



signposts

a spiritually progressive community of faith

5811 Sardis Road / Charlotte, NC 28270 / 704.362.0811

SardisBaptistCharlotte.org

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday @ 9:45 AM
Study Group

Sunday @ 11:00 AM
Morning Worship

Saving Salvation:

Lenten Theme for Reflection and Contemplation

Over the course of the Liturgical or Church Calendar, there are special seasons during which the Church is invited and encouraged to remember specific events in the life of Jesus or the people of God as recorded throughout both the Hebrew Bible and the Christian Testament. The Lenten season is one of such time. This is the season of the year which begins on Ash Wednesday and continues 40 days, except Sundays, until Palm Sunday.

This time is most easily remembered as being kicked off by Mardi Gras in New Orleans with Shrove or Fat Tuesday and the pancakes and King Cakes and all the excess before a season of fasting and prayer. We also will note that our favorite fast-food chain is bringing back or highlighting their fish sandwiches for our Catholic siblings in faith who abstain from meat except fish on Fridays during this season.

The Biblical connections are to the 40 days of fasting and meditation which Jesus spent in the desert following his baptism which also connects to the 40 years which the Hebrew people spent in the desert following their exodus from Egypt. It is intended to be a time of deeper reflection, a time to step away from the things in this life which might serve as a distraction from a richer spiritual life and experience with the Divine.

During this Lenten season, we here at Sardis are going to be following in the line of the larger Church and reflecting. Specifically, we will be reflecting on Salvation as the idea of salvation is so intertwined with the Lenten season and the season to follow in Easter. Salvation has long been understood as a something which people attain through a mode of baptism or a public profession of specifically held beliefs. At Sardis, this is too narrow an understanding and we wanted to practice greater intentionality as we define and reflect upon what salvation actually means and is to the Church. During this Lenten season we will be including more moments of contemplation within our worship experiences on Sunday mornings. We will also be looking for meaningful and impactful ways which we can invest in communities in need of salvation in and around us, with special emphasis on immigrants. Be on the lookout for ways to reframe the idea of salvation with a greater emphasis on the reality of Jesus' teaching that the Kingdom of God is here and now rather than some far off and future place to which a select number are saved while the rest of the world burns.

~ Rev. Dr. Chris Hensley



SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE

Shrove Tuesday
March 4th @ 6:00 PM

Shrove Tuesday is traditionally a night of feasting and celebrating, and that is exactly what we'll do here at Sardis! It always falls the night before Ash Wednesday which marks the beginning of Lent and at a time when some people choose to give up fatty foods (or other vices). It's sometimes referred to as Fat Tuesday. The tradition of eating pancakes during Shrovetide began in the 16th Century. Christians were encouraged to use up ingredients such as butter and eggs that were discouraged during the fasting season. We hope you will join us for the feast!

ASH WEDNESDAY



On Ash Wednesday, Sardis Baptist Church will worship with friends and neighbors from Sardis Presbyterian Church in a community service at 7:00 PM to be held in the sanctuary of Sardis Presbyterian (6100 Sardis Road). Ministry teams and choir members of both congregations will collaborate to offer ecumenical worship that honors the traditions of both congregations. Rev. Dr. Chris Hensley will be the proclaimer.



Living Lilies - Honorariums to Support Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency

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. The benefactor for this year's collection will be Carolina Refugee Resettlement Agency (CRRA), a non-profit organization whose purpose is to resettle refugees coming to Charlotte.

CRRA assists refugees with the integration process. (Refugees are human beings who are endangered in their countries of origin and who have entered the US through a legal pathway, codified into US law by the 1980 Refugee Act.) Due to recent executive orders and directives from the state department, CRRA is no longer receiving funding to assist refugees in securing basic needs such as housing, food, clothing, education, immunizations, and much more. Agencies who assist refugees are no longer being reimbursed for their work. The stoppage of federal funds jeopardizes both the clients seeking assistance and the staff working to support them. Visit this link for more details: <https://conta.cc/4iAGDcL>.

Your honorariums will support the important work CRRA continues to do. Instructions for making contributions to the Living Lilies Fund will be shared on Sunday mornings and in our weekly Sardis Happenings emails; order forms will also be available in the vestibule. Contact the church office with questions: info@SardisBaptistCharlotte.org.



CHRIS' CORNER

I finally utilized the labyrinth on our campus for the first time a couple of weeks ago. It was following a staff meeting and prior to one of our Spiritual Stories gatherings on a Wednesday night. It has been a while since I have walked a labyrinth, honestly, and it was good for my soul – despite what I am about to share. I may have already shared with you that I fancy myself a bit of a spiritualist minus the asceticism. That said, contemplative practices are important to me for my own spiritual health. Whether this is sitting in silence – a difficult task with young children – contemplating the veins of a leaf, reflecting on the “God sightings” I had experienced throughout the day, or walking a labyrinth; these practices are life-giving and life affirming for me.

Something which I hope for while deeply involved in these practices is experiencing a restful awareness of myself, my surroundings, and God. Often this is something which I do experience. However, restfulness eluded me during this most recent labyrinth walk. As I walked the labyrinth, noting the feel of the stone under my shoe, the feel of the breeze on my face, the sounds of nature and Charlotte traffic, the familiar restfulness danced on my periphery, not in a taunting way, more a “not right now, Chris,” way. I was only able to come to that conclusion after further reflection following the labyrinth walk and having removed myself from the moment. That’s part of the ongoing joy and frustration with contemplative practices, I do not always experience restfulness or spiritual rejuvenation in the moment but require further reflection afterward.

I share this with you to offer encouragement. Many of the practices of self-care which we perform are intended to bring rejuvenation and a sense of restfulness. Unfortunately, that is not always the way of things in the moment. For whatever reason, restfulness eludes us and we have difficulty finding that which we went searching for when we began our contemplative practice or self-care routine. Whatever your spiritual practices, your self-care routine, or other life-giving activities look like, continue to lean into them. In a world which sprints from one thing to the next, where catastrophes and cataclysms are reported immediately, and where so many things which connect us only bring out the worst in us, find time to slow down. Even without the frantic movements of our larger society, life is hard enough.

Breathe and take care of yourself. Even when our practices do not produce the expected results, they are doing us good, we may simply need to reflect more on them or look at them from a different angle.

Rev. Dr. Chris Hensley



Sardis People: **David Kreutzer**

A NASCAR-related job brought David Kreutzer south from his home in Tonawanda, New York. He began work in North Carolina with Simpson Race Products, a company which sells driver-related safety equipment. As a representative of Simpson’s, he traveled to Daytona FL to consult and offer help to a start-up race team. That led to his being offered a job with newly formed BACE Motorsports where he became a staff accountant. During his tenure with BACE, BACE racers won three back-to-back championships in the Busch Grand National series.

The sports world beckoned soon after Dave graduated from State University of New York at Buffalo. The University was near his hometown where he grew up with one brother and one sister. A degree in economics and accounting in hand, he soon received a CPA license. Today Dave works for The Maintenance Team where he oversees the work of employees who maintain business properties, specializing in electrical, plumbing and temperature control. (It was because Dave quickly contacted one of his plumbers when Sardis recently had a major leak that it was taken care of within a few hours of its discovery!)

Dave has retained a high interest in sports. He has been chauffeur and enthusiastic supporter of his children’s sports endeavors. He is also a participant, playing hockey in a Charlotte area men’s league headquartered at the Extreme Ice Center in Indian Trail. He enjoys the challenge of triathlons, those races which include swimming, biking and running.

Married to Kathryn, Dave and she have four adult children: Dylan, Kaleb, Alcie and Madison, three of whom were born after they joined Sardis nearly 25 years ago.

– Rev. Tillie Duncan



Dear Sardis Baptist Church Family...

... I wanted to express my deepest appreciation for the unexpected and generous gift which was given to myself and the staff members of the church. To have received such a gift, above and beyond that which the church already does provide, fills the heart and mind with humility and gratitude. Gratefully, Pastor Chris

... I cannot express how grateful I am for your love offering. I feel so blessed to work for and with such loving, generous people! With thanks, Hilary

... Thank you for your very generous love offering. So many ways you demonstrate kindness and affirmation. With appreciation, Tillie

... To be part of such a thoughtful congregation is something to be grateful for! Thank you all for the kind and generous love offering. It is a privilege to serve Sardis Baptist, and exciting to imagine what our future holds! Warmly, Kathryn

The Power of Music

“My bologna has a first name: it’s O-S-C-A-R...”

Music is a through-line for humanity – we hear it at the grocery store, at sporting events, blasting from other people’s cars as they speed past us on the highway, and, of course, in commercials. The song above, the Oscar Mayer Bologna song, was first introduced in 1974 as a follow-up to the brand’s iconic Oscar Mayer Wiener jingle. Both tunes remained staples of the advertising world well into the 2000’s. In fact, my aunt was a kindergarten teacher in the 90’s and her assistant teacher taught her class, as well as my sister and me, how to spell the word “bologna” with this song. That’s the power of music.

Before audio recording, print was the best way to share music around the world. There were songbooks, musical sheets, even magazines that you could subscribe to in order to learn the newest hits from the star composers and performers of the day. Prior to that, you would need a music teacher, traveling musician, or church music leader to teach you the newest songs. If you weren’t rich or privileged enough to afford a teacher, or if you lived somewhere remote where troubadours might not visit as often, you could seek out local musicians. You might hear something that you liked the sound of and figure out how to recreate it yourself to the best of your abilities. And if all else failed, you could make something up. But what do all of these stories have in common? People keep making music.

The act of making music, of performing, is personal and spiritual. It requires a mind-body connection that engages the senses and has the power to silence all but the parts of the mind required to create it. In other words, it is meditative. But I hear some of you saying, “I don’t have any musical ability, I can’t do this!” Wrong, talent doesn’t play into this at all. Making music is an action that anyone can do, no matter what age, where they are, or what their abilities or skills are.

Music has this reputation as a “higher art form,” but I think that phrase has been misused in the past. Higher doesn’t have to imply hierarchy, for me it means closer to God, above human comprehension. God is like that – we can’t see, touch, smell, taste, or hear God, but God is in everything that we can interact with using our senses. God is too big, too important, too complex for us to understand; we put limits on God when we try to. I see music, all music, the same way. It doesn’t matter if it’s a Beethoven symphony, a pop song on the radio, or a kid trying out the clarinet for the first time – all of it is music.

So when you sing the Bologna song, or the Liberty Mutual jingle for that matter, you are making sweet music. When you scream at the top of your lungs on a roller coaster or laugh quietly at an audiobook while you walk your dog, you are making music.

¹ *Shout for joy to God, all the earth.*

² *Worship God with gladness; come before God with joyful music.*

³ *Know that God is.*

It is God who made us, and we are of God.

~ Psalm 100, paraphrase by Rev. Hilary McIntyre ~



The Power of Music, painting by Genevieve Esson

Hear My Voice

CONDOLENCES

Our condolences are with Sardis friends who are grieving the loss of loved ones:

Parker and Phillips families for the death of Mike Parker (extended family of Susan and Danny)

Friends and family of Jo Crowe, friend and colleague of Bennett Henkel

Crist and Kreutzer families, for the death of Kayden Crist (great-nephew of Kathryn and David)

TRAVELING MERCIES

• *Askins Family (Rebecca, Jourdan, Joey, Brady, Samuel, Reece, Keely)*

• *Liliana Fisher*

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

• *Doloras Abdow, mother-in-law of Sandra*

• *Clemmer Allison, friend of Alcie Kreutzer • Melissa Bowlin, Sardis Baptist Church • Richard (Nick) Bowlin, uncle of Melissa • Maria Byrd, Sardis Baptist Church*

• *Murphy Clark, relative of Robin Rowland • Tyler Criss, Sardis Baptist Church • Tracey Danley, friend of Sarah Criss*

• *Betsy Cadle DePaul, Sardis Baptist Church • Rachael Duwall, friend of Susan & Tillie • Amelia Eidson, Jonathan’s mother*

• *David Faircloth, extended family of the Phillips • Jeff Friar, friend of Mark Wiebke • Melissa Galloway, friend of Luther Fisher • Bill Guerrant, uncle of Kathryn Kreutzer • Mary Moon Guerrant, mother of Kathryn K. • Jenna Hardister, friend of Hilary McIntyre • Ken Henderson, friend of Jim Owen*

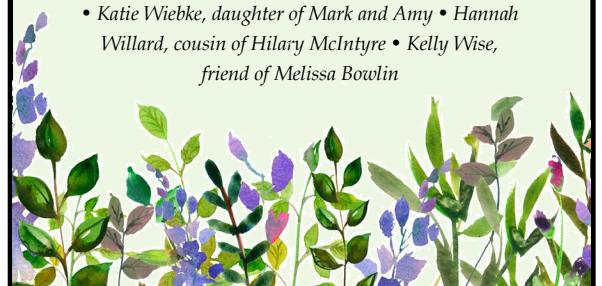
• *The Henkel-Lewis Family (George) • Billie Hutchison, Sardis Baptist Church • Dave Kreutzer, father of David Kreutzer*

• *Robert Marshall, grandson of Janette Grassi • Barbara Mosley, Sardis Baptist Church • Barbara Newman, mother of Kris Hawkins • Rex and Yvonne Nordeen, cousins of Tillie*

• *Vadim Pateshkin and Family, relatives of Billie Hutchison • Rachel Phipps and Family, friends of Betty Gunz • Pam Poston, Sardis Baptist Church • Bob Rowland, Robin Rowland’s father • John Simpson, Sardis Baptist Church*

• *Jackson Stewart, grandson of Kristin Parker • Amy Stirens, friend of Hilary McIntyre • Wanda Stitt, Sardis friend from Hope Chapel • Vanessa Wieland, cousin of Jonathan Eidson*

• *Katie Wiebke, daughter of Mark and Amy • Hannah Willard, cousin of Hilary McIntyre • Kelly Wise, friend of Melissa Bowlin*





**Working Together at Hope Chapel:
Sardis Baptist Church and Temple Beth El
Presidents Day Service Project**

★  **CHRISTIANS AGAINST
CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM**

Christian nationalism is a cultural framework that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life. It contends that America has been and should always be distinctively “Christian” from top to bottom — in its self-identity, interpretations of its own history, sacred symbols, cherished values, and public policies — and it aims to keep it that way.

Jesus commands us to love our neighbor. Christian nationalism asserts that white, US Christians with a certain set of political and theological views have exclusive access to God’s love. This assertion can lead people to deny their neighbors the right to fully participate in our nation and can even be the motivation for acts of violence against neighbors. Such actions ignore God’s love is for the whole world.

Rev. Dr. Chris Hensley, in collaboration with other local pastors, is forming a North Carolina affiliate group of **Christians Against Christian Nationalism** to bring awareness and stand up to the white Christian nationalism infiltrating our state and country. Sardis friends are encouraged to visit this link and register to receive information about upcoming Zoom gatherings:
<https://bit.ly/NCCACNInterest>.

Christians Against Christian Nationalism is a project of BJC (Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty), which defends the right of everyone to choose a faith journey free from government coercion or penalty, while leading honest and open conversations about our past failings and how we can forge a more inclusive future. Read about BJC at bjconline.org.

[Learn more at christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org](http://christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org).

 **MARCH**

SPECIAL EVENTS AT SARDIS THIS MONTH

- March 4th, Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Supper @ 6:00 PM**
- March 5th, Ash Wednesday, Community Worship @ 7:00 PM**
(Sardis Presbyterian, 6100 Sardis Road)
- March 8th, Daylight Savings Time Begins Tomorrow**
(Spring Your Clocks Forward Before Bed)
- March 9th, 1st Sunday in Lent, Worship @ 11:00 AM**
(Lenten Theme: Saving Salvation)
- March 19th, Sardis Academy — Spiritual Stories of Sardis Fellowship Dinner @ 5:45 PM, Program @ 6:30 PM**
- March 20th, Vernal Equinox or First Day of Spring**
- March 22nd, Church Workday, 9:00 AM to Noon**
- March 27th to 28th, CBFNC Annual Gathering @ Prichard Church**
- March 28th to March 30th, Alliance of Baptists Annual Gathering**
(Riverside Church in Washington DC or Online)
- April 6th, Baby Shower for George Henkel-Lewis, 9:45 AM**