

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
Study Group

Sunday at 11:00 AM
Morning Worship

FOUNDING DEAN OF WAKE FOREST DIVINITY SCHOOL DR. BILL LEONARD AT SARDIS ON NOVEMBER 19TH

Dr. Bill Leonard, Professor Emeritus of Divinity, Wake Forest University, will lead the Sardis congregation to look at the history of and continuing influence of Baptists in the life of our nation. On Sunday, November 19th, he will meet with Sardis folk at 9:45 AM to give insight on who Baptists have been and are. At 11:00 he will continue the theme in the morning worship service.

An aficionado of church history, Dr. Leonard is especially drawn to Baptist studies and American religion with particular interest in the Appalachian region. His study of the subject was pursued at Texas Wesleyan (B.A.), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (M. Div.), Boston University (Ph. D.) and at Yale University (post-doctoral work).

Prominent pastor, author, and professor of preaching, Dr. Steve Shoemaker avers, "Bill Leonard is one of our best teachers of American Religious History and an astute theological observer of religion in American today." Dr. Leonard taught church history at Southern Seminary, was Department Chair of Religion and Philosophy at Samford University and was the founding dean (1996) of the Wake Forest University Divinity School, as well as being named the James and Marilyn Dunn Chair of Baptist Studies there in 2012. During his teaching career, he was visiting professor at Seinan Gakuin University in Fukuoka, Japan. Dr. Leonard retired from teaching in 2018.

Karen Richardson Dunn, a well-being counselor at Wake Forest / Asheville, interviewed Leonard upon his retirement. She described him as "crackling with energy." His greatest hope for the future of the church: the human beings who sit in his classroom. "They are...agents of compassion, reconciliation and justice." His greatest legacy: "My greatest gift was to interact about ideas, issues and the Gospel with a group of students who ARE the legacy."

The author or editor of 25 books, Dr. Leonard's latest offering is Homebrewed Christianity Guide to Church History: Flaming Heretics and Heavy Drinkers. He is also a regular columnist for Baptist News Global and a sought-after speaker on church history and the changing shape of religion in America. The Bill J. Leonard papers are housed in the Z. Smith Reynolds Library Special Collections and Archives of Wake Forest University.



**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8TH
WORKING DINNER @ 5:45 PM**

**Sardis Baptist Church is...
Sardis Baptist Church aspires to...**

Consider these two statements as progress on the Sardis Visioning Process continues. The next phase of the journey requires input from all of us who are invested in the future of Sardis Baptist!

Please gather with friends for a working dinner on Wednesday, November 8th at 5:45 PM. With guidance from David Brown, our goal for the evening will be to formulate a Mission Statement that will lead us into the future. Our Mission Statement will succinctly encapsulate the essence of why Sardis Baptist Church exists.

Once voted on by the congregation, the Mission Statement will undergird the rest of our Visioning Process, as well as future decisions for Sardis Baptist Church. We are currently recruiting task groups that will help us determine specifically HOW we will live into our stated mission. An overview of the task groups can be found on page 3. Take a look and let a member of our ministry team know how you feel called to serve.

SARDIS BAPTIST'S NOVEMBER PROCLAIMERS

Interaction with the Bible is one way that has brought individuals and churches to this moment in their lives. Along the way of their faith journey, November's proclaimers have found that there are certain Bible stories which appeal to them in a thoughtful, provoking way.

REV. DANIEL RUSHING

Rev. Rushing is drawn to the story of the Demoniak of the Gadarenes because of its many layers. The demoniac tells Jesus that his name is "Legion," reminding one of the Roman legions who occupied Israel at the time. As many domination systems do, Rome tried to destroy the unique identifications of the people they conquered. In the process of a culture losing its identity, many individuals lose a sense of who they are. The story gives hope as the demoniac is restored to a sense of who he positively is.

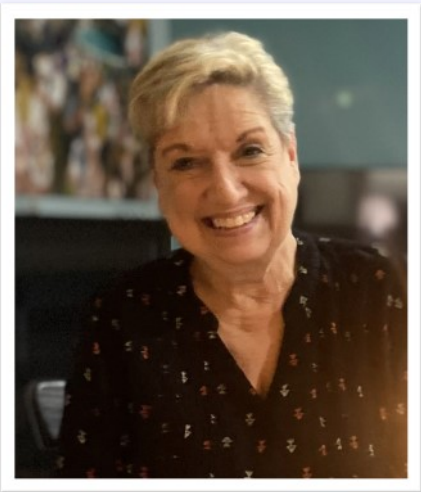
Daniel grew up in Troy, NC. He graduated from Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee and from the Gardner-Webb School of Divinity. Presently in the real estate business, he has pastored churches in Charlotte and in Asheville and has been an adjunct professor of New Testament studies. Daniel and his wife Crystal have two daughters. Bianca is a college student and Olivia is a high school senior.



REV. REBECCA PROCTOR

Rev. Proctor claims the story of Esther as one of her favorites. It is the story of a young woman who is a citizen of an oppressed minority. With the help of family and friends who have influence in high places, she is positioned to become and be named Queen. Because she is in the right place at the right time, Esther is empowered to save her people from annihilation and give them hope for the future.

Becky grew up in Salem, Virginia. She attended Hollins University where Lottie Moon was educated. (Lottie was a nineteenth century Baptist missionary to China.) Then she graduated from Madison College (now James Madison University) with a degree in music and English. She was first in her class at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Serving in churches in Virginia, Becky has held positions with music, youth and children, and religious education. Sardis is one of the churches benefiting from her minister-of-music talents. Her husband Rick is also an integral part of the music program, lending his first-class tenor voice to the Sardis choir.



REV. LEDAYNE MCLEESE POLASKI

Rev. Polaski is partial to the story of Peter and Cornelius, where everything that Peter knows to be good and right and moral is upended. "I am mystified as to why this story hasn't had more influence in the church," she says.

LeDayne grew up in Greenville, SC and graduated from Furman University. Post graduate work was completed at Duke University School of Divinity and she was ordained by Watts Street Baptist Church in Durham. (Watts Street holds the distinction of ordaining, in 1962, the first Baptist woman to the gospel ministry.) She is currently the Executive Director of Mecklenburg Ministries. Previously she was director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America. LeDayne's work with these organizations has been ecumenical and inclusive. She has led groups in the examination of conflict transformation and has trained others in trauma awareness and resilience. Her husband Tom is a professor at Winthrop and their daughter Kate is a recent Meredith graduate.



INTERIM PASTOR UPDATE

Your Interim Search Team has concluded a number of tasks necessary to the securing of an interim pastor. They have written a job description and interviewed several candidates. The discernment process is ongoing, but the team looks forward to recommending a candidate as soon as the middle of the month. November 12th has been set as a tentative date for a called church conference for the church to vote on a recommendation. The Search Team is composed of Ellen Dillard, Luther Fisher, and Robin Rowland, with Tillie Duncan as staff representative.

RADICAL Inclusion

COMMUNITY-WIDE INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Tuesday, November 21, 2023 | 7 - 9 PM

Trinity Presbyterian Church

3115 Providence Rd Charlotte, NC 28211

RSVP



prayer

CONDOLENCES

*Our heartfelt sympathies are with friends
who have recently lost loved ones:*

Judy Vick, aunt of Melissa Bowlin

Paul Holbrook, son of Mary & John Holbrook

Kai Newman, brother of Kris Hawkins

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Ken Abbott, friend of June Ross • Rita Akers, friend of the Phillips family
- Clemmer Allison, friend of Alcie Kreutzer • Charles Almond, grandfather of Jacqueline Stillerman • Holly Almond, aunt of Jacqueline Stillerman
- Melissa Bowlin • Mark & Cheryl Bradbury, friends of Jonathan Eidson
- Mike Bryant, friend of Mark Wiebke • Maria Byrd • Celia, friend of Amy Wiebke • Elzene Corbett, Janet Beltzhoover's mother • Rae Deicke, friend of Jean Lawrence • Nela Demme, Ron's dog • Betsy Cadle DePaul • Dusty Detterman, daughter of June Ross • Luke Duncan, son of Tillie and Shannon • Amelia Eidson • Ed Gash • Mildred Gragg, mother of Billie Hutchison • Janette Grassi • Mary Moon Guerrant, Kathryn Kreutzer's mother • Janie Harris • Kathie & Marvin Jean • Jen Kaminska, friend of the Kreutzer family • Ann Macguire, sister of Rev. Ruth Gouldbourne (Grove Lane) • Robert Marshall, grandson of Janette Grassi • Rex Nordeen, cousin of Tillie Duncan • Frank Phillips, brother of Danny Phillips • Vicki Phillips, niece of Shannon Duncan • Rachel Phipps and her children, Kendarius and Mekhi, friends of Betty Gunz • Pam Poston • Bill Reynolds • Mala Reynolds • Tony Rivers, friend of the Taylor family • Bob Rowland, Robin's father • Pamela Schwartz, former staff of St. Stephen UMC • John Simpson • Sarah Simpson, friend of John Simpson • Tanya Stevensen, daughter of June Ross • Stillerman Family • Eddie Waiters, husband of Doris • Reggie Warren, friend of Becky Proctor's • Katie Wiebke, daughter of Mark & Amy • Kelly Wise, friend of Melissa Bowlin

TRAVELING MERCIES

- Askins Family (Rebecca, Jourdan, Joey, Brady, Samuel, Reece, Keely)
- Leon Fisher • Karen, friend of Amanda Lewis

*I pray peace into the hearts of those who hate, into the minds of those who live in anger,
of those who long for revenge...*

Peace I pray











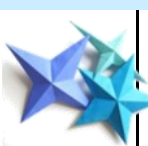
*Peace against all the odds, peace without compromise, peace strong and enduring,
peace so children never worry as they go to sleep.*

Excerpt from Steven Charleston, Episcopal Bishop and Citizen of the Choctaw Nation

Visit the Greater Good website for articles that explore peace, and resources for well-being and activism:
greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/greater_good_resources_for_peace_and_conflict

Sardis Baptist Church

November November

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1		2	3	4
	The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM				Clergy Group Meeting	
	Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM		4:00 PM Staff Meeting 5:45 PM Fellowship Dinner 6:30 PM All Saint's Labyrinth Walk 7:30 PM Choir Practice			 Clocks Fall Back Before Bedtime!
5 Twenty-Third Sunday After Pentecost Daylight Savings Ends 9:45 AM Book Study: Deconstructing Hell 11:00 AM Rev. Daniel Rushing	6	7	8	9	10	11
	The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM					
	Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM		4:00 PM Staff Meeting 5:45 PM Working Fellowship Dinner: Sardis Mission Statement 7:45 PM Choir Practice			
		Election Day 				
12 Twenty-Fourth Sunday After Pentecost 9:45 AM Book Study: Deconstructing Hell 11:00 AM Rev. Becky Proctor Noon Called Church Conference	13	14	15	16	17	18
	The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM				Clergy Group Meeting	
	Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM		4:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:30 PM Choir Practice			
		 7:00 PM Charlotte Wildlife Stewards Community Program				
19 Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost 9:45 AM What IS Baptist? Rev. Bill Leonard 11:00 AM Rev. Bill Leonard	20	21	22	23	24	25
	The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM					
	Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM		4:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:30 PM Choir Practice	Happy Thanksgiving! 		
		5:45 PM Fellowship Dinner 7:00 PM Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Trinity Presbyterian				
26 Twenty-Sixth Sunday After Pentecost 9:45 AM Book Study: Deconstructing Hell 11:00 AM Rev. LeDayne Polaski	27	28	29	30		
	The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM					
	Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM		4:00 PM Staff Meeting 7:30 PM Choir Practice			
		7:00 PM Magnificence Making at the Home of Jean Lawrence				

Simple Gifts



*"'Tis the gift to be simple, 'tis the gift to be free,
'tis the gift to come down where we ought to be..."*

Although the Shakers who wrote this hymn are not the traditional pilgrims we think of around Thanksgiving, their story is very similar and just as important to the history of the United States.

The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing, the Shakers as they were more commonly known because of their "ecstatic dancing" ("About the Shakers" from pbs.org), came to North America in 1774, led by Ann Lee, or Mother Ann as her followers called her. They left Manchester, England, looking for religious tolerance and settled near Albany, New York. "The Shakers believed society could be perfected and a paradise on earth created through communal living, gender and racial equality, pacifism, confession of sin, celibacy, and separation from the world" ("The Shakers" from shakermuseum.us). Radical beliefs yes, but we at Sardis would probably agree with them on many, if not all, of their teachings.

*"When true simplicity is gained,
to bow and to bend we shan't be ashamed..."*

The Shaker community has dwindled through the years, but their many contributions, and this song in particular, have stood the test of time. Though it was mostly unknown to the outside world, the greater population was made aware of the song in 1944, almost 100 years after its composition, when Aaron Copland incorporated the tune into his ballet Appalachian Spring. Then, in 1950, he included an arrangement in his first set of "Old American Songs." It was performed at President Ronald Reagan's second inauguration, President Bill Clinton's first inauguration, and President Barack Obama's first inauguration ("Song of the Week: Simple Gifts" by Raina Sayer for themusicclass.com). Many of us are also familiar with "Lord of the Dance," an adaptation of the tune composed by Sydney Carter in 1963.

With its uncomplicated melody, its message of simplicity and freedom, and the people who gave us this hymn in the first place, it's no wonder that "Simple Gifts" is still with us. If we step back and take stock, we have a lot to be thankful for, and though we may experience much "turning" in our lives, "by turning, turning we come 'round right."

~ Hilary McIntyre



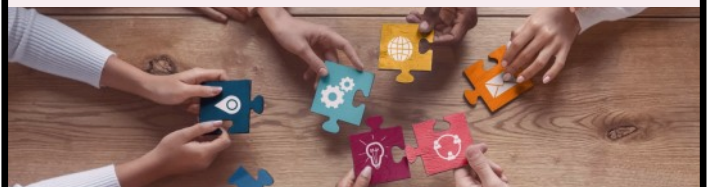
How many performances do you see each week? How many do you give each week? Sometimes we act like we feel good even when we don't. Sometimes we act interested even when we're not. Sometimes it's hard to tell if we're witnessing a performance or not but there are always those in our lives who we don't need to perform for, who don't feel the need to perform for us.

In my recent spiritual direction, after reading Ephesians 2:4-6 and entering a time of silence, we discussed and expressed gratitude that our relationship with God is not dependent upon performance. I've known this forever so you would think I'd no longer need reminding but that's not the case. I still do!! Have you considered faith as performance before? I believe Jesus was referring to performance when he directed his followers not to pray with fanfare on the street corner as the hypocrites did but to go into your own room and do so in private.

After our second time of silence, my spiritual director asked me what bubbled up. The image didn't come to my mind until that moment. What bubbled up was the memory of a spring on my grandfather's land. On a tree beside it was a nail on which hung an aluminum drinking dipper. We only needed one because we all drank from the same dipper (I know!) and that water was the best water I've ever had. In that bubbling up, I thought of all the times I've heard about Jesus offering living water. Isn't it a good thing that there's no performance necessary for it?

~ Jonathan Eidson

VISIONING TASK GROUPS



We have begun the recruitment process for task groups that will help us determine specifically HOW Sardis Baptist will live into the Mission Statement that is being formulated through our Visioning Process. Three groups will be formed. Please let a member of our ministry team know where you feel called to serve:

The first group will evaluate our **Systems & Structures**. This group will update our governing documents, evaluate our organizational model, and they will guide how to best utilize the gifts and resources of Sardis staff members.

The second group is the **Communication Crew**. They will focus on telling the Sardis story more effectively. This group will work with a third-party specialist to develop intentional plans for internal and external communication.

The third group, **Community Builders**, will explore ways to deepen internal relationships within Sardis and expand external relationships in the larger community. This group will also create a campus use plan to encourage intentional stewardship of our buildings and grounds.



SARDIS CROP WALK 2023

FALL PICNIC & TRUNK-OR-TREAT

Advent Theme: Magnificence in the Ordinary



During spring and summer months, deciduous trees are continuously synthesizing chlorophyll which causes their leaves to appear green in color. As the days begin to shorten in fall, there are fewer hours of sunlight, allowing for less photosynthesis. The trees cannot synthesize as much chlorophyll, therefore allowing their innate colors to appear.

The magnificent oranges and yellows were always there, our eyes just couldn't see them! The colors were masked by the green pigment from the chlorophyll.

Splendor is everywhere, but it often escapes our perceptions. During the season of Advent, we will look for magnificence in the ordinary. Like the beautiful colors of the fall leaves, we want to open ourselves to see what was always present, but previously unseen.

The Worship Development Team invites you, not only to *see* magnificence in the ordinary, but to *make* something magnificent from something ordinary. On two occasions, we'll gather at the homes of Sardis friends to shape something splendid from standard supplies; we'll create ornaments for Sardis' Christmas tree using paper worship guides left behind after recent Sunday services, along with some other ordinary items. Our hosts will be Jean Lawrence and Susan Phillips on Tuesdays, November 28th and December 5th at 7 PM. Please save the dates and join Sardis friends for two evenings of magnificence making!

