

# 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*

*April 2025*

### Worship on the Lord's Day

#### The Day of Resurrection

We gather to worship God on the Lord's Day (Sunday) because the gospels testify that Jesus rose from the dead early on the first day of the week. The Lord's Day is also called the "eighth day" of creation, a sign of the new creation that has begun with Christ's resurrection. While we may worship God on any day and at any time, the Sunday service in particular is a celebration of Christ's resurrection and an anticipation of the fullness of God's coming reign.

#### The Pattern of Lord's Day Worship

The Service for the Lord's Day is a service of Word and Sacrament. We meet in the presence of the living Lord, who appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week—the day he rose from the dead—to interpret the Scriptures and break bread. Following Jesus' example, the Church proclaims the fullness of the gospel in Word and Sacrament on the Lord's Day.

The Service for the Lord's Day includes other actions as well: gathering and singing, confession and pardon, prayer and offering, blessing and sending. Through all of these actions, we are drawn into Christ's presence and sent out in the power of the Spirit. The pattern of Lord's Day worship may be applied to days and times other than Sunday morning. Saturday evening services such as the Easter Vigil appropriately follow the order of Lord's Day worship since, in the ancient Jewish and Christian reckoning of time, the new day begins at sunset. Services of daily prayer provide a pattern for worship at other times and on other days of the week.

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

(continued next month)



## Session Synopsis

The Deacons are preparing procedures for implementation of home communion for members unable to attend in person.

The annual Presbytery review of 2024 Session minutes and rolls will be held at Mason First on April 12<sup>th</sup> for the Lansing area Presbyterian churches. Also from Presbytery, the building that served as the Presbyterian church in Dimondale has been sold. The Dimondale congregation has merged with Lansing Delta Presbyterian Church.

U-Kirk is active with the return of students to college campuses. A U-Kirk team will be assisting with the April 6<sup>th</sup> worship service and fellowship.

Session approved the recommendations of the Finance committee for revisions of the Gifts and Bequests policy that replaces the 2006 Investment policy, adding the use of electronic bookkeeping systems for finance records in the Receipt and Disbursement policy replacing the former policy on Other Funds. Session also supported Finance recommendations to appoint Barb VanDyke to the Memorial Committee (Class of 2028) and to allocate up to \$10,000 for 2025 scholarships to the Scholarship Commission.

The Parish Life committee announced no Wednesday night dinners during Spring break (March 26<sup>th</sup>) or on April 9<sup>th</sup> while preparing for the April 10-11<sup>th</sup> Rummage Sale.

The Personnel Committee reported very positive performance evaluations with Choral Accompanist Claire and Sanctuary Choir Director Deb this past month. The next evaluations will be the 6-month reviews for new staff members Jess and Jessica.

The Spiritual Growth Committee announced that, due to shared interest in the same curriculum, we will be joining with the Eden United Brethren Church and Mason First Methodist Church for this year's Vacation Bible School. It will be held July 15-17<sup>th</sup> at Eden United Brethren.

The Administration Committee has scheduled Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8:30 AM for the Spring yard clean-up and mulching. The committee is also gathering data to update the Building Use Fee schedule. The schedule applies to building use for weddings, funerals, and other member family events who want to use the church facilities.

The annual joint gathering of the Session and Board of Deacons is tentatively scheduled for July 18<sup>th</sup> at the Lang residence. Session Elders and Deacons should confirm the date with Bruce (Elders) or Tom (Deacons).

Bruce F Archer  
Clerk of Session



## Presbyterian Social Witness: Ecology and Environmental Concerns

*This is the fourth part of a series exploring different aspects of our church's social witness policy.*

For a long time, the Presbyterian Church has been very concerned about our care and stewardship of this beautiful planet we live on. Here are some pertinent policy statements:

### **1. The Power to Speak Truth to Power (1981)**

A public policy statement on Energy, Its Production and Use; with a background analysis.

[https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/power\\_to\\_speak\\_truth\\_to\\_power\\_0.pdf](https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/power_to_speak_truth_to_power_0.pdf) (15 pages)

### **2. Restoring Creation for Ecology & Justice (1990)**

This document not only provides a thoughtful review of the deteriorating ecology of our entire world, but also provides guidance for ways in which we can participate in God's redemption of the creation.

### **3. Hazardous Waste, Race, and the Environment (1995)**

This policy concludes that poor communities and communities of color are bearing a disproportionate burden of the nation's hazardous waste sites. Typically, local residents are unaware and rarely are involved in the decision-making process of facilities siting. This policy amends a portion of the policy statement "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" (1990), with a greater emphasis on environmental injustice and advocacy.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/hazardouswasteraceandenvironment1.pdf> (19 pages)

### **4. We Are What We Eat (2002)**

This report calls on the whole Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—rural, suburban, and urban—to participate in the current agricultural revolution that is affecting everyone who produces and consumes food. The interdependence between food producer and consumer is significant, although it is a linkage we don't often acknowledge. Now, we have a unique opportunity to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ through our daily food production and consumption decisions that will support sustainability, stewardship, compassion and community of all God's creation.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/4-we-are-what-you-eat-2002.pdf> (36 pages)

### **5. Globalization and the Environment – A Study Paper (2003)**

The focus of this paper is environmental degradation, in particular the attitudes toward nature that are still assumed in economic and political decisions and hence in the process of globalization. These assumed attitudes are now in conflict with newly emerging attitudes more conducive to environmental integrity. These old and new attitudes are also foundational to four major perspectives that are at the heart of the environmental debate over globalization. If economic globalization contributes to environmental degradation, it is certainly not the only contributor. Environmental degradation is a complex phenomenon with many causes. It is not a necessary consequence of globalization. Matters could be otherwise; but until the world's affluent learn to alter their desires to consume and to modify their attitudes toward nature, globalization will remain a cause of environmental degradation.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/3-globalization-environment-2003.pdf> (40 pages)

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# Presbyterian Social Witness: Ecology and Environmental Concerns

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## 6. Report and Recommendations on Limited Water Resources and Takings (2004)

The purpose of this study is to help the church understand and struggle with the issues surrounding limited water resources, to think about the impact humans and groups have on the natural world and environment, and explore why care for God's creation is part of our Christian call.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/water-resources1.pdf> (34 pages)

## 7. The Power to Change – U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming (2008)

This policy offers moral guidance and provides practical steps individual Presbyterians, groups and communities may take to change unhealthy energy practices to ensure that there is an abundant supply of God's good energy for future generations of the whole creation to enjoy.

[https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/energyreport1\\_0.pdf](https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/energyreport1_0.pdf) (40 pages)

## 8. The Precautionary Principle: Managing Technological Risks to Protect Humanity and our Planet (2018)

New genetic, nano, cyber, and bio-chemical technologies threaten our environment and our own life as a species, sometimes prompting near-panic at the extinction of species (bees, butterflies, coral, polar bears, etc.) and at increases in human allergies, autism diagnoses, and effects of hormones on endocrine and reproductive systems. This report reviews the several regulatory approaches needed to protect the biosphere without stifling innovation. Within a sustainability framework, it provides Christian theological concepts and ethical principles for evaluating inevitable trade-offs. More use of the precautionary principle would bring more holistic consideration of social and ecological goods, such as biodiversity, and more scientific analysis of climate impacts on toxins and their interaction, while applying a decent Christian skepticism toward purported technological fixes such as geo-engineering and increased artificial intelligence use.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/Precautionary-Principle-PCUSA-Report-2018.pdf> (36 pages)

## 9. Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation (2022)

This resolution provides a call to the church to do the trifold work of environmental justice, environmental racism and economic justice. It provides a vision for a renewed and restored creation, one with a low carbon/zero emissions global economy, better health outcomes, living wage jobs, clean air and water, wilderness preserved for its own sake, access to healthy food and the reparation of broken relationships.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/0019-CPJ-ACSWP-Investing-in-a-Green-Future-1.pdf> (17 pages)

I would encourage you to pick one or more of these documents to read and study.



# Deacons

Hello All! Yay!! We made it to Spring and we've got warm, nice weather and beautiful flowers and plants to look forward to! Has anybody noticed all the different birds that are suddenly around? Thank you Jesus!

We are currently collecting food for the Mason Food Bank. The grocery list for needed items includes: canned corn, canned red kidney beans, chicken noodle soup, tomato soup, rice side dishes, au gratin potatoes, scalloped potatoes, and low sugar cereals. Please bring donations to the table in the Memorial Room. The end date for this collection is April 13 (Palm Sunday). Thank you for your continuing generosity to help those in need!

There are many in our church family who are in need of our prayers, love, and care. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers. And, thank you for your continuing generosity to help those in need!

# Parish Life

| <b><u>Birthdays in April</u></b> |      |                   |      |
|----------------------------------|------|-------------------|------|
| ■ Paul Blonshine                 | 4/01 | Andrew Pinches    | 4/16 |
| ■ Shirley Herrick                | 4/02 | Sally Trout       | 4/18 |
| ■ Ted Welch                      | 4/02 | Mike Buchman      | 4/22 |
| ■ Tonya Seely                    | 4/03 | Calvin Hammond    | 4/22 |
| ■ Rachael Greene                 | 4/07 | Lucinda Davenport | 4/23 |
| ■ Bruce Caltrider                | 4/11 | Scott Robinson    | 4/29 |
| ■ Anne Slavin                    | 4/11 | Suzanne Lang      | 4/30 |



At 5:30 PM on Wednesday, April 2, Linda Hughson, Director of Mason Community Services, and community workers for MCS will be present in the dining room to give you the opportunity to:

- learn how we can reach out to the community
- work with a group which does a lot of outreach to the needy
- learn new skills

Afterwards, they will join us for dinner and individual conversation at 6:00 PM.



The Liturgical Arts committee will be **preparing the sanctuary for Holy Week** on Saturday, April 12th at 10:00 am and on Saturday, April 17th at 10:00 am. Volunteers who would like to participate will be welcomed with open arms.



# Worship & Music

## April 2025 Worship Calendar

|          |                                   |  |
|----------|-----------------------------------|--|
| April 6  | Fifth Sunday in Lent              | ~ The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; UKirk will be with us  |
| April 13 | Palm Sunday                       |  |
| April 17 | Maundy Thursday                   | ~ Worship service at 7:00 pm   |
| April 18 | Good Friday                       | ~ Worship service at 12:00 noon<br>~ <i>The Mason Ministerial Association is also holding a Good Friday worship service in the evening</i> |
| April 20 | Easter / Resurrection of the Lord | ~ Children’s Sermon  |
| April 27 | Second Sunday of Easter           | ~ Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering<br>~ Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus preaching   |

# Finance

## Financial Report through February 28, 2025

|                                       |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| General Fund Balance: January 1, 2025 | 0         |
| Income through February 28, 2025      | \$ 94,281 |
| Expenses through February 28, 2025    | \$ 51,599 |
| Ending Balance (February 28, 2025)    | \$ 42,683 |

|                                   |                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| General Fund Balance 2/28/25      | \$ 42,683         | Anticipated pledged income through October |
| Revolving Accounts Balance        | \$ 87,153         | \$44,497                                   |
| Reserve Accounts Balance          | \$ 76,236         | Actual pledged income through October      |
| Investments as of 12/31/24        | \$ 541,164        | \$76,066                                   |
| Net Financial Position (10/31/24) | <b>\$ 747,236</b> |  |

A Message from the Finance Committee:

Reimbursement Requests

We have implemented a new process for reimbursements to members and friends. When you need reimbursement from the church, you should submit your receipt or invoice to the office. In the office, there is a reimbursement request that indicates the important information needed for the reimbursement. Please complete the form and affix the receipt, at the bottom of the form. This allows for easier scanning of the receipt. Jess will send this information to the applicable committee chair for approval prior to processing the check. Once the chair has approved the check, she will process the check, have our Treasurer or Assistant Treasurer sign it, and then leave it in the church office for you.

There are things that slow down the processing of the check. One is a lack of information including using only first name, using acronyms, or not knowing the activity. Please remember that Jess has only been with the church for six months. This means she does not know everyone’s name nor each church activity. Please err on the side of more information instead of less. The second possible delay is waiting for the chair to approve the request. These requests are emailed to each chair (If there is a chair without an email, he/she will receive a paper request.). If the chair has not seen the email yet, Jess is waiting for approval prior to processing the check.

You can also email the receipt/invoice to Jess ([jess@masonfirstpresbyterian.org](mailto:jess@masonfirstpresbyterian.org)) with a copy to your committee chair. The committee chairs approval via this email is sufficient. But remember, it needs to have all the detail!

The Finance Committee appreciates your patience as we work through this new process.

Statement Corrections

There have been some requests to make changes on statements that should not be made. There are two types of corrections that can, and should, be made. First, if money is incorrect on the statement, then this will be corrected. Second, if the fund listed is incorrect. This will be corrected. For example, if you paid \$25 for Flowers but it shows up as a General Fund donation, we will correct this. One item that cannot be corrected is the dates. The date on the statement corresponds to our deposit date and should not be charged to the date in your records. It is important that the dates match our deposit dates.

## Mission Committee

The Mission Committee is once again planning an adult mission trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The trip is through the Re-Member Organization and takes place during Senior Week which is September 13-19, 2025. Thanks to a generous donation, the lodging, meals, and transportation expenses while on the reservation are all being covered, so there is *no cost* to participants from our church this year. The Mission Committee will cover any remaining travel expenses, including hotel rooms, meals, and gas money for the trip there and back.

This will be our third adult mission trip to Pine Ridge. While on the Rez, we will be building outhouses, ramps, and beds for families who need these things. We also may be skirting trailer homes to provide better protection against the winter conditions or working at Feather II to harvest and care for the gardens that provide fresh vegetables for families. The most important things we will be doing are interacting with the Lakota people, learning about their culture, and recognizing how the injustices of the past affect the lives of the Lakota people today.

If you are interested in going on this mission trip, feel free to contact Debbie Markiewicz or any member of the mission committee.



Find the latest, up-to-date church calendar at [masonpresbyterian.org](http://masonpresbyterian.org)

**WORSHIP AT  
MASON FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

In-Person and Livestreaming at 10:00am each Sunday

**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 Spring Yard Clean up is Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:30 AM or whenever you can be available that morning. The tasks include general cleaning of the yards and mulching of the gardens.

To our Church Family,  
Once again, we thank you all for your prayers for us. Shane returned to his group home on February 16 after nine days of seizure monitoring. The process went much faster than expected, as doctors told us it could have taken 2-4 weeks. We now wait for his brain to heal before the final step in the treatment—the implant of a permanent “brain pace maker” which will arrest the seizures when they start. We sincerely felt God’s presence with Shane, thanks to all the prayers from so many family and friends who prayed with us and for us. Truly, being a part of this church family is a blessing.  
Sincerely, John, Sandy and Shane Diehl



*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*

*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

SANCTUARY CHOIR DIRECTOR & BELL CHOIR DIRECTOR -  
Deb Melse

OFFICE MANAGER - Jessica Tessman

FINANCIAL SECRETARY - Jess Weber

CHORAL MUSIC ACCOMPANIST - Le Ji (“Claire”)

OFFICE ASSISTANT - Nancy Sue MacDonald

SEXTON - Eric VanDyke

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH COORDINATOR -  
Michelle Mackey

**ELDERS:**

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

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

**2027** - Travis Archer, Evelyn Tayong, Dan Baker,  
Steve Sowles.

**DEACONS:**

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

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

**2027** - Donna Archer, Rick Cote, Sally Hughes,  
Debbie Johnson, Issie Nielson.

**From The Bridge Builders For  
Racial Atonement Task Force:**

If you were unable to join us  
for the viewing of the video  
"They Even Took The Dirt"  
and would like to watch it, it  
is available on YouTube:  
[https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=o5LXCcEes2c&t=43s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5LXCcEes2c&t=43s)

