

# 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 2025*

### Worship on the Lord's Day

#### The Order of Worship

An order of worship offers a meaningful and reliable structure for the church's encounter with the living God. Over time, an order of worship helps to shape our faith and faithfulness as the people of God, becoming a pattern for how we live as Christians in the world.

#### Preparing for Worship

Worship begins as the people gather—greeting one another, praying in silence, sharing announcements, or offering music to the glory of God. The act of assembling in Jesus' name bears witness to the Church's identity and mission as Christ's body in the world.

#### Opening Sentences

A call to worship, typically drawn from sentences of Scripture, expresses God's invitation to gather as Christ's body in this place. A greeting in the name of Jesus Christ or the triune God establishes the context for worship as an encounter with the Holy One who calls all things into being.

#### Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

For millennia the people of God have sung psalms as praise and prayer to God. Early Christians continued to sing, pray, and study the psalms, interpreting them in the light of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Singing psalms remains an important part of the Reformed heritage. To the psalms the Church has added other hymns, canticles, and spiritual songs. Through the ages and from varied cultures, the Church has developed many other forms of congregational song, accompanied by a great array of instruments. We draw from this rich repertoire in the Service for the Lord's Day, singing glory to God.

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

(continued next month)



## Session Synopsis

Session received correspondence announcing a change in Facebook policy on time of storage of Facebook recordings that may impact accessibility to past livestream recordings. Also announced were openings in various Presbytery committees. Anyone interested in serving a role in Presbytery can contact Pastor Bill or Clerk Bruce Archer for further details.

Deacons provided Easter baskets for some of our members.

Pastor Bill announced that office hours for Office Manager Jessica remain flexible for the next couple months. A lot of work is being accomplished remotely from her home. Call ahead for any in-person meetings or office access.

The Mission committee is coordinating an upcoming presentation by the Justice League of Greater Lansing on May 18th. The committee is also preparing for the adult mission trip to Pine Ridge.

The Bridge Builders Task Force is also encouraging the Justice League presentation as well attending the next Presbytery "Hope In Action" meeting May 16th.

The Parish Life committee reported good participation at the April Rummage Sale. The last Wednesday night dinner for the spring will be May 21st. The dinners will resume in September, after the start of school.

The Personnel Committee will be reviewing the 6-month performance of Financial Secretary Jess this month. Session approved minor revisions of the position description for the Financial Secretary to include weekly obligations.

The Administration Committee supports Sexton Eric's efforts to repaint or replace ceiling tiles discolored from the overwhelmed roof drains after heavy rains. The drain system was optimally designed to accommodate average and below average rainfall and is overwhelmed with above average rainfalls. The committee will be addressing coverage for the Sexton's week of vacation in May to attend a family graduation in Texas.

The Worship and Music Committee is considering the use of youth acolytes and greeters. The Spiritual Growth Director will contribute training interested youth. An Adult coordinator(s) may be required to assist the youth. The committee continues discussion on updating the inclement weather policy. Issues include when to cancel events, decision to cancel, and effective means to communicate cancellations.

A date for the annual joint gathering of Session and the Board of Deacons is being considered among June 13th, July 18th, or July 19th.

Bruce F Archer  
Clerk of Session



## PC(USA) *Book of Order* Amendment Regarding Non-Discrimination

Every two years, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) reviews and votes on proposed amendments to the *Book of Order*, part of the Constitution of our church. These proposed amendments originate in presbyteries all over the country. Proposed amendments that meet the approval of the General Assembly are then sent out to all 166 presbyteries (regional jurisdictions) for additional voting. Amendments that are approved by a majority of the presbyteries are then incorporated into the next edition of the *Book of Order*. Most amendments typically have to do with relatively minor matters; every now and then a proposed amendment is of weightier importance. This year, there is a proposed amendment to modify our denomination's non-discrimination policies, and a related proposed amendment to modify the protocol for approving people who have been elected to become Deacons, Elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The first amendment, which has now been approved by a majority of presbyteries, adds two categories to our list of people we promise not to discriminate against. The revised paragraph (section F-1.0403 in the *Book of Order*) will now read as follows (the new wording is printed in bold and italics):

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism, regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, ***gender identity, sexual orientation***, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

The second amendment has not yet been approved by a majority of presbyteries (numerous presbyteries are still voting), but it appears likely that it will also be approved. This proposed amendment would mandate that candidates for ordination and/or installation would be expected to commit to those principles of non-discrimination. The revised paragraph (section G-2.0104b), if approved, will read as follows (the new wording is printed in bold and italics):

Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404), ***the Historic Principles of Church Order (F-3.01), and in the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403***. Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

The net effect of these changes, if both amendments are approved, would be that candidates for ordination and/or installation for any of the three ordained offices of the church (Deacons, Elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament) would need to promise that they will abide by the principles of non-discrimination outlined above, including the provision to not discriminate against people of various gender identities and sexual orientations. That is a significant change, and it has generated some controversy. Not every pastor, elder, or presbytery is in favor of these changes, but all presbyteries and individual congregations will be bound to abide by them. We share this information with you so that you will know about these changes before they take effect this summer. These changes will, in all likelihood, impact our annual process of electing, ordaining, and installing Deacons and Elders, beginning this fall. If any of you would like more information or would like to discuss these matters, please reach out to Bill.

## Deacons

Hello All! What a beautiful Spring it is! We've got warm, nice weather and beautiful flowers and plants to look at! Thank you Jesus!

We had the pleasure of delivering Easter Baskets to seventeen of our members needing some extra Easter joy and love, in hopes of brightening their day.

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



Jenny Bond  
 Burcham Hills Retirement Community  
 2700 Burcham Drive, Apt. 446  
 East Lansing, MI 48823

## Parish Life

### Birthdays in May

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

## Spiritual Growth

The youth of all ages enjoyed Lenten activities during April including learning about the miracles of Jesus during Sunday school; making crafts for the Deacon Easter baskets during Wonderful Wednesday; folding palms into crosses for people to take on Palm Sunday; and of course, our yearly Easter Egg Hunt at the church.

### Important Dates

May 10<sup>th</sup> Middle/High School Bowling at City Limits 10am-12pm with other churches from Mason

May 11<sup>th</sup> Bible Presentation Sunday

June 1<sup>st</sup> Graduation Sunday

Vacation Bible School will be a joint adventure between our church, the Methodist church and the Eden United Brethren church. The event will be held at Eden United Brethren church on July 7, 8, 9, and 10<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-8:00pm. More details to follow.

### Triennium 2025

This every 3-year event will take place in Louisville, KY, July 28-31<sup>st</sup> for Presbyterian youth 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Thousands of youth world-wide will be attending this week of music, worship, and spiritual growth. Many youth from our church plan to attend. Please contact Lori Filka for details.



# Worship & Music

## May 2025 Worship Calendar

May 4	Third Sunday of Easter	~ Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
May 11	Fourth Sunday of Easter	~ Bible presentations
		~ Guest Organist: Caitlyn Brown
May 18	Fifth Sunday of Easter	~ Children's Sermon
May 25	Sixth Sunday of Easter	~ Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering
		~ Guest Organist: Caitlyn Brown

# 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.

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.

## Bridge Builders for Racial Atonement

"Hope In Action" - A potluck meal. A short worship service. A time to have a conversation with a new friend. An opportunity to reach out to a legislator and share your thoughts on an issue close to your heart. Please join the Bridge Builders Task Force and attend this event at the First Presbyterian Church of Holt at 6:30 pm on Friday, May 16th. Car-pooling is available. Contact Monte Shuck, Katharine Wise, Nancy Sue McDonald or Debbie Markiewicz for more information.

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>

### *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, Sally Hughes.

#### 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, Debbie Johnson,  
Issie Nielson.



*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*