

Mason First Presbyterian Church

The CORNERSTONE



You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone. Ephesians 2:19-20

May 2024

Christian Worship (continued)

Space

Because heaven and earth belong to God, we may worship in any place. The Old Testament describes stone altars, tabernacles, temples, and other places where the people gathered and encountered God. The Gospels tell us that Jesus worshiped at the synagogue and temple, but he also worshiped in the wilderness, on hillsides, and at lakeshores, demonstrating that God cannot be confined to any one place.

The first Christians worshiped at the temple and in synagogues, homes, catacombs, and prisons. The important thing was not the place, but the gathering of Christ's body—the people of God—and the presence of Christ among them in Word and Sacrament. Later the Church began to build special places to meet for worship. To this day, space for Christian worship is primarily established by the presence of the risen Lord and the communion of the Holy Spirit in the gathering of the people of God.

Space that is set apart for worship should encourage community, be accessible to all, and open us to reverence for God. It is not to be an escape from the world, but a place for encountering the God of all creation who gathers us in and sends us out. Space for Christian worship should include a place for the reading and proclamation of the Word, a font or pool for Baptism, and a table for the Lord's Supper. The arrangement of these symbols of Word and Sacrament conveys their relationship to one another and their centrality in Christian worship.

— from *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), "Directory for Worship"*

....LIVE FOR THE
PRAISE OF HIS GLORY.



E P H E S I A N S 1 : 1 2

Session Synopsis

The Session approved the request of three active members to be transferred to the Associate Member rolls based on their inactivity. Those transferred were Bruce Caltrider, Suzanne Caltrider, and Connie Cantrell.

Pastor Bill reported completion of the periodically required boundary training. The training addresses social issues and how best to address those that are sensitive to the variety of issues. Church leaders at all levels are required to complete the periodic training. Both Presbytery and Pastor Bill have alerted the Session of pending changes in Board of Pensions health benefits. Generally, such changes result in increased premiums for congregations to consider in the annual Pastor's Terms of Call.

The Nominating Committee is not actively seeking a candidate for the open Session Elder position. Should someone wish to consider the leadership opportunity, the committee will gladly assist in the candidacy.

The Bridge Builders Task Force is yet to schedule their next meeting. Well-thought comments on the recently approved antiracism policy were made available to the Session that may be utilized to further discussions and potential revisions to the policy. The Task Force was requested to recommend where in the church governance the policy should be administered.

The Finance Committee continues reviewing the committee's duties and responsibilities. A donor has funded the total per capita tax obligation for the congregation for this year of \$5,000+. Session concurred with Finance and Memorial Committees' recommendations to appoint Debbie Johnson as Chair of the Memorial Committee.

The Parish Life Committee provided some suggestions on information about committee responsibilities for church members, current, and especially new members. Wednesday night dinner costs are running slightly in the red (deficit) from fewer donations and increased food costs. The last dinner of the season will be May 22nd.

The Security Team reported on some unlocked interior doors normally locked to protect stored items and equipment. Also reported was an incident of a backpacking stranger desiring entry to the worship service long after the exterior door had been secured. The on-duty team members found the stranger safe from any harmful weapons but concerns resulted in the request for entry being denied.

The Personnel Committee will be reviewing the Child Protection Policy and evaluating the Sexton position this month.

The Spiritual Growth Committee is considering playground equipment supported by specifically reserved memorial funds. A planned summer trip to the Montreat Youth Conference is being challenged by the scheduling of required boundary training for chaperones and leaders prior to registration for the event. Session joined in congratulating Adult Spiritual Growth Coordinator Michelle Mackey having one of her devotions published in the current issue of *The Upper Room* devotional magazine. The youth will be gathering and assembling another 50 health kits for disaster relief efforts. The Session commented on the committee's concept of adults sharing their prom pictures with the youth prepping for their upcoming prom. Some were reluctant to share the pictures due to past broken relationships or ex-spouses that were prom dates. The recent U-Kirk trivia night was again successful.

The Administration Committee's repair of one of the outdoor HVAC units is still pending receipt of a new modified component and new replacement parts. Damaged gaming tables in the youth room are being discarded if the items cannot be made safe. The committee's next meeting has been changed from the first Thursday in May to May 9th to accommodate member travels.

The Worship & Music Committee is coordinating the changeover of communion preparations from veteran Deb Shellenbarger to new volunteers. Session members noted the different methods of collecting the offerings, cueing the doxology, and distributing communion during services due to some recent glitches. More servers have been recruited to hopefully improve the situation.

Session continues to review *Book of Order* responsibilities within the governing structure of Mason First Presbyterian Church.

Bruce F Archer - Clerk of Session

Mission

Mission Report. For April, we have committed 200.00 to our Presby youth for any homeless outreach that they choose to do. This is typically accomplished with a parking lot ministry, in downtown Lansing, on a Saturday morning—hot breakfast for those on the street. This is valuable work with leadership from Spiritual Growth, etc.! We also commit 200.00 to the youth project of assembling 50 hygiene kits, plus 100.00 reserved for mailing them. (Please stay tuned as we address needs that church members can fill by shopping for specific items.)

Because of the good work of Doctors Without Borders (MSF, in their original title), we commit 300.00 to them in the hopes of furthering their healing work. Sometimes medical personnel come under fire, though they are a neutral group. Similarly the World Central Kitchen is under threat and in need of our prayer; on April 1, it lost seven of their workers to missile shells in Gaza (WCK is a group also doing good work of feeding people there). Please feel free to look up MSF or WCK online and contribute, because our small gifts of Mission commitment are representative of the prayers that we make for world problems, yet physically they make a small dent.

For our sister mission group in Pine Ridge, Re-Member, we commit 200.00 to their efforts at “growing” agriculture on the Lakota Sioux Reservation, pinpointing seed and fertilizer, or whatever that they need, to get their crops going. On a regular basis, Mission Committee is doing 130.00 per month to help the Freely Given store at 118 W. Oak St., helping with feminine hygiene and toiletries, often a high cost for underserved populations. For aid to refugees and the homeless whom Holy Cross serves in the regional, urban area, we commit 241.00 to them. Thank you and keep praying for Ukraine, the families of Russia (those used in this conflict, and those that many see as enemies), and the Middle East.

Rex Hauser

Deacons

Thank you again for helping with our latest food collection for the Mason Food Bank.

As we transition to spring and summer and put away our winter gear, please keep in mind the Coats For Kids Drive on the schedule this fall. This annual community project collects and distributes warm winter coats, hats, gloves, and boots to children and those in need. Items can be dropped off at the church all year round.

We have open sanctuary flower dates for August 11 and October 20. If you would like to donate flowers in memory of a loved one, please contact the church office.

We continue to pray for those in our church family that are in need of our love, care, and support. Please keep them in your thoughts. And, thank you for your continuing generosity to help those in need!

Donna Hujsak

Worship & Music

May 2024 Worship Calendar

- May 05 **Sixth Sunday of Easter** ~ The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper
- May 12 **Seventh Sunday of Easter** ~ Presentation of Bibles ~ Teacher Appreciation
Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus preaching
- May 19 **Day of Pentecost** ~ Children’s Message
- May 26 **Trinity Sunday** ~ Two-cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering

Finance

Financial Report through March 2024

General Fund Balance January 1, 2024	0
Income through March	\$143,741.22
Expenses through March	99,728.95
Ending Balance (3/31/24)	\$ 44,012.27

General Fund Balance 3/31/24	\$ 44,012.27	Anticipated pledged income through March
Revolving Accounts Balance	56,360.56	\$71,479
Reserve Accounts	97,060.62	Actual pledged income through March
Investments as of 3/31/24 (end of 1st quarter 2024)	528,488.09	\$109,481
Net Financial Position (3/31/24)	\$725,921.75	

Higher Education Scholarships

Mason First Presbyterian Church offers higher education scholarships. The scholarships are awarded annually to individuals who plan to continue their education beyond the high school level.

Each year the Finance Committee recommends the total award amount to Session for approval. The Session also approves Scholarship Commission members who will convene to review the applications and determine the award amount for each applicant.

In addition to investment income, the scholarship awards depend on donations from individuals. If you would like to make a donation to the scholarships for 2024, please do so prior to May 15th.

Parish Life

Birthdays in May

Debbie Markiewicz	5/01
Barb VanDyke	5/03
Mary Ozee	5/06
Camille Subject	5/06
Lyle Brockman	5/09
Judy Caswell	5/11
Lori Filka	5/17
Leah Harkness	5/21
Jo Hammond	5/24
Mary Schrock	5/26
Sam Pinches	5/27
Diane DeVoe	5/28
Kelly Trout	5/28
Ruby Simons	5/29

DIRECTORY ADDITIONS and CORRECTIONS

Merrilee & Lyle Brockman
2050 S. Washington Road
Apartment 1020
Holt, MI 48842
517-709-3746

Shirley Day
Quincy Place Senior Living
Apartment 33
12300 Quincy Street
Holland, MI 49424



**THE NEXT CRAFT AND LUNCH DATE IS
MAY 21, AT 10AM
(NOTE TIME CHANGE).**

**THE COST IS \$5.00 FOR SUPPLIES.
LUNCH IS PROVIDED BY THE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION.**

**PLEASE SIGN UP ON THE SHEET
OUTSIDE THE OFFICE OR CONTACT
GLADYS OR DEBBIE!**

Spiritual Growth

Important dates to remember

May 8 th	Disaster Relief Bag Packing
May 10 th	6-8pm Food Preparation at church for Mission Project
May 11 th	8-11am Serve Food in Lansing for Mission Project
May 12 th	Scholarship Applications Due
May 12 th	Bible Presentation and Teacher Appreciation Sunday
May 19 th	Last Day of Sunday School for Youth and Adults
May 22 nd	Last Wonderful Wednesday and Dinner
June 2 nd	Graduation Sunday
July 16 th -18 th	VBS at the Methodist Church
July 21 st -27 th	Montreat Youth Trip

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and
be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.*

Numbers 6.24-26

Find the latest, up-to-date church calendar at masonpresbyterian.org

**WORSHIP AT
MASON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

In-Person and Livestreaming at 10:00am each Sunday
Audio, video, and printed worship is online at masonpresbyterian.org

Bulletin Submissions are due by 9:00am every Monday. Submissions for *The Cornerstone* are due by noon on the 15th day of every month. Please be prompt. Late submissions may not be honored. We are now attempting to publish the newsletter the week following Session.

The
CORNERSTONE

Mason First Presbyterian Church

MINISTERS - All Members

PASTOR - Rev. Bill Pinches

PARISH ASSOCIATE - Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus

PASTOR EMERITUS - Rev. Charlie Herrick

SPIRITUAL GROWTH DIRECTOR - Lori Filka

OFFICE MANAGER - Sheren Wright

SANCTUARY CHOIR DIRECTOR & BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR -
Deb Melse

CHORAL ACCOMPANIST & ORGANIST - Feng Kang

OFFICE ASSISTANT - Nancy Sue MacDonald

SEXTON - Eric VanDyke

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH COORDINATOR -
Michelle Mackey

ELDERS:

2024 - Jerry Ambrose, Lucinda Davenport,
Loren Harkness, Tonya Seely.

2025 - Doreen Chapman, Mary Garland Jackson,
Monte Shuck (*Recording Clerk*).

2026 - Bruce Archer (*Clerk of Session*),
Ginnie Gibson, Jane Hamelink, Tim Hammond.

DEACONS:

2024 - Donna Hujsak, Issie Nielsen, Camille
Subject.

2025 - Marge Clarke, Julie Dart, Timothy Pinches,
Tom Seely (*Moderator*).

2026 - Ron Dlouhy, Bill Leutscher, Sandy
Leutscher, Nancy Sue MacDonald,
Laurie McGonigal.

*"I will pour out my Spirit
on all people."*

Joel 2:28, NIV

