April 13th	Palm Sunday Service 10:30 AM
April 17th	Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 PM w/Holy Communion
April 18th	Good Friday Service 7:00 PM
April 20th	Easter Sunrise Service 6:30 AM w/Holy Communion; followed with breakfast in the Fellowship Hall

Please keep this schedule handy and plan to attend

Sign the sheet in the Narthex for Soup etc.

Council Minutes
Sardis Lutheran Church
January 12, 2025

Members present: Darrell Jarrett, Dwayne Whitener, Gene Biggerstaff, Jane Moretz, Joe Biggerstaff, Jon Gladden, Rick Johnson, Tim Whitener, Zachary Stewart, Mike Midgett, Pastor Oscar Shephard

Joe called the meeting to order at 7pm with 10 council members and the Pastor present. Tim had devotions. The December minutes were discussed with no corrections or additions and a motion to accept the December minutes as presented was made by Jon, seconded by Dwayne and the motion carried. Dwayne provided an overview of the financial reports for December stating that there are no concerns and that the balances were slightly negative for the month mainly due to a \$3k charge for refilling the propane tank. With no further discussion, Jon made a motion to accept the financial reports as presented and this was seconded by Rick. The motion carried.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor Oscar reported the following:

- ◇ Had a very full month of December with many Christmas activities and services
- ◇ Continued home visitations with shut-ins and several members in the hospital
- ◇ Catechism/Confirmation training is going very well with a high level of engagement from the youth.
- ◇ Asked about others delivering communion to shut-in/homebound members
- ◇ Reported that prayer groups were going well
- ◇ Stated that he was participating in TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) serving as a Spiritual Director. This program has a special meaning to him as he was baptized and met his wife while attending TEC.
- ◇ He reached out to the Synod for direction on how to support Western NC hurricane relief and was encouraged to support the Bridging Together program. This is a joint venture between the Mennonite Disaster Service and Lutheran Disaster Response Carolinas which is working to rebuild private bridges connecting homes and communities throughout western North Carolina. He encouraged everyone to support a fundraiser (BBQ chicken dinner) being sponsored by the Trinity Men in Mission and Messiah UMC being held at Messiah United Methodist Church in Lincolnton on Saturday, January 25th.
- ◇ Pastor Oscar closed by thanking everyone for their support throughout the past month.

Old Business:

- ◇ A discussion was had concerning potential roof leaks in the Narthex. After a brief discussion the following action items were determined:
 - Rick will engage the Property committee and contact John Varner to help investigate this issue.
 - Jane will research church files to determine if there is a warranty that would still be valid from when the roof was installed.
- ◇ The council discussed Bold Women's Sunday which is scheduled for February 23, 2025. The women of the church (WELCA) will be leading the service and Donna Biggerstaff informed the group that the guest speaker will be the leader of Ashure, and she will speak on "Jesus' Work and Outreach."
- ◇ Rick Johnson asked that his home phone number be corrected to (704) 462-2617.

New Business:

- ◇ The annual Congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2nd after the service and a catered meal will be provided. Jane stated that all committee heads need to turn in their reports asap. Jane also informed the group that Normans will be providing the meal which will consist of chicken pot pie, Salisbury steak, mashed potatoes, green beans and rolls. The cost of the meal will be \$17 per plate and donations will be accepted. The congregation will provide the condiments, and the council will assist with serving the meal and with the clean-up after the meeting.
- ◇ The council held a discussion on how to direct all special offerings during 2025. Jane made a motion that all funds collected for special offerings be directed to the Western NC Disaster Relief Fund through the NC Synod. Jon seconded the motion, and the motion carried.
- ◇ Joe asked for input and direction on the Hazardous Weather policy. The group agreed that decisions relating to hazardous weather should be made by the Council Vice-Chairman, the Pastor and the Chairperson of the Property committee. The Pastor will then pass relevant information on to the congregation using the Sardis phone tree.
- ◇ A discussion was held regarding the recent drop in attendance over the past month. Although nothing specific was identified, the weather has most likely contributed to this trend over the past month; however, Pastor Oscar did add the Facebook live stream has been averaging 100+ views on most Sundays and over 300+ views per week.
- ◇ Monthly Council assignments were discussed and determined including Assisting Minister duties.

The February Church Council meeting will be held on an “as needed” basis. Joe will let the group know if a meeting needs to be scheduled.

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

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
<p>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.</p>						
<p>2 Bring Food for Blessings Box 9:00 Confirmation Class 3:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/ Holy Communion and FB Live</p>	<p>3 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM</p>	<p>4 6:00 Shrove Pancake Supper</p>	<p>5 12:00 FTF Seniors at Laurel Hill 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service</p>	<p>6 6:00 Handbells Rehearsal 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>7 Pastor's Sabbath</p>	1
<p>9 3:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/ Holy Communion and FB Live 6:00 Lenten Meal followed with Lenten Service</p>	10	11	12 1:00 Cross Wreath making class	13 6:00 Handbells Rehearsal 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	14 Pastor's Sabbath No School	15
<p>16 3:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/ Holy Communion and FB Live 6:00 Lenten Meal followed with Lenten Service</p>	<p>17 7:00 Prayer Group via ZOOM No School</p> 	18	19	20 6:00 Handbells Rehearsal 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	21 Pastor's Sabbath	22
<p>23 3:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/ Holy Communion and FB Live 3:00 trinity Ridge 6:00 Lenten Meal followed with Lenten Service</p>	24	25	26 5:00 Articles due for April NL	27 6:00 Handbells Rehearsal 7:00 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	28 Pastor's Sabbath	29
<p>30 NOISY OFFERING SUNDAY 3:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship Service/ Holy Communion and FB Live 6:00 Lenten Meal followed with Lenten Service</p>	31			<p>**NOTE** <i>If you have a birthday or anniversary and they are not listed please let the office know. Thank you.</i></p>		

BIRTHDAYS

COUNCIL CONTACT

ASSISTING MINISTER

3/2 Sheila Ramsey
Barbara J. Whitener

Jon Gladden

3/4 Richard Covington
Mike Midgett

USHERS

Darrell J., Dianne Nail

3/5 David Fulbright

3/6 Lucas Richard
Kendra M. Starkey

COMMUNION PREPARATION / CLEAN – UP

3/10 Pastor Oscar

Sharon Sigman

Kristin Teague

3/11 Laythe Yousef

Offering Counters: Dwayne/Tryston

3/13 Robin Stuart

3/20 Sandra Roseman

Anniversaries

3/16 Patsy Johnson

3/24 Nate Johnson

Wayne & Elaine Jarrett 3/3

Joe D. Biggerstaff

Shuford Whitener

Garry & Annette Richard 3/8

William Farnsworth

3/27 Shannon Hollar

William & Lindsey Farnsworth 3/26

3/17 Mike Hollar

Teresa E. Starkey

3/19 Ralph Ramsey

3/30 Ron Crawley

Wesley Weaver

<i>VOLUNTEER March</i>	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th
ALTAR FLOWERS	Pete & Sheila R.	Buster B.	Bruce & Sharon S.	Richard & Dawn C.	Hope G.
ACOLYTE/ CRUCIFER	Marshall/Shuford W.	Gabriel/Bruce	Tryston/Ian	Ian/Marshall	Shuford/Joe
COMM. ASSISTANT	Jennifer W.	Roger T.	Marshall W.	Zachary S.	Bruce S.
GREETERS	Darrell/Roger	Dianne/Wanda	Felicia/Bruce	Al/Sylvia	Annette/Evelyn
LAY READER	Jennifer W.	Dawn C.	Jon G.	Kathy W.	Gabriel S.
CHILDREN'S CHURCH	Jennifer W.	NO Children's Church	Heather C.	NO Children's Church	Susan J.
TECHNOLOGY	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel	Terry, Ben, Joe, Samuel
SECURITY	Ralph S.	Zachary S.	Bruce S.	Rick J.	Ben W.
SUNDAY SCHOOL LEADER	Pre-K Jennifer EL Sherrie/Mike MH Dawn	Pre-K Jennifer EL Donna MH Rick	Pre-K Jennifer EL Phyllis MH Nena	Pre-K Nena EL April MH April	Pre-K Jennifer EL Phyllis MH April
FRONT YARD SIGN	Tim W.	Nena B.	Gabriel & Ian	Robin & Cynthia S	Tim W.
BACKPACK DELIVERY	6th Tim & Barbara	13th Dwayne & Barbara	20th Gene & Donna	27th Joe & Phyllis	4/3 Roger, Marilyn, Jane
MEAL DEL.	8th Donna B.	15th No Meal	22nd Dawn C.	29th No Meal	4/5 Kay W.
BLESSINGS BOX	Disciples of Christ	Church Council	LMM	Jon's Class	Disciples of Christ

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