

sardis signposts

baptist church

a spiritually progressive community of faith

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

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday at 9:45 AM
Sunday School

Sunday at 11:00 AM
Morning Worship

Friday @ Noon
Virtual Prayer Gathering

ADVENT: THE GOSPEL OF SARDIS

Gospel is a fancy word for truth. In the Christian faith, gospel takes its form in story. We're familiar with the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Some of us may even be familiar with apocryphal (additional) gospels like Thomas. But too often, we fail to recognize the most important gospels: our own stories of truth!

The stories in our sacred texts reflect communities of faith seeking to make sense of the life of Jesus. Something about him was true. Somehow, somehow, Jesus made God more accessible, more present, and more realized in everyday, relational encounters – we often call them kin-dom moments. No, we weren't firsthand witnesses to that first supper, or to the feeding of the multitudes, or to the healing miracles. But we have known tables. And we have been fed. And we have found healing. God is true and present in our own lives. Our gospel, the Gospel of Sardis, speaks a powerful truth. Perhaps the Advent season is the perfect time for us to speak and hear our truth anew.

Good stories always start with hope! As we prepare to welcome the Christ child, it's important to remember that we are in the process of becoming. YHWH, the name of our God, means "I am who I will be." God has created each of us, just as we are, in order that we might become who we will be. Hope reminds us that God is present and inbreaking; we are moving toward God, and God toward us. Hope helps us believe that ours is a story worth telling!

Hope leads to peace. Peace is less about the absence of conflict, and more about the access of space. When we hope, we become more aware of the peaceful spaces God provides, and we gain confidence in the expression of our gifts. If hope allows us to conceive of the story, perhaps peace allows us the stillness and purpose to compose it. Peace. Be still. And know that I am God. And know that I've got you!

Dreamers hope. Stories take form in peaceful spaces. Spoken stories bring joy. Joy that we are not alone. Joy that we can find the divine in our ordinary activities, too. Joy that God is invested in our world. Joy that we play a part in making God's world a reality.

We hope for a story. We find peace of mind to tell it. We experience joy in its telling. Joy provokes us to love. In telling of God's love, we experience God's love for ourselves. The spirit stirs us to share that love with others.

The season is here, Sardis. We've got a gospel full of hope, peace, joy, and love. Come and speak, "Truth!" with us.



Jesus did not invest in the status quo and neither do we! Our worship plans for December are extraordinary. Services that differ from standard plans are detailed below. These services will be intergenerational and we encourage Sardis kiddos of all ages to join us in worship.

December 19th at 10:30 AM Worshipful Lovefest

We will celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Love, with a festive worship service that includes favorite Christmas carols, coffee, and cocoa. Please note, Sunday School will not meet on December 19th, and worship will begin half an hour earlier than usual at 10:30 AM.

**December 24th at 5:00 PM
Canon, Carols, and Candlelight**
Our annual Christmas Eve service begins at 5:00 PM. We will read stories of the Christ child from our canon, sing Christmas carols, and welcome the light of the world during a candlelit worship service.

**December 26th – Anytime
Virtual Worship**
A recording of worship will be available for you to watch when you wake on Sunday, December 26th. We will NOT meet in person for Sunday School or worship.

www.facebook.com/SardisBaptistCharlotte

www.youtube.com/channel/UCsNtR_jGcOwUddbzGHax4bw/videos

**January 2nd at 11:00 AM
Second Sunday of Christmas**
We will continue our celebration of the Christ child during worship at the meeting-house on January 2nd at 11:00 AM. This will be an informal, intergenerational time of worship and song. Sunday School will meet prior to worship at 9:45 AM.

LIGHT THE WORLD THIS CHRISTMAS

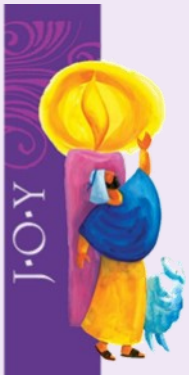
BY GRETTA VOSPER



HOPE—As this season of “sparkle and bright” unfolds before us, the glimmering promises of hope lie like boxed jewels awaiting an adoring light. May we hold fast to hope’s patient possibilities. May we lift them high that they might catch the light of our dreams and shine bright in our broken world. And may we instill hope’s challenge in the hearts of our children that they, too, will live it into meaning—pouring their lives, as we do ours, into making it real—for themselves, for each other, for the world. May Hope light the world this Christmas.



PEACE—As this season of “sparkle and bright” unfolds around us, the silent prayers of peace lie like stars hidden in a clouded night. May we inspire the world with peace. May we touch it to our lives that in every place of stress, frustration, or fear, we might feel the presence of peace easing our hearts and transforming our lives. And may we share its healing power with our children, that they might become the inspiration through which peace makes its way to a new yet-dreamt-of world. May Peace light the world this Christmas.



JOY—As this season of “sparkle and bright” unfolds around us the transforming wonders of joy await discovery like shimmering sugar crystals on a favorite treat. May we create joy in all our surroundings as we share gifts, meals, and simple pleasures with family and friends. May the easy gift of a smile bring the power of joy’s touch to those we meet through these busy days. And may we experience the joy of this season as though with the eyes and hearts of children that we might be transfixed by power of what could be. May Joy light the world this Christmas.



LOVE—As this season of “sparkle and bright” unfolds around us the welcome beauty of love is found, woven into the simplicity of every moment. May love flow from our hearts with abundance filling every moment with the season’s gifts of hope and peace and joy. May it be shared truly and deeply that all who encounter it be charged with its message and become, themselves, the agents of love. And may our children, who love without reckoning, teach us the truth of this most precious gift—we are nothing without each other. Let us live, then, in the blessing of love. May Love light the world this Christmas.

Daynette Snead Perez

Sardis People:



Dawtchin was the sobriquet of Rev. Dr. Daynette Snead Perez when she served on the pastoral staff of the First Chin Baptist Church in New Bern. The congregation of refugees from Myanmar designated her: one who “loves the Chin people.” When she preaches for Sardis on the 12th of December, she will be wearing the stole they presented to her when she finished her ministry there. As the founder of her company DIASPRA, LLC, Dr. Perez could be described as one who loves _____ people. Fill in the blank with any ethnicity, gender, generation, or social class. The company is focused on making one aware of diversity and inclusion and on aiding in the societal recovery from systemic injustice. Stranger to Neighbor ministry is a part of DIASPRA. Her recently published book, *Church: What to Do When Everyone Is Like You*, also promotes building relationships with people who are different.

Daynette helped Trenton, NC, rebuild after Hurricane Florence. She was the local response coordinator for the Haiti (Hey-tie) community, coordinating volunteer teams who came to help dig out from flood debris left by six feet of water covering the community. She now serves as manager of CBF National Domestic Disaster Response. Under her leadership the 1000 Bucket Challenge was launched in Louisiana, providing 2021 hurricane victims with buckets of cleaning supplies.

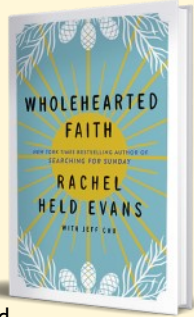
The Richmond, VA native grew up with seven brothers and sisters. Her educational experience includes Shenandoah University, degree in music; Regent University, M. Div.; and Gardner-Webb University, D. Min. She was ordained by First Baptist Church, New Bern.

Daynette and husband Pedro recently celebrated their second wedding anniversary. Their four adult children live along the east coast: New York, Baltimore, and Atlanta.

WHOLEHEARTED FAITH

- Written by Rachel Held Evans with Jeff Chu

The Sunday School class will begin discussing **Wholehearted Faith** this month. This is a collection of essays by Rachel Held Evans, whose reflections on faith and life encourage, challenge, and influence. This book asks candid questions about the stories we've been told—and the stories we tell—about our faith, ourselves, and our world.



Wholehearted Faith is for the doubter and the dreamer, the seeker and the sojourner, those who long for a sense of spiritual wholeness as well as those who have been hurt by the church. Through theological reflection and personal recollection, Rachel wrestles with God's grace and love, looks unsparingly at what the Church is and does, and explores universal human questions about becoming and belonging.

All are welcome to join our Sunday morning discussions. We meet at 9:45 AM in the largest classroom in the Education Building.

The book is available locally at Park Road Books and Barnes and Noble. Contact the church office if you would like assistance procuring a copy.

BLESSINGS AND PRAYERS FOR SARDIS FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

Pray for peace and comfort through the holiday season for those who are grieving the recent loss of loved ones:

- Family and friends of Jeff Allen, Jacqueline Stillerman's father
- Family and friends of Henry Barnes, relative of Kathryn Kreutzer
- Family and friends of Linda Black, relative of Tillie Duncan
- Family and friends of Jack Gentry, relative of Kathryn Kreutzer
- Family and friends of Linda Thomas, friend of Melissa Bowlin

Pray for the health and well-being of those who are sick or recovering from surgeries and injuries:

- Holly Almond, aunt of Jacqueline Stillerman • Melissa Bowlin
- Maria Byrd • Carol, neighbor of Tillie Duncan • Pat Chowning, friend of Marge Henderson • Sonny Cole, Marge Henderson's brother
- Elzene Corbett, Janet Beltzhoover's mother • Becky Crisco, friend of Marge Henderson • Nancy Darnell • Ron Demme • Larry & Amelia Eidson, Jonathan's parents • Carter England-Cole • Mary Moon Guerrant, mother of Kathryn Kreutzer • Betty Gunz • Larry & Donna Harrill • Shareen, niece of Janie Harris • Daniel Hudgins, son of Scott Hudgins (CBF-NC) • Kathie & Marvin Jean • Charlie King, friend of Mark Wiebke • Lela, relative of Tillie Duncan • Ann Macguire, sister of Rev. Ruth Gouldbourne (Grove Lane) • John McKinney, friend of Donna Barger • Kristin Parker • Kendarius, Mekhi, and Rachael Phipps, friends of Betty Gunz • Beau Prevost, friend of Jim Owen • Becky Proctor • Cheryl Raugh, friend of Kristin Parker • Mala Reynolds • Rolando, father of Tamara Prieyemski • Bob Rowland, Robin's father • Tanya Stevenson, daughter of June Ross • Linda & Cameron Thomas • Deannie Tiddy, Jo's mother-in-law • Doris Waiters • Julie White, friend of Marge Henderson • Kelly Wise, friend of Melissa Bowlin

Pray for the safety of those traveling:

- The Askins Family (Rebecca, Jourdan, Joey, Brady, Samuel, Reese, and Keely) recently relocated to Japan • Karen, friend of Amanda Lewis, working overseas for CBF • Vadim, Veronica, and Kira Pateshkin, chosen family of Billie Hutchison, from Belarus awaiting paperwork from American Embassy for move to the United States • Katie Wiebke, daughter of Mark & Amy, traveling and working in South America

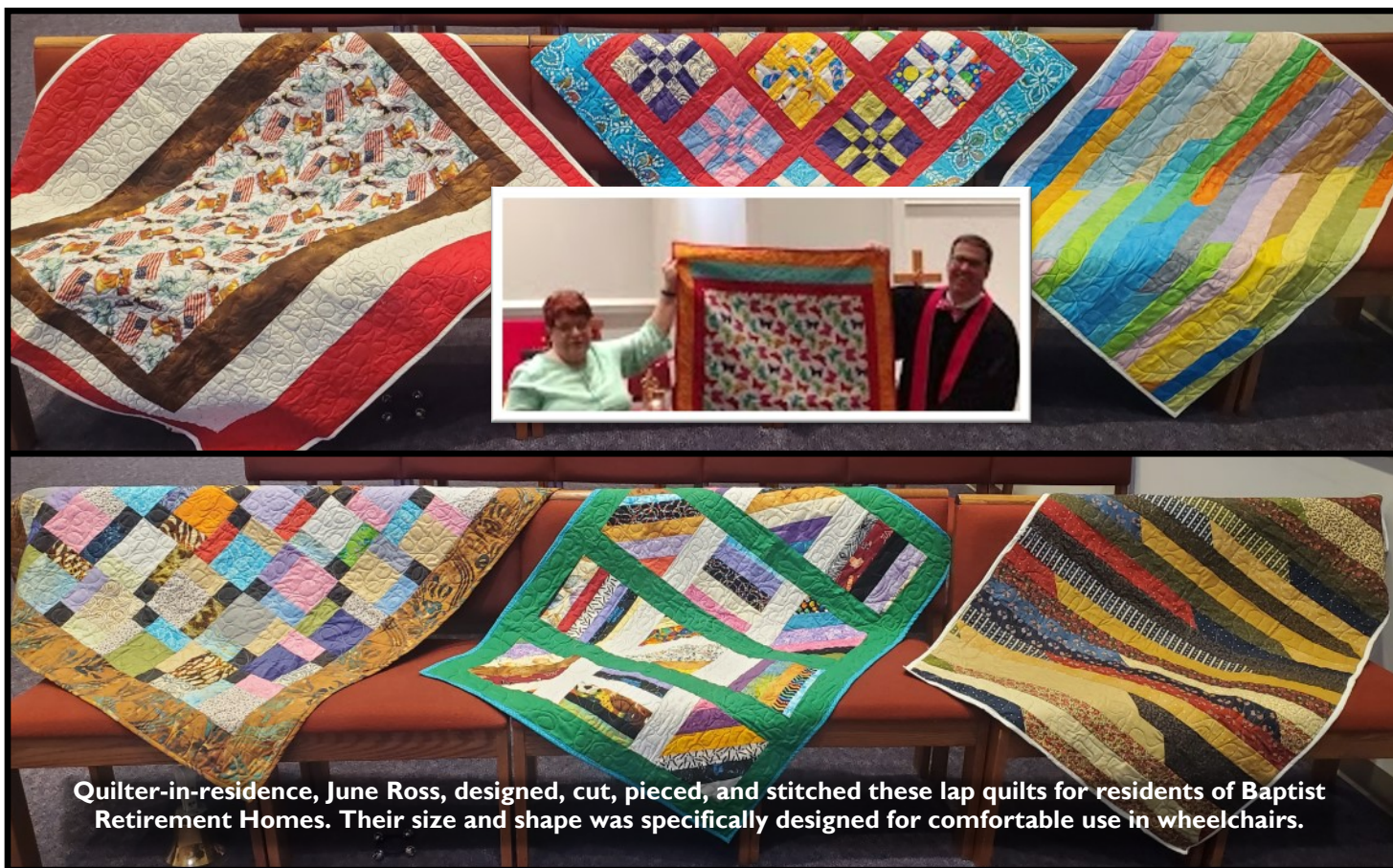


MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET THE MUSICAL

Miracle on 34th Street, a play adapted from the novel by Valentine Davies, will be presented at Matthews Playhouse this month. This heartwarming story is about a man named Kris Kringle who helps families procure exactly the toys their young'uns yearn for.

Our very own Jeff Jackson is performing in the ensemble. Tickets are available for shows between December 9th-19th: \$16 for adults; \$14 for students, seniors and children, and can be ordered online at www.matthewsplayhouse.com/miracle.

The shows will take place in Fullwood Theatre located in Matthews Playhouse: 100 East McDowell Street, Matthews, NC 28105. Contact the box office with questions, (704) 846-8343.



Quilter-in-residence, June Ross, designed, cut, pieced, and stitched these lap quilts for residents of Baptist Retirement Homes. Their size and shape was specifically designed for comfortable use in wheelchairs.

CHRISTMAS REMEMBRANCES

Traditionally during Advent, we offer the opportunity to honor or memorialize special people in our lives with poinsettias displayed on Christmas Eve as a visual reminder of the love and appreciation we feel. During worship, the names of honorees are read aloud. This year we are putting worship in action and honoring our loved ones differently. We invite you to make a donations to Goodness Groceries in lieu of purchasing poinsettias.

The primary benefactor of Goodness Groceries is Charlotte Secondary School. CSS is a nearby charter school where 60% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. The Goodness Groceries food pantry opened in the Spring of 2020 at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Initially the plan was to provide food for hungry students and their families during Spring break and Easter. Your continued outpouring of support has enabled the school to continue providing assistance to families in need for more than a year and a half. Funds from Goodness Groceries are used to stock the school's food pantry, and also to provide school supplies for economically insecure students.

If you wish to honor or memorialize loved ones, please provide the following information to the church:

- 1— Your Name
- 2— Is this in honor or memory of your loved one?
- 3— List the full name of the person(s) to be recognized
- 4— Amount of donation (for reference, the cost of poinsettias is approximately \$15 apiece)

Options for sending this information follow:

- Order forms will be available at the church on Sundays
- Mail the above details along with payment to the church office: 5811 Sardis Rd / Charlotte, NC 28270
- Email the above details to the church office: info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org, and submit payment via our secure PayPal page, www.paypal.com/paypalme/SardisBaptistChurch.



BAPTIST RETIREMENT HOMES
OF NORTH CAROLINA, INCORPORATED

Sardis Baptist resident quilter, June Ross, has presented handmade quilts to Sardis friends struggling with illness and to all Sardis babies born since she joined our congregation. She has also given custom quilted stoles for members of the ministry staff. This year, like in years past, June has designed, cut, pieced, and stitched six quilts for donation in the name of Sardis Baptist Church to residents living in Baptist Retirement Homes. Our ministry partner, Baptist Retirement Homes is a faith-based, not-for-profit organization that provides residential and healthcare living options for senior citizens in North Carolina. We know June's quilts, made with love and prayer, will bring comfort and warmth to recipients. We are grateful to June for modeling how we can turn our skills and abilities into active prayers.