

# sardis signposts baptist church

a spiritually progressive community of faith

5811 Sardis Road / Charlotte, NC 28270 / 704.362.0811  
sardisbaptistcharlotte.org

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:45 AM  
Sunday School

11:00 AM  
Morning Worship



## SARDIS BAPTIST: A VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

The Sardis Baptist culture is one of hospitality and community. Our faith is strengthened through communion with one another on Wednesday evenings, Sunday mornings, and other gatherings in between. We are saddened that such gatherings at this time would not only jeopardize our health (as well as the health of unknown others), it would be in conflict with the stay-at-home order put in place by officials to contain community spread of Covid19.

Sardis Baptist is finding creative ways to be in community with one another from the confines of our homes. We have • livestreamed worship for anyone with access to the internet to see • gathered our Sunday School class in a virtual classroom (with excellent attendance!) • hosted a communion supper using Zoom • posted solo choral performances to our Facebook page • met online for prayer meetings • emailed devotionals and • funded two large deliveries to our ongoing Goodness Groceries campaign. We will continue to find creative ways to connect with each other and our community throughout this time of crisis.

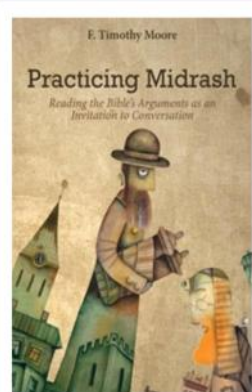
## Easter Underground

**Perhaps we will appreciate  
resurrection more this Easter than  
ever before! Many of us feel as if we've  
been buried in a tomb during this  
period of confinement.**

On the morning of April 12th, our Easter service will be different than usual, but we will celebrate resurrection nonetheless! Together, from our homes, we will honor new life and the beauty of the transformation from Jesus as man to Christ as savior.

The Easter story teaches us that new life comes from seeds buried in dark soil. Darkness is required for transformation into flowering plants. It seems that Easter this year will fall during a period of germination. Roots grow first, seeking water to feed the seed and give it strength to shoot forth from the soil. Our roots are growing; our flowers not quite ready to bloom, but when that day comes we will celebrate Easter again.

Our first Sunday back in our brick-and-mortar meetinghouse will be a true resurrection celebration! The date is yet to be determined. Meanwhile, let's all continue to tune into virtual church to tend our gardens together!



## Faith & Wisdom in Societal Crisis

Rev. Tim Moore will lead Sardis Baptist's inaugural Zoom Bible Study this week. Join us Wednesday evenings at 7 PM for "Faith & Wisdom in Societal Crisis: A Practicing Midrash Approach towards Biblical Writers in Crisis". The topic for the first week's discussion is how praying lament opens us toward hope. We will look at Lament Psalms and the Book of Lamentations. The class will take place in the VIRTUAL Sardis Baptist Meetinghouse: Join with this link: <https://zoom.us/j/909219035>.

## I LIFT UP MINE EYES...

Rev. Bob Stillerman

### Paying Attention to the Little Resurrections

God resurrects. God makes new life out of death. God restores. God keeps creating. God thrives, even when it seems like or feels like God shouldn't. God defies our expectations. God offers us salvation: the space and the grace (sometimes it's physical, sometimes it's emotional) to live into our potential, to discover all that life can be. Wow!!! Why don't we talk about this more often?!

Yes, we designate one (ONE!!!) Sunday of fifty-two (FIFTY-TWO!!!) and declare it Resurrection Sunday. There's a Holy Week, and we all look fancy in our new, pastel Sunday outfits, and the candy, yes, God, thank you SO much for the candy. There are sunrise services, and Hallelujah choruses, and ceremonious ends to the Lenten season. And the liturgical calendar actually has fifty days of Easter (seven Sundays if you are counting at home). But let' be honest, for the most part, our acknowledgement of Easter (much like Christmas) is a one-shot deal.

But what happens when COVID-19 interrupts our annual plans? What happens when our "big" Easter celebration has to be postponed? Maybe, just maybe, we are afforded the opportunity to really, really, really notice that God's resurrection is ongoing. Christ's victory over the cross is certainly one of our most poignant and memorable examples of resurrection – it's something that fundamentally changed us, or perhaps reawakened us to God's presence. It's a moment, but not the only one. God's work is still ongoing, in each of us, and indeed, in all of creation. God continues to make new life where life seems impossible. Easter (the event) doesn't end in a period. Easter ends with an ellipsis, or better yet, Easter is the beginning of a crescendo.

Just this week, my lawnmower removed old weeds to reveal the beginnings of green grass (or newer, greener weeds!); a brilliant red cardinal returned to the feeder in my window; and azaleas winked at my little girls in the driveway. Grieving the loss of our in-person gatherings, I watched faithful church members learn new technology to maintain connection, and I saw women and men wave their arms and shake their keys to a rousing chorus of Halle, Halle, Halle; and my inbox and social feeds have been filled with countless stories of creative generosity in securing supplies for neighbors in need. It occurs to me that I've seen a hundred little sunrise services in the past week alone.

I realize it feel like Good Friday, and in many ways it is. COVID-19 continues to ravage our nation. But just like at Golgotha, God is not absent. God is here, and like those faithful women at the cross, we too must wait, with a mix of presence, faith, and hard work, for God to reveal new life. And when we recognize that new life, even when it seems too good to be true, we mustn't be afraid to share it. For the world needs to hear it.

At some point, it may be this summer, we'll do a big resurrection service. In the meantime, we'll have to note our own little ones. But big or small, gathered or scattered, God is resurrecting our world. May each of us have the faith, the strength, and the courage to be witnesses to such a truth. May each of us be an expression of Easter to one another!

## Sardis People: David Garrison

Interest and expertise in English has taken David Garrison hither and yon. He began his student journey at A.C. Reynolds High School in Asheville, moved up the road to study English at Appalachian State, went south to Baylor University in Texas for his master's degree, and then traveled north to the University of Minnesota where he earned a PhD.

Teaching has also found him in various places. In addition to teaching English, he has been department chair of the school of business and an associate dean at Georgetown University, dean of arts and sciences at Georgia Southwestern in Americus, and provost of the oldest private college in Georgia, LaGrange. At present he is closer to his growing-up years home (Asheville), teaching English at Queens Grant Charter School here in Charlotte.

David's leisure time activities run the gamut from music to reading to playing video games to.... He enjoys playing the piano and recently received a keyboard for his birthday. He enjoys reading anything, but is particularly fond of poetry. His favorite author is Davidson graduate, Pulitzer prize winner, U.S. poet laureate (2014-15) Charles Wright. His favorite video games are car racing games, and a recent interest involves real racing, NASCAR. He also likes to cook, and is interested in Indian cuisine.

He is married to high school sweetheart Donna Barger, after a hiatus of some years. They live with five dogs: four beagles named Charles Dickens, Charles Darwin, John Adams, and Abbie; and a chihuahua, Evie.



*David and Donna celebrating their daughter's birthday with family (human and animal)*



*It takes many hands, feet, hearts and minds to do  
the work of Sardis Baptist Church. We are grateful  
to all of you for the various ways you support  
the ministries of this special church!*

We are grateful to Kristin Parker for the informative Sardis Academy session she led last month about the intersection of our justice system and people with mental illness and developmental disabilities. Thank you!

Thank you to our Fellowship Team and volunteers for providing an opportunity for fellowship and supper together before requests for no gatherings were made: Ellen Dillard, Tillie Duncan, Billie Hutchison, Debbie Kidd, Kathryn Kreutzer, Jean Lawrence, Howell Peterson, Magay Shepard, and Amy Wiebke.

We appreciate all who have worked to enable us to see one another face-to-face while under stay-at-home orders:

Tillie Duncan, Jonathan Eidson, Amanda Lewis, Kathryn Kreutzer, Hilary McIntyre, and Bob Stillerman. Sardis Baptist is thankful to each one of you for signing in and participating as a vital members of our virtual church.

We are grateful to those who served as worship leaders in March: Tillie Duncan, Jonathan Eidson, Betty Gunz, Marge Henderson, Irena Hramenkova, Kathryn Kreutzer, Amanda Lewis, Kate Mata, Hilary McIntyre, Howell Peterson, and Bob Stillerman.

Thank you for the Sardis friends who loved and cared for our youngest members during the March worship hours in our meetinghouse: Deborah Clark, Amanda Lewis, Krista Sigmon, and Jacqueline Stillerman.

*We work hard to acknowledge all those who give their time, talents, and tithes to the ministries of Sardis. You are a generous congregation! Sometimes we fail to offer proper gratitude to the persons who deserve it most. We offer special thanks for those whose gifts have gone unnoticed. We are grateful!*



## PETITIONS

All essential workers who are on the frontlines fighting this disease, and those keeping is healthy and safe • All who are impacted by domestic violence • Fay Alderman • Charles Almond, grandfather of Jacqueline Stillerman • Jourdan Askins, son-in-law of Jo Tiddy • Judy Blevins, friend of Kristin Parker • Gaye Booth, friend of Ellen Dillard and Marge Fowler • Jim Bowlin, Melissa's father • Melissa Bowlin • Margaret Branton, Amanda Lewis' grandmother • Don Brunton, father of Mark • Maria Byrd • "Coach", friend of Marge Fowler • Sonny Cole, Marge Fowler's brother • Ben Cooley, Ruthye's husband • Elzene Corbett, Janet Beltzhoover's mother • Nancy Darnell • Mollie Gilmore, granddaughter of Jim & Becky Owen • Betty Gunz • Janie Harris • Gennelle Hall, Mother of Jessica Wallace (Bullies 2 the Rescue) • Joanne Henkel, Bennett's grand-mother • Don Hill • Eugene Hill, Don's son • Harvie Hill, Kathryn Kreutzer's father • Karen — CBF North Africa Field Personnel • Mark Kearns, uncle of Hilary • Casey Leonhardt • Vicki Lewis, Amanda's aunt • Bobbie, Katie Mata's grandmother • Rachael Phipps, friend of Betty Gunz • Mala Reynolds • Bob Rowland, Robin's father • John Simpson • Susan Stanley, David Kreutzer's mother • Catherine (Kitty) Tate, sister of Becky Proctor • Susan Tuttle, friend of Phillips • Heather Robinson Weir, friend of Susan Phillips • Katie Wiebke, daughter of Mark & Amy

## A PRAYER OF HOPE DURING THIS PANDEMIC

*by Rabbi Naomi Levy*

*We are frightened, God,  
worried for our loved ones, worried for our world.  
Helpless and confused, we turn to You  
seeking comfort, faith and hope.  
Teach us God, to turn our panic into patience,  
and our fear into acts of kindness and support.  
Our strong must watch out for our weak,  
our young must take care of our old.  
Help each one of us to do our part  
to halt the spread of this virus.  
Send strength and courage to the doctors and nurses  
in the frontlines of this battle, fortify them  
with the full force of their healing powers.  
Send wisdom and insight to the scientists  
working day and night across the world  
to discover healing treatments.  
Bless their efforts, God.  
Fill our leaders with the wisdom  
and the courage to choose wisely and act quickly.  
Help us, God, to see that we are one world,  
one people who will rise above this pandemic together.  
Send us health God, watch over us,  
grace us with your love, bless us with your healing light.  
Hear us God, heal us God.  
Amen.*



## SARDIS ALUMNI UPDATE

Jackson Hawkins is an electrician apprentice now. He just passed his first craft test! He is loving the job and the school, and says everything is going great for him right now.

Jeff Jackson is working locally for Flying Squirrel Tree Service. In his free time he takes Japanese Jiu Jitsu lessons. Although a method of combat, Jiu is translated as “gentle, soft, supple, flexible, pliable, or yielding”. Jitsu can be translated to mean “art” or “technique”. Jiu Jitsu masters manipulate their opponent’s force against themselves rather than confronting with their own force. Jeff also enjoys watching anime and YouTube videos, and playing video games.

Erin Kennedy has moved to Keystone, Colorado, and is loving it! She was working as a photographer for Keystone Resort, but recreational skiing is not considered essential business!

Kaleb Kreutzer is a student at Central Piedmont Community College, in a special partnership program with UNCC that allows him to play on their hockey team. He works part-time at Autobell and was recently promoted to a supervisory position.

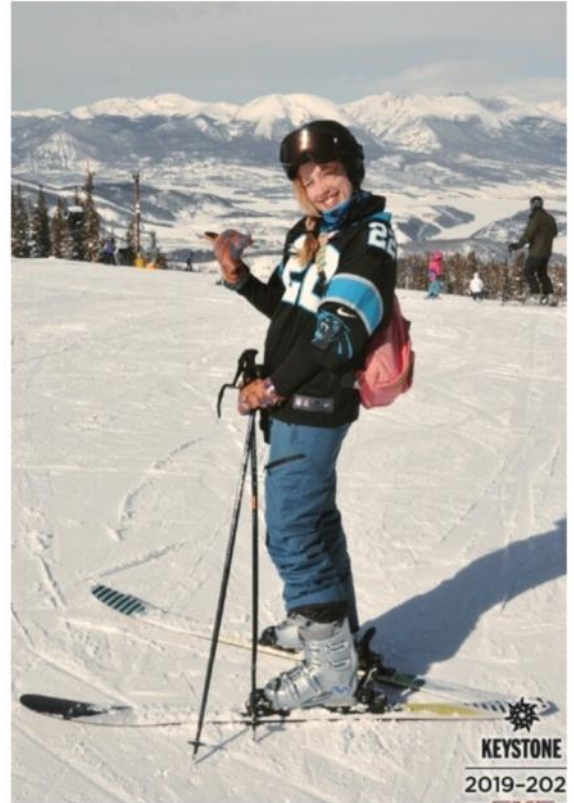
Brandon Rutherford is living in Boone and finishing up his associate’s degree at Caldwell Community College. After this semester, he is heading to Appalachian State to finish out his college term. Until Covid 19 closed dining rooms down, he was working part-time as a server at a hibachi restaurant. Brandon continues to love God and the greatness he has blessed him with. Living in Boone has opened his eyes to many of God’s works. In his free time he enjoys snowboarding.

Abby Shepard-Moore is a student at American University. She recently returned early from her semester abroad in Paris due the global pandemic. She was able to complete her semester school requirements before Covid 19 forced her home. She continues working remotely as an intern doing research for a French company.

Hannah Shepard-Moore is a student at Emory University. She just became team leader for her research seminar’s Brazil Team (for which we interpret articles in Portuguese). She became a public relations officer for Emory’s chapter of Amnesty International, and is applying to write an Honors Thesis on Organized Crime in Latin America, it’s interactions with development/stability/indigenous rights, and the policies that effectively combat them.

Michael Shepard-Moore is a student at the Kenan-Flagler Business School of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is on track to graduate in 2021 with high honors. He also works part-time at the campus gym. He has secured a summer internship with Bank of America as a Financial Management Analyst.

Grey Sigmon is a student at the University of South Carolina. He plans to study abroad this summer; he’s scheduled to leave for Australia in May. Next fall he will spend the fall semester in Colorado for a student exchange program.



*Erin Kennedy, Keystone, Colorado*



*Abby Shepard-Moore, Paris, France*

## GOODNESS GROCERIES



The goal of our Goodness Groceries mission project is to supply a food pantry for Charlotte Secondary School, a charter school near our church that has a high percentage of food-insecure families. Breakfast and lunch are available to students on school days, but some of them do not have adequate food to eat when school is not in session. With our current stay-at-home orders and the consequential threat (or reality) of job loss, there are many families unable to stock their kitchens.

Last week, Kathryn and her daughter, Alcie, were shopping for groceries for the pantry. They was only \$490 in our Goodness Grocery account, significantly less than they had for the previous delivery — so they were doing their best to be frugal. When they took a break to tally their selections, a lady stopped and asked who they were shopping for. They explained, and the lady said she did not have much to offer but wanted to give something to help their effort. She gave them \$8. They were grateful, especially when they realized they were going to be over budget. They made some tough decisions about what they could keep and what they couldn't, then realized they were still going to be a little over budget. As they headed toward checkout anyway, the woman appeared again. She had change left from her grocery allotment and wanted to give it to them — another \$8.

When the cashier gave their total, it was \$505.62 — \$16 over budget, but EXACTLY the amount they had after accepting the gifts from their new friend. That does not seem like simple coincidence. Her hands were the hands of God in that moment. May we all find ways to be the hands of God during these troublesome times.



### Visit us on Facebook

We miss you all, and are doing our best to stay in contact and share details about ways Sardis Baptist is adapting to our stay-at-home orders. Our presence on social media is more important now than ever before! The best ways to get current information are through Facebook and our regular emails. If you do not receive our emails and would like to be added to our distribution, call or send an email to 704.362.0811 or [info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org](mailto:info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org).

**You can find up-to-date info about current Sardis events at:**  
**[facebook.com/SardisBaptistCharlotte](https://facebook.com/SardisBaptistCharlotte)**

Please "like" our page and "share" any posts you think other Facebook friends would appreciate. The more "likes" and "shares" we get, the more likely our posts will be seen in the newsfeeds of other friends of Sardis Baptist Church.

*Please continue collecting new or gently used suitcases, duffels, backpacks and tote bags for our Community Link Luggage Drive. We will schedule a time for dropping them off as soon as we are permitted to gather again. Luggage donations will be used by recipients of CL's "Housing to Homeless" program. [See their website for more info.](#)*



Blood donations save lives, and right now blood centers are in critical need of donors. Many blood drives have been cancelled due to the risk of spreading Covid 19 at gatherings. Donation Centers will remain open as an essential business throughout the stay-at-home orders. If you are healthy and not in a high-risk category for complications from the coronavirus, we encourage you to contact a local, not-for-profit blood donation center to make an appointment:

**OneBlood.org / 888.936.6283**

**RedCross.org / 704.376.1661**



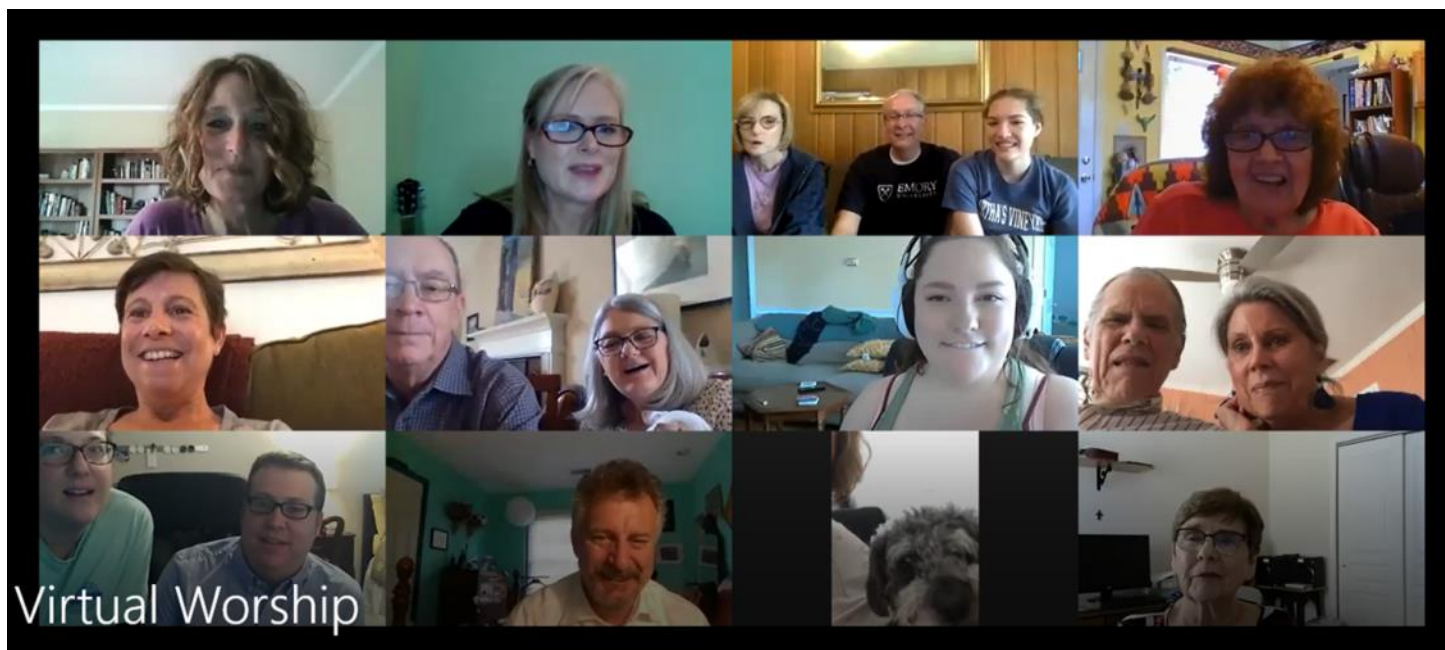
*Benevolence requests have increased during the last month, and we've been able to provide assistance to multiple families whose struggles have been magnified by our current situation. Please consider donations to our Benevolence Fund or to our Ministry Plan, which supports the administrative needs of the church as well as community partners such as Crisis Assistance, Urban Ministries, Loves & Fishes, and others. Please notate any special designation on your payment. Unspecified donations support our Ministry Plan: [PayPal.me/SardisBaptistChurch](https://PayPal.me/SardisBaptistChurch).*





# the virtual meetinghouse

There were about 40 "Sardisians" at our virtual meetinghouse on Sunday. We've also heard from a number of people who watched a recording later in the day. We are grateful for the many Sardis friends who are finding ways to stay connected to Sardis family while we are socially distancing. Below is a candid screenshot of just a few of us in attendance. It was wonderful to welcome a few of God's non-human creatures to worship with us!



## Dearest Sardis Baptist Friends...

"Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness." (The Dalai Lama) You are a kind and caring congregation! We are so appreciative of the generosity you showed with this year's love offering. Your financial gifts were received by grateful hearts. "I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks (William Shakespeare)." Much love, Bob, Jonathan, Hilary, Irena & Kathryn

*"For kindness shown through the way you cared, For thoughtfulness and the blessing shared, Thank you and God bless you." Thank you just isn't enough to express the gratitude that I have for the love offering you gave me. God bless you all for caring enough to help others. You are a true example of being Christ like. Thanks again and may God in return bless you 100 fold. "And ye shall know a tree by the fruit it bears. Keep bearing fruit and sowing seeds. ye shall reap a harvest." Love, Doris*

*"The family of Mary Jane Osborne acknowledges with grateful appreciation your kind expression of sympathy." Thank you so much for the wonderful deli tray you had sent out for the family. Your support throughout Mom's 4 months of illness is so appreciated. Comforting to both Mom and I. "I wish you all the best, the love of God and the beauty of the folks of Sardis. Much love, Anna*