

# sardis signposts

baptist church

a spiritually progressive community of faith

5811 Sardis Road / Charlotte, NC 28270 / 704.362.0811  
[SardisBaptistCharlotte.org](http://SardisBaptistCharlotte.org)

## VIRTUAL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday at 9:45 AM  
Virtual Sunday School

Sunday at 11:00 AM  
Virtual Morning Worship

Friday @ Noon  
Virtual Prayer Gathering



## LIFE & LOVE FOR LENT

No matter the season, here's what we know: We are *called* to be a chorus of love; we are determined to *reclaim* our connection to the divine in positive and life-giving ways; we find our *vitality* (assert it, even!), together, in the beloved community.

In this Lenten season, we are challenged by symbols new and old: the cross, the (Zoom) grid, and the mask.

On Ash Wednesday, a coal-colored cross compels us to confront our mortality. And too often,

we are told that Jesus died for us, and atoned for our shortcomings, by taking up his cross. In this season, we choose to believe that Jesus lived in love, in order that we too might model God's love in our own lives and communities. In this season, we choose to claim life in an old rugged cross. We do so with the confidence that life, just as much, if not even more so than death, can bear witness to resurrection.

This season, we choose to reclaim our relationship with God, and with one another. We don't do so out of regret, or remorse, and especially not out of shame. We choose to believe that this season provides the opportunity and possibility to be the people God has called us to be.

For eleven months, we've donned our masks, and greeted one another on virtual grids. For too long, we've believed that masks and grids are like the ashes we spread on our foreheads – they remind us of our mortality, of what we've lost, and we're all too ready to dismiss them, move on past them to happier days.

We believe it's time to reclaim the symbols of 2020, and remake them in 2021.

We believe the coming season of Lent offers the opportunity to take up crosses that bear love in life; to wear masks that lighten life, not darken it; to participate in grids that connect us instead of exhausting us.

So here's your invitation. Come along, as we transform a barren cross, and a lifeless mask, and a familiar grid into reminders of a God who is still here, a people who can still be surprised, energized, and changed, and the beautiful resurrection, the LIFE that happens, when these two forces come together.



## PALM SUNDAY

According to ancient Middle Eastern tradition, a leader's choice between a horse and a donkey revealed his intention when entering another territory. A leader would have ridden a horse when he was bent on war and a donkey when his arrival was peaceful. March 28th marks the day we remember Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem at the beginning of what would later become known to us as Holy Week. The donkey symbolized Jesus' arrival as the Prince of Peace.

Followers of Jesus welcomed him to town by waving palms and laying them down along his path. "Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord." In the Roman Empire, palm fronds symbolized victory. As the Christian religion developed, the palm came to more specifically represent victory of spirit over desires of physicality. Under normal circumstances, on Palm Sunday we would offer palm fronds to all who join us for worship. Since our meetinghouse is virtual for now, we ask you to improvise! You are encouraged to snip a leafy branch from a shrub in your yard or to be creative and make an artificial palm frond of your own.

LENT  
2021



#CrossOfManyColors

### JOIN US IN BRINGING LIFE TO THIS LENTEN SEASON

#### A CROSS OF MANY COLORS:

During Lent, Sardis will reclaim life in the symbol of the cross through many colors of fabric. We will place a cross next to our road sign, and adorn it with a different fabric every few days during the season of Lent. The varied colors will remind us the rich and diverse seasons of life. Passersby can see the change daily, or follow along on Instagram for daily updates by using the hashtag #CrossOfManyColors.

#### SELFIE COLLAGE:

Sardis community members and extended church family are encouraged to share a selfie. Please send photos to the church email ([info@sardisbaptistcharlotte.org](mailto:info@sardisbaptistcharlotte.org)) by March 15th. We will merge collected photos into a community collage, which will be sent to each household in poster form. This way, all your church buddies can live on your refrigerator or file cabinet, and add some liveliness into your days.

#### HOMEMADE CROSSES:

Congregants are encouraged to make their own crosses (of any size), and display them in their homes, or in their background feeds on Zoom meetings. Simply take household items and transform them into meaning: cereal boxes, twigs and branches from your yard, yarn, popsicle sticks, construction paper, even duct tape will work. If you really like your cross, share it on social media with the hashtag #CrossOfManyColors.

#### BE BRIGHT BY WEARING/DISPLAYING BRIGHT:

Bring on your pastels and bright colors! Consider wearing life-giving colors when you join Zoom meetings, or use backgrounds that make us smile. This is our chance to reclaim Zoom and other virtual spaces as outlets of light, joy, peace, and hope.

#### LENTEN ARTIST:

Amber Simpson, an artist and minister, who lives in Alabama, but has NC ties (Chowan College) will join our Lenten efforts. Amber will be working on a collection of images, which will be incorporated into our weekly worship and weekday devotionals. You can read more about Amber in Sardis People.

#### SIDEWALK CROSSES:

During Holy Week, congregants will be invited to come to the Sardis grounds on their own schedule, and draw pastel crosses with sidewalk chalk on our walkways and parking lots. We'll greet Spring and Easter with a rainbow of colors. More details to come.

#### READ SIGNPOSTS, SOCIAL POSTS, AND WEEKLY EMAILS:

The staff will provide ongoing communications to keep you up to date on all things Lent 2021. Check your email and social accounts as you are able; join the conversations with comments, likes, and shares when you can; reach out to the staff and diaconate with any questions.

Amber Simpson

Sardis People...



"God created creative beings," declares Amber Simpson, who uses art to connect to the divine, to the self, and to others. She is connecting to Sardis for this season of Lent as Artist-in-Residence and will be sharing her creativity in worship each week. The abstract alcohol ink artist will help us to claim our connection to the divine and find our vitality in community as we reclaim the symbolism of cross, of zoom grid and of mask.

Amber reclaimed her artistic side after spending a few years in other pursuits. A strong artistic creativity began in Amber's childhood. The experiences of her growing up years (institutionalized religion, "always done it this way," less openness to the new) led to other goals becoming more important.

She attended Jacksonville State University in Alabama, earning a BS in secondary education and taught high school science for four years. Loving the interaction with youth and young adults, Amber branched out into church youth ministry. She began studies at Central Baptist Theological Seminary and earned a Master of Divinity. Dr. Molly Marshall who was president of Central at that time became one of her mentors. She was part of the Women's Cohort Leadership Initiative and journeyed to Cuba with them. The group met with about 30 women pastors as they provided leadership in reclaiming their Cuban heritage from Anglicization, putting new life into the music and other elements of worship.

Amber grew up in north Alabama with three sisters. She currently resides in Anniston, AL with her husband Scott, her two-year-old son Martin and their red heeler (a herding dog with origins in Australia) Dot, so named because of her freckles.

# LENTEN ● ●

## Prayer ● ●

**We offer condolences for family and friends  
of loved ones recently lost:**

Gaye Booth, friend of Ellen Dillard and Marge Henderson  
Herb Davis, friend of Marge Henderson  
Elizabeth Stultz Sawyer, Donna Harrill's mother  
Lori Werthen, friend of Tillie Duncan's

**Please remember the following people in your prayers:**

Our Country, Our Citizens, Our Leaders • Migrants and Advocates,  
including Eastside Advocacy Group and Migrant Assistance Project •  
Students, Teachers and School Staff • Holly Almond, aunt of Jacqueline  
Stillerman • Askins Family: Rebecca, Jourdan, Joey, Brady, Samuel,  
Reese & Keely • Jim Bowlin, father of Melissa • Melissa Bowlin •  
Maria Byrd • Sonny Cole, brother of Marge Henderson • Ben Cooley,  
Ruthie's husband • Elzene Corbett, Janet Beltzhoover's mother •  
Roddy Craft, friend of June Ross • Nancy Darnell • Larry and Amelia  
Eidson, Jonathan's parents • Gennelle Hall, Jessica Wallace's mother  
(Bullies 2 the Rescue) • Larry & Donna Harrill • Sharin, niece of Janie  
Harris • Danny Harthan, friend of Kreutzer's • Joanne Henkel,  
grandmother of Bennett • Eugene Hill • Kathie & Marvin Jean •  
Karen, CBF Field Personnel and friend of Amanda Lewis • Charlie King,  
friend of Mark Wiebke • Bob Lee, neighbor of Eidson's • Vicki Lewis,  
aunt of Amanda Lewis • Bobbie, Katie Mata's grandmother • John  
McKinney, friend of Donna Barger • Rachael Phipps, friend of Betty  
Gunz • Cheryl Raugh, friend of Kristin Parker • Mala Reynolds •  
Rolando, father of Tamara Prieyemski • Bob Rowland, Robin's father •  
Linda & Cameron Thomas • Deannie Tiddy, Jo's mother-in-law •  
Heather Robinson Weir, friend of Susan & Danny Phillips • Linda  
Robinson, friend of Susan and Danny Phillips • Jack Wall, brother of  
Joe • Lenka Warner, Jonathan's cousin • Katie Wiebke, daughter  
of Mark & Amy • Kelly Wise, friend of Melissa Bowlin

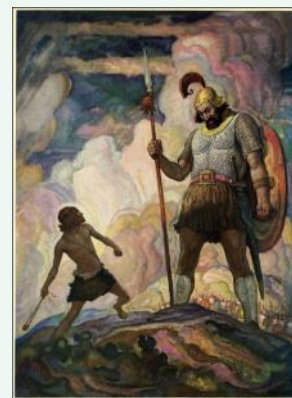
## A NEW POINT OF VIEW

Do you remember what you were taught about Noah's Ark or Jonah and the Whale when you were a child? *If I don't follow God's laws I will be punished, maybe by death.* What about Cain and Abel? *Sometimes what I think is good is not good enough for God. And feelings of jealousy are evil and deserve punishment.* David and Goliath? *Great faith and trust in God will lead Him to intervene and deliver me from trials.* These are not lessons we would teach our youngest church buddies at Sardis (or oldest, for that matter)! The Adult Sunday School class has been rereading Bible stories that may have been misinterpreted by some in our younger years. Discussions have led us to deeper meaning of scriptures, and we've gleaned knowledge that aligns with the God of our understanding. Following are just a few of the points-of-view we've discussed about the stories mentioned above:

- Noah's Ark is a re-creation story. We've all been overwhelmed at times in our lives and needed opportunities to begin anew.
- Jonah and the Whale is a story of inclusivity. Israelite leaders believed they should maintain purity by separating themselves from people of other nations. Jonah reminds us that the love of God is for people everywhere.
- Consider Cain and Abel, not as a story about the nature of God, but about the nature of humanity. Think of it as a story about human responses to difficult (but normal) emotions, and about God's grace regardless of the choices we make.
- David and Goliath reminds us: our metaphorical giants are not as powerful as our minds make them; the power of God in our world is expressed in unexpected ways; great success comes from knowing yourself, and acting from confidence of your identity.

We invite you to join us as we continue study and discernment of ancient stories in March:

March 7th	The 10 Commandments Exodus 19:16-20:21
March 14th	Naaman 2 Kings 5
March 21st	Peter and Cornelius Acts 10:1-11:18
March 28th	Paul's Trip to Rome Acts 27:1-28:16



**SMALL BUT MIGHTY: SARDIS BAPTIST 5-YEAR RECAP** — Rev. Bob Stillerman has created a presentation to show you where we've been in recent years, and to help us shape where we are going. It is quite surprising to look back at all we've done! We may be small, but we are mighty! Click here to access our 2016-2020 recap, or enter the following address in your web browser: [my.flipbookpdf.net/4Umzm](http://my.flipbookpdf.net/4Umzm)





## LENTEN HAIKU

by Roger Lynn

the world weighs heavy  
our brokenness wearies us  
*and yet God is here*

shadows threaten us  
darkness presses on all sides  
*God's light continues*

we hunger and thirst  
longing to be satisfied  
*abundance is here*

life comes as a gift  
whether we notice or not  
*it's time to rejoice*

having received  
we freely share what we have  
*God's abundant life*

God's love shining through  
filling our lives and our world  
*our response is praise*

**DON'T FORGET TO  
SPRING FORWARD!  
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME  
BEGINS ON  
SUNDAY, MARCH 14TH.**



HAPPY WORK ANNIVERSARY



Join us in celebrating Rev. Jonathan Eidson's  
8 years of service at Sardis Baptist Church!

## ROOF ABOVE

Working together to end homelessness



This Lenten season we will continue our tradition of honoring and memorializing our loved ones. In lieu of Easter lilies, you may purchase an honorarium by making a \$15 donation to the Sardis Baptist Roof Above fund. All of the funds we collect will be used to support Roof Above's effort to provide comprehensive resources for Charlotte's homeless population. Honorees will be recognized during worship on Easter morning as well as in our weekly email the week of Easter.

If you wish to purchase an Easter honorarium, please provide the following details to the church:

- 1—Your Name
- 2—Is this an honorarium or memorial?
- 3—List the full name(s) of the person(s) to be recognized.
- 4—Amount of donation

Send details and payment through USPS or Email/PayPal:

- USPS: Sardis Baptist Church / 5811 Sardis Rd / Charlotte, NC 28270.
- Email / PayPal: [info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org](mailto:info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org). Our PayPal page is located at <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/SardisBaptistChurch>.

