

# sardis signposts baptist church

a spiritually progressive community of faith

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

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday at 9:45 AM  
Study Group

Sunday at 11:00 AM  
Morning Worship

## GOSPEL TRUTHS AND EASTER DOUBTS

Truth and fact are not always synonymous. Great truths are often shared through stories that are not believed as fact. As I child, I learned about the consequences of greed from farmers who killed the goose that laid golden eggs (Aesop's Fables); I learned to listen more and speak less from a wise old owl (Mother Goose); and I learned that "A person's a person, no matter how small" from Horton, the talking elephant (Dr. Seuss). The fact that animals don't lay golden eggs and owls and elephants don't speak English, doesn't negate the truths I learned from the stories.

The seasons of Lent and Easter are difficult for Christians working through doubts because we struggle with truth and fact. Many of us were taught that we must accept as fact two core tenets, or gospel truths, about the cross in order to identify as Christian: first, salvation from sin (Jesus pays so that God forgives), and second, sacrifice for redemption (suffering triumphs over sin). Some Christians doubt these doctrines because they cannot reconcile a loving and compassionate Jesus with a violent God who requires suffering and sacrifice. Others have struggled with resurrection: is the Easter story about a physical reappearance of Jesus, or is it about the spiritual renewal of the life he lived and ways he led? Does the truth of resurrection require a specific belief about the historical facts?

Some of us have repressed difficult questions of doubt for fear of rejection from our communities of faith (and others), but Sardis Baptist believes that exploring our doubts can be a catalyst for deepening our relationship with God. The role of a healthy faith community (and healthy faith leaders) is not to tell you what to believe or to force feed facts, but to facilitate connection with God, and to serve you in ways that allow you to determine what is true for yourself.

Beyond the seasons of Lent and Easter, we encourage difficult questions about the conceptual beliefs you hold about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. According to two (but only two) of the gospel accounts, our greatest spiritual teacher uttered words of question and doubt before his final breath, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46, Mark 15:34). Let these words be a reminder that questions and doubt do not offend God. The other gospels declare different words and sentiments as Jesus' last. May variations in the gospel accounts encourage questions that stimulate new life in your understanding of the Easter story, in your acceptance of gospel truths, and in your relationship with God.

~ Kathryn Kreutzer

## HOLY WEEK WITH SARDIS

### Palm Sunday

**March 24th @ 11:00 AM**

*We remember Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We will wave palms and process to the labyrinth as we end worship on this special day.*

### Maundy Thursday Communion Supper

**March 28th @ 6:00 PM**

*Join us for a light supper of soups, grapes, cheese and bread – simple foods that we imagine may have been enjoyed amongst friends in the Upper Room. We will remember Jesus' last meal with the disciples.*

### Good Friday Community Worship

**March 29th @ St. Stephen UMC**

*Sardis Baptist, Sardis Presbyterian, and St. Stephen UMC will partner for the annual community Good Friday worship service. This year's service will be held at St. Stephen (6800 Sardis Road). Additional details are forthcoming.*

### Easter Sunrise Service

**March 31st @ 7:00 AM**

*Joins in the Sardis Baptist labyrinth on Easter morning at 7:00 AM for a sunrise service. This simple service of prayer, song, and scripture is a beautiful way to begin the Easter season.*

### Easter Breakfast

**March 31st @ 7:45 AM**

*Worship often occurs around the table. Sardis friends will gather for breakfast at the Original House of Pancakes (4736 Sharon Road) on Easter morning at 7:45 AM.*

### Easter Morning Worship

**March 31st @ 11:00 AM**

*Sardis will host a celebratory Easter service in our sanctuary (and online) at 11 AM. Please note, the Sunday morning book study group will not meet on Easter morning.*

# COMMUNITY BUILDERS TASK GROUP

*Sardis's Community Builders will lead us to deepen internal relationships and expand our relationship to the larger community. In addition they will lead us to an intentional stewardship of our buildings and grounds. Each of the members have experience in building community in various ways.*

## **JEAN LAWRENCE**

Jean builds community internationally. She teaches English to persons who have immigrated to the United States and want a fuller understanding of the language. She draws on her background of teaching, in earlier years having taught French in Charlotte area schools. At Sardis she is involved in the Sunday morning discussion group, the G-3, and has contributed to the visual aspects of special church events. Especially memorable is the bread that she made for a world communion Sunday.

## **SUSAN PHILLIPS**

One of Susan's favorite ways of building community is with children, having spent several years as a minister to children and as a consultant for other ministers to children. At Sardis she currently serves on the Worship Development Team and on the Pastor Search Team. She enjoys Shepherd's Center activities and is involved in their community program to provide transportation for seniors who need the service to attend their doctor's appointments.

## **SHANNON ROBERTS**

Shannon builds community with writers as a liaison and an editor of an author submission service. She supports Sardis in various ways and is currently on the Pastor Search Team, where she serves as recorder of their meetings. She is a contributing participant in the Sunday morning discussion group and in occasional events which help to deepen internal relationships. Studies in psychology have given her a solid background for relationship building.

## **RACHEL FAULK**

An ardent dancer, Rachel has built community at Sardis by hosting a Wednesday evening program in which participants learned some Latin dances. She has also invited congregants to listen to podcasts together as discussion starters. She is all about intentionality in communication and connection. She, too, has a background in psychology as well as in women and gender studies.

## **BETTY GUNZ**

Betty is passionate about social justice issues and keeps the people of Sardis informed about opportunities to let our voices be heard. The saving of the earth by environmental integrity is another of her passions. In keeping with those interests, she has served on the missions team at Sardis and led in undertakings to share food and support to immigrants and other underserved folk in our population.

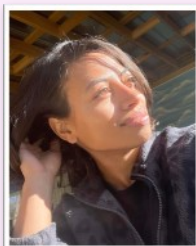
## **ROBIN ROWLAND**

Robin has honed her community skills by teaching basic skills and coordinating instruction for the mentally and physically challenged. She serves on a suicide prevention coalition as well. Robin has led us to use our creative talents at Christmas time as we decorate the tree and make wreaths for building community with those who are unable to attend services on a regular basis. She gave visual evidence of our animal blessing by making a radiance with pictures of loved animal companions.

## **JONATHAN EIDSON**

Jonathan is the staff representative on the Community Builders team. He learned community building early as he would go to the little meeting place early with his grandfather, preparing the building by mopping floors. Then he had the privilege of ringing the bell to call the church to gather for worship. Jonathan has built his career on building community with youth and with children.

~ Rev. Tillie Duncan



Shannon Roberts



Jonathan Eidson



Robin Rowland



Susan Phillips



Rachel Faulk



Jean Lawrence



Betty Gunz



## LIVING LILIES

Throughout the season of Lent, Sardis friends make donations to a "Living Lilies Fund" that supports organizations who embody the way of Jesus in their missions. Donations are made in honor or memory of loved ones who are recognized during worship on Easter Sunday. The benefactor for this year's collection will be Hope Chapel.

Hope Chapel was formed in 1987 when the United Baptist Association purchased the parcel of land adjacent to what was then called the George Shinn Men's Shelter (now Roof Above). It was formed to be a church that welcomed folks who didn't feel comfortable in other churches – the homeless, those released from prison, people with substance abuse disorder and other mental illnesses. Hope Chapel continues meeting the spiritual needs of the downtrodden today, celebrating its 37th anniversary this year. For many visitors, Hope Chapel provides their first introduction to spiritual life. There are long-time members today who have forged their way from homelessness to housing, but they return for worship and fellowship at the chapel that welcomed them during their hardest times.

Easter honorariums will support the important work this ministry provides to the Charlotte community. Their small annual budget, approximately \$5,500, is funded completely by the United Baptist Association (UBA) which is made up of Sardis Baptist Church, St. John's Baptist Church, Park Road Baptist Church, and Greater Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. The extra funds collected for our "Living Lilies Fund" will have a significant impact on what Hope Chapel can accomplish this year.

Sardis Baptist provides more than financial subsidies for Hope Chapel. We participate in a rotation with other worship leaders to preach during their worship services on Sunday mornings. Hope Chapel is run completely by volunteers which include an overseer, preachers, a piano player, a book-keeper, and others who serve weekly meals. Their doors are open to anyone, and you are welcome to attend their 8 AM service any Sunday morning. Hope Chapel is located at 125 Wadsworth Place, off N. Tryon.

Instructions for making contributions to the Living Lilies Fund will be shared on Sunday mornings and in our weekly Sardis Happenings emails. Contact the church office with questions: [info@sardisbaptistcharlotte.org](mailto:info@sardisbaptistcharlotte.org).



## Hear My Voice

### CONDOLENCES

**May the following friends of Sardis Baptist feel comforted by the love and support of friends and family as they grieve these losses:**

- The Phillips Family, for the death of Frank Phillips, younger brother of Danny
- The Floren and Byrd Families, for the death of Luis Floren
- The Duncan and Christman Families, for the death of Kyle Christman, nephew of Shannon Duncan

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Ken Abbott, friend of June Ross • Rita Akers, friend of the Phillips  
• 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 • Maria Byrd • Murphy Clark, relative of Robin Rowland  
• Tracey Danley, friend of Sarah Criss • Rae Deicke, friend of Jean Lawrence  
• Nela Demme, Ron's dog • Betsy Cadle DePaul • Dusty Detterman, daughter of June Ross • Linda Duncan, sister-in-law of Shannon • Amelia Eidson, Jonathan's mother • Ed Gash • Mildred Gragg, mother of Billie Hutchison • Mary Moon Guerrant, mother of Kathryn Kreutzer • Homeless Neighbors • Marvin Jean • Jen Kaminska, friend of the Kreutzer family  
• Bob Lewis, father of Amanda • Robert Marshall, grandson of Janette Grassi  
• Tim Moore • Rachel, Kendarius, and Mekhi Phipps, friends of Betty Gunz  
• Planet Earth • Pam Poston • Bill Reynolds, son of Mala • Mala Reynolds  
• Bob Rowland, Robin's father • Pamela Schwartz, former staff of St. Stephen UMC • Ken Smith, friend of the Kreutzer's • Nancy Steavenson, friend of Jean Lawrence • Tanya Stevensen, daughter of June Ross • Katie Wiebke, daughter of Mark & Amy  
• Mark Wiebke • Kelly Wise, friend of Melissa Bowlin

### TRAVELING MERCIES

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



**G3 Will gather for brunch on Tuesday, March 19th. Those wanting to carpool will gather at Sardis at 10:30 AM; others will meet at Uptown Yolk at 11:00: 1220 S. Tryon St.**



# Sardis Baptist Church

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Clergy Group Meeting 	2 10 AM—Noon 
3 Third Sunday in Lent 9:45 AM Sunday Book Study Dancing in the Darkness 11:00 AM Worship Dr. Daynette Noon Pastor Search Team	4 The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM Jonathan's Workiversary (March 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2013) 	5 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	6 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 10:30 AM Structures & Systems CWS Leadership Team	8 Clergy Group Meeting	9 2:00 PM Celebration of Life Frank Phillips  Spring Ahead Before Bed
10 Fourth Sunday in Lent 9:45 AM Sunday Book Study  11:00 AM Worship Dr. Daynette	11 The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM 10:30 AM Trustees  7:00 PM Charlotte Wildlife Stewards: Nature at Your Door	12 The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM 10:30 AM Trustees  7:00 PM Charlotte Wildlife Stewards: Nature at Your Door	13 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 Fellowship Dinner 6:30 PM Sardis Academy Embracing Doubt 7:45 PM Choir Practice 	14 CBFNC Annual Gathering	15 Clergy Group Meeting CBFNC Annual Gathering 	16 CROP Walk Luncheon 
17 Fifth Sunday in Lent 9:45 AM Sunday Book Study Dancing in the Darkness 11:00 AM Worship Dr. Daynette	18 The Garden Preschool — 9:15 AM to 1:15 PM Sardis Piano Academy — 3:15 PM to 8:45 PM  G3 Brunch Uptown Yolk	19 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	20 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	21 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	22 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	23 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
24 Palm Sunday 9:45 AM Sunday Book Study Dancing in the Darkness 11:00 AM Worship Dr. Daynette	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	26 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	27 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	28 Maundy Thursday  5:45 PM Community Soup Supper	29 Good Friday Community Worship 	30 Good Friday Community Worship 
31 Easter Sunday 7:00 AM Sunrise Service 7:45 AM Breakfast at Original Pancake House 11:00 AM Easter Worship						



## MUSIC AS COMMUNITY

Throughout human history, music has been a constant. Music helped us while away the long hours of darkness when we were still dwelling in caves or small nomadic bands; it provided a rhythm and way of keeping time while performing necessary yet tedious tasks or traveling large distances; music also, and perhaps most importantly, gave us a way to record and share important stories when we didn't have a way to write things down. Music, combined with poetry and dance, have played a vital role in the development of human civilization and culture, they connect us to our ancestors as well as to our contemporaries in a way that is both timeless and novel. Music, just like us, is always changing, evolving, and adapting to new technologies.

In religious settings, music serves multiple functions. Historically, it has helped largely illiterate populations learn and remember the stories, proverbs, and laws taught by a religion; it makes religious education easier for children who have limited vocabularies but limitless ability to retain new information when it's presented in short, rhyming couplets set to music. Music also has the uncanny ability to create "atmosphere" – an intangible, yet visceral feeling of a known place becoming transformed into something otherworldly, even, in the right circumstances, divine. I hope that we have all had the experience of being at a concert, show, or worship service where the music is so powerful, where the crowd gathered is moving as one unit, and you let yourself be taken over by the experience. That feeling of ecstasy is priceless, and has been an important part of spirituality since the beginning of time.

When I choose hymns for worship services, I have a few goals in mind. First, I want to look at the scripture we're using and try to find hymns that either reference that text or share similar themes; second, I try to balance out familiar hymns that may have more antiquated themes with newer ones that tend to fit our theology better; and third, I try to limit the number of copies Kathryn has to make by engaging with the resources available in the Chalice Hymnal we have in the pews. Chalice has been an excellent hymnal, preferable in my opinion to the Baptist Hymnal we were using when I first arrived, but it isn't all-encompassing or perfect, and sometimes I find gems that are only available in one random hymnal, or even in the old Baptist Hymnal!

I have eclectic taste when it comes to hymns—I like to sing old standards just as much as I like to learn new ones, but that is not the case for everyone. With that knowledge, I have a task for all of you: I want you to tell me what hymns you love to sing, what hymns you hate to sing, if you like hearing and learning new pieces, or if you would rather we stick to the old favorites. I want to foster a deeper sense of community with our music, and to do that I need your feedback! If you want more choir, more instrumentalists, more soloists, please let me know! I'm all ears.

~ Hilary McIntyre, Minister of Music

## SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Have you heard of the spiritual discipline known as Centering Prayer? I heard about it years ago but I've not practiced it like I hoped I would. As it is with all spiritual disciplines, the practice is what brings the meaning that makes a difference.

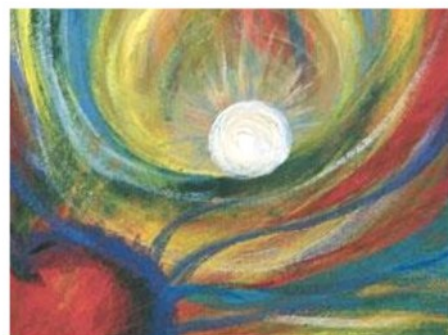
According to [centeringprayer.com](http://centeringprayer.com), "Centering Prayer is a method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of contemplative prayer, prayer in which we experience God's presence within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than consciousness itself."

So what about the mechanics of this discipline? Step 1: choose a word. Sometimes it's called a sacred word. The word could be peace or love, or any word that works for you. Keep that word for the entirety of your prayer. Step 2: use the word. Sit down and get comfortable with your eyes closed. Silently say the word in your mind. As other thoughts and distractions come to mind, return to your word. Listen for the voice of God. Step 3: close the prayer time. After 15 to 20 minutes, as you transition out of the prayer, remain in silence and slowly open your eyes. You may have a time of discernment but don't feel like you must do anything.

When I first tried this discipline, there was so much busyness with distracting thoughts and minor disturbances that it seemed like I was repeating my word almost constantly. It takes practice.

A friend of mine said it can help to imagine a river in front of you and as thoughts and distractions appear, visualize them floating on down with the current. He also said if the same thing comes down the river several times, consider whether it is God trying to communicate. Give it a try and let me know what you think.

~ Rev. Jonathan Eidson







Lenten  
Love Wreaths,  
made by Sardis  
Friends to share  
with Sardis  
friends



Sardis Ski Trip at Winterplace Ski Resort which included a birthday dinner for J. Swiz



### *Maundy Thursday Communion Supper*

**MARCH 28TH, 2024 AT 6:00 PM**

*Sardis Baptist has reclaimed Maundy Thursday  
as a remembrance of the First Communion rather than the Last Supper.*

*The gathering is bitter-sweet, but it is love, laughter,  
and the radical hospitality of God's table that steels us for Friday,  
and empowers us to believe and embrace the joy of Sunday.*

*Join us in the meetinghouse at 6:00 PM for physical and spiritual sustenance  
around the table. We will hear the gospel accounts of Jesus' last meal with his friends  
as we enjoy a light supper of soups, grapes, cheese and bread -  
foods that we imagine may have been eaten in the upper room many years ago.*



## THRIVING TOGETHER

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of North Carolina is one of the denominational partners that Sardis is affiliated with. Their annual gathering will be held in Greensboro on March 14-15th. This year's theme is "Thriving Together", and will include a celebration of the partnerships' 30th anniversary.

Tillie, Daynette, and Kathryn will attend. Opportunities will be available for them to participate in workshops that will support Sardis' visioning and transitioning processes. There will also be time for connection with ministers of other churches, allowing them to exchange fresh ideas for the work of the church. Their trip will include a special event hosted by CBFNC's Racial Equity & Justice Team: a tour of the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in downtown Greensboro, the location of the historic sit-in at the Woolworth lunch counter in 1960.



Cooperative Baptist  
Fellowship North Carolina