

Mason First Presbyterian Church

The **CORNERSTONE**



April 2026

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

Worship on the Lord's Day: Sacrament

(Continuing a discussion of various elements in the worship service)

Theology of the Lord's Supper [part 1]

The Lord's Supper (or Eucharist) is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord. Jesus shared meals with his followers throughout his earthly life and ministry—common suppers, miraculous feasts, and the covenant commemorations of the people of God. Jesus spoke of himself as the bread of life, and the true vine, in whom we are branches. On the night before his death, Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples. He spoke of the bread and wine as his body and blood, signs of the new covenant and told the disciples to remember him by keeping this feast. On the day of his resurrection, Jesus made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. The disciples continued to devote themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, prayers, and the common meal. As Paul wrote, when we share the bread and cup in Jesus' name, "we who are many are one body" (1 Cor. 10:17).

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper offers an abundant feast of theological meaning, including: thanksgiving to God the Father; remembrance of Jesus Christ; invocation of the Holy Spirit; communion in the body of Christ; and a meal of the realm of God. The Reformed tradition understands the Lord's Supper to be a sign of God's covenant. The bread of the Lord's Supper is linked with the bread of Passover and the gift of manna in the wilderness. The Lord's Supper thus connects us with God's saving power and providential care from generation to generation. Like the offering of sacrifices, a sign of Israel's thanksgiving for God's faithfulness, the Lord's Supper is a sacrifice of praise and a sign of our gratitude for God's steadfast love. The Lord's Supper represents God's gracious invitation to an everlasting covenant. The Lord's Supper also reflects our calling to feed others as we have been fed, and offers a foretaste of that heavenly banquet when God will wipe away every tear and swallow up death forever.

The Lord's Supper enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God's sustaining grace offered to all people. The Lord's Supper is at once God's gift of grace, God's means of grace, and God's call to respond to that grace. Through the Lord's Supper, Jesus Christ nourishes us in righteousness, faithfulness, and discipleship. Through the Lord's Supper, the Holy Spirit renews the Church in its identity and sends the Church to mission in the world.

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

(continued next month)

Session Synopsis

The March meeting of Presbytery included action to dissolve the First Presbyterian Church of Allegan. Also announced was an invitation for area congregations to join a "Palm Sunday Path" walk in Lansing from Sparrow Hospital to the State Capitol Building on March 29th at 3 PM. Elder Monte Shuck accepted an invite to serve on the Presbytery's Commission on Ministry for a 3-year term.

Pastor Bill has been busy serving in various roles for Presbytery, be it serving on the Commission on Preparation for Ministry or moderating the Administrative Commission to discern the futures of Lansing Delta and Dimondale First churches separately, together, or otherwise. Local Chapter(s) of the Daughters of the American Revolution will be conducting a public reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8th to commemorate the first public reading 250 years ago. The event is to include the ringing of the area church bells. The Lansing cluster of Presbyterian Pastors is interested in participating with a booth at the June 27th Lansing Pride event.

U-Kirk for area college youth has been recognized with "The Partner in Health and Well Being Award" by MSU for exceptional collaboration and commitment to improving the health and well being of the campus community.

The Bridge Builders Task Force is making preparations to host the first Safe Space Discussion after service on April 12th, moderated by Rev. Dr. Fran Lane-Lawrence of the Presbytery with snacks provided.

Session approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee to appoint Luana Foster to the Class of 2029 of the Memorial Committee. The committee also presented for approval a revised credit card policy which was approved.

The Parish Life Committee reported the Youth fundraising dinner for Camp Greenwood successfully raised \$734 with the aid of the Women's Association. An Easter dinner will be the menu for Wednesday, April 2nd. The Spring Rummage Sale will be April 16th and 17th.

The Personnel Committee completed the annual performance review of Choir and Bell Choir Director Deb Melse. Office Manager Jessica Tessman is suggesting a change in her part-time hours. The committee will be reviewing possible updates in the Employee Handbook and detail tasks of the Responsibilities of the Financial Secretary.

The Spiritual Growth Committee announced this year's Vacation Bible School will be July 13th-16th, at Eden United Brethren with Mason Methodist and Aurelius Baptist youth also participating. The program is based on Paul's letters from the prison in Rome. Youth Bibles will be presented on May 10th to those entering the 3rd grade and high school (9th grade).

The Administration Committee is getting estimates to replace the choir loft light bulbs and to repair the choir room roof leaks. New equipment is being considered to upgrade the livestreaming of services.

The Worship & Music Committee evaluated the Ash Wednesday services and may likely return to a single evening service next year.

Bruce F Archer
Clerk of Session



Bridge Builders

Genesis 1:27 states “that God created humans ‘in the image of God’” and our Presbyterian Brief Statement of Faith, lines 29-32, read “In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community”. Because of this, your Bridge Builders for Racial Atonement task force believes that, rather than avoiding the topic of race, it is actually important for all of us to have these conversations and to do so in ways that increase our understanding of one another. We need to have these conversations in order to improve relationships in our families... in our churches... and in our communities.

To this end, your Bridge Builders for Racial Atonement task force is sponsoring a series of Safe Space discussions to encourage conversations about this critical and often uncomfortable topic.

What is a Safe Space discussion? It is an environment with specific ground rules in which each individual is free to express themselves respectfully – everyone will be heard equally. To help us in this effort, our Presbytery of Lake Michigan Executive Presbyter, Rev. Fran Lane-Lawrence, who has extensive experience in these situations, has agreed to serve as the moderator of the discussions.

Our first gathering will be after church on Sunday, April 12, 2026 in the dining room. At the first session, we will be exploring the subject of race through our own stories and experiences, by answering the question “When you were growing up, what did you learn from your family, school, or church about race and racism?”. Everyone will be given 5 minutes to present their personal story. We expect the session to last about 90 minutes. Come share with us as we begin this journey toward better understanding of this difficult topic. Snacks will be provided. Thank you.



“*Getting To Reparations*” by Dorothy A. Brown has the subtitle “How Building A Different America Requires A Reckoning With Our Past”. The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 presents the four instances when the United States paid cash compensation to nonblack people for harms similar to those experienced by black people: reparation payments to enslavers in Washington, D.C.; Italian lynching victims; Tribal Nations for land theft and economic exploitation; and Japanese Americans for their mass incarceration. Part 2 catalogs the harms experienced by black people after chattel slavery ended. It describes the many ways in which slavery-like conditions were maintained, both legally and by force, to thwart black wealth building and progress. Part 3 outlines the author’s opinions on practical steps to getting reparations for black Americans.



I found the book to be compelling. The author builds, in my opinion, a very strong case for reparations. While I am somewhat less optimistic than she that the goal can be accomplished in my lifetime, I am convinced that reparations are the right thing to pursue.

Monte Shuck



Important Dates

Bible presentation and teacher appreciation will be May 10th
Mark your calendars for our summertime Vacation Bible School July 13-16. We again are joining several Mason churches to combine our efforts, and to allow youth interact with peers from other churches.
Our theme this year will be "Rome". Many of the lessons are from New Testament and the early church, including the letters from Paul.

Children's Sunday School

We will be covering several lessons leading up to Palm Sunday including: Zacchaeus, fishing for men, water into wine, the Sermon on the Mount, and walking on water.

Wonderful Wednesday

The kids had fun decorating the youth room for Easter/Spring. We have many fun springtime activities planned. The youth made 20 crafts for the Deacons to be distributed in their baskets for homebound and "special" members of the church. All lessons and crafts revolved around the lead up to the crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus.

We twisted palms into crosses the Wednesday before Holy Week.
We would like to thank everyone that assisted or attended the Fundraiser for Camp Greenwood. It was a great success and we raised around 700.00.

Youth Fellowship

During Lent the teens have been using a book of devotional readings, reflections and questions entitled "Come and See, your invitation to a radical encounter with Jesus" by Shannon T.K. Kearns. This book tackles topics of fairness, justice, inclusion, friendship, doing the right thing and care for community.

This group also fills 100+ Easter eggs and hides them around the church outside so we can have our annual Easter egg hunt. They also fill Easter goodie bags to give to the younger youth.
We also will be making pretzels in the kitchen prior to Palm Sunday. This is also a tradition for us. Youth learn that German Monks used to pass out pretzels stating they looked like crossed arms praying. Again, the older youth assist the younger ones.

Adults

Season 5 of "The Chosen" is being watched during the adult Sunday school hour. We invite you to come after worship to view the film and participate in discussion following the film.



Deacons

The Deacons will be collecting NEW pairs of socks starting April 1st and running until April 30th. The 'Coats for Kids' campaign has added socks to their list and are calling it 'Sock-It-To-Me Sundays in April'. All congregation members are invited to bring in their sock donations with all sizes and colors welcome. There will be a collection box set up in the Memorial Room. Thank you!

Mission

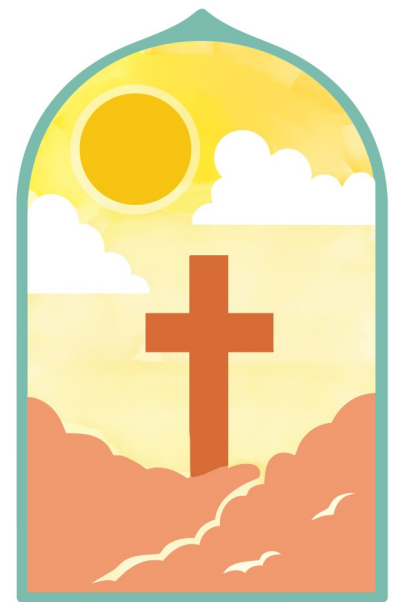
Mission Committee has been active during these past few months in cooperation with Spiritual Growth, involving the initiatives of our youth and their leaders Lori and Sarah alongside them-- a breakfast outreach to the homeless, the sponsoring of hygiene kits assembly and mailing them to Malawi, the sponsorship of a Compassion International child (now our church has two, in Bolivia and in Uganda).

Locally and internationally, these are learning experiences for all of us, examples of what youth have learned from being in church and from Jesus' mission in our lives, about serving the hungry and less fortunate where all of the world is a neighbor.

Also, Mission is involved in regular aid to programs that are active in Gaza (World Central Kitchen), refugee communities in Chicago, a missionary family in Costa Rica, UKirk at MSU, and the Pine Ridge reservation of the Oglala Sioux in South Dakota. At this month's meeting we supported a refugee program in Chicago (known to us by a church-involved contact), tornado/ disaster relief via United Way in Southeast Michigan, and a long established regional outreach (Lansing City Rescue Mission).

We look forward in this spring to One Great Hour of Sharing as one of three special, annual world mission collections (sponsored by our national church, PC(USA), for many decades).

Please thank our consistent committee members--- Suzie Threadgould, Gladys Welker, Greg Lang, Debbie Markiewicz, and Lori Filka --- and supporters (some of whom may be unknown to us, yet known for their generosity). Blessings to the church for its giving and witness.



Christ the Lord
is Risen Today

Rex

Parish Life

Birthdays in April

Paul Blonshine	4/1	Andrew Pinches	4/16
Shirley Herrick	4/2	Sally Trout	4/18
Ted Welch	4/2	Mike Buchman	4/22
Tonya Seely	4/3	Calvin Hammond	4/22
Rachael Greene	4/7	Lucinda Davenport	4/23
Bruce Caltrider	4/11	Scott Robinson	4/29
		Suzanne Lang	4/30



Presbyterian Social Witness: Interreligious Relationships (Part 1)

This is the 15th part of a series exploring different aspects of our church's social witness policy.

The PC(USA) works through the General Assembly Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Relations, as well as other partners, to encourage relationships across religious traditions.

1. Social Creed for the 21st Century: Connecting to the Creed (2008)

The Social Creed for the 21st Century was adopted in 2008 by ecumenical representatives of 35 Protestant and Orthodox church communions. This booklet provides Biblical, theological and historical background as well as current application ideas for each of the Creed's affirmations. It also includes questions for discussion and study.

In our time of economic crisis, the churches have an answer, a constructive vision of the directions needed for a fairer society and a healthier world. This non-doctrinal Social Creed is a positive framework for needed new thinking and action by individuals, institutions and government itself, all of which are called to serve the common good. It embodies the prophetic heart for justice, which insists that all persons must be treated equally and that societies are judged by how they treat their weakest members.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/connectingtothecreed1.pdf> (64 pages)

2. The Ecumenical Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2008)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and its antecedent churches have been at the forefront of local, regional, national, and global ecumenism for more than a century. Presbyterians have been ready to reflect on, pray for, and organize ecumenical initiatives in the life of the worldwide body of Christ and respond to the initiatives of others. From discussions of organic union to the formation of councils of churches, from common efforts in evangelism and mission to upholding concerns for justice and social service, Presbyterians have been deeply involved in the ecumenical work and witness of the church. The Presbyterian church has put considerable material, spiritual, and personnel resources into the ecumenical movement, working to "listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches" and respond in creative ways to our ecumenical calling.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/ecumenical-stance-of-the-pcusa.pdf> (11 pages)

3. The Interreligious Stance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (2014)

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) long has advocated positive relationships with people of other religious traditions. We have seen these relationships as a specific instance of Christ's universal command to "... love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" and to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt. 22:37, 39). This statement affirms that tradition.

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2026-03/the_interreligious_stance_pc%28usa%29_2014.pdf (11 pages)

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

**For God
so loved
the world.**

JOHN 3:16



Worship & Music

April 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

April 2026 Worship Calendar

April 2	Maundy Thursday	7:00 pm Service Communion
April 5	Good Friday	12:00 pm Service
April 5	Easter/Resurrection of the Lord	Children's Sermon
April 12	Second Sunday of Easter	Communion Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus preaching
April 19	Third Sunday of Easter	Children's Sermon
April 26	Fourth Sunday of Easter	Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus preaching



Financial Report through February 28, 2026

General Fund Balance: January 1, 2026	0
Income through February	\$112,187
Expenses through February	\$ 69,128
Ending Balance	\$ 43,059

General Fund Balance 2/28/2026	\$ 43,059	
Earnings from Prior Year	\$ 20,838	Anticipated pledged income through February
Revolving Accounts Balance	\$ 82,025	\$49,821
Reserve Accounts Balance	\$ 47,255	Actual pledged income through February
Investments as of 2/28/2026	\$ 583,083	\$72,750
Net Financial Position (2/28/2026)	\$ 776,260	



- The Women's Association is asking for donations for the spring rummage sale, being held on April 16th and 17th. Please contact Gladys Welker with any questions.
- Spring church yard clean up that will be Saturday, April 4th, beginning at 8:30 AM. We also plan to spruce up the garden beds with a new layer of mulch.
- UKirk Spring Trivia Night is coming! Friday, April 17th starting at 7 pm. Cost is \$20 per person and all money goes to support MSU UKirk. Please see Sarah Fay-Koutz for information on joining or starting your own team. <https://www.ukirkmsu.org/trivia-night-and-silent-auction.html>

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

Bulletin Submissions are due by 12:00 PM every Wednesday. Submissions for *The Cornerstone* are due by noon on the 20th day of every month. Please be prompt. Late submissions may not be honored. We are attempting to publish the newsletter the week following Session.

*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.*

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 - Becky Moots

CHORAL MUSIC ACCOMPANIST - Yinzhe Li ("Ashlyn")

SEXTON - Eric VanDyke

YOUTH MINISTRY COORDINATOR: Sarah Fay-Koutz

ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH COORDINATOR -

Michelle Mackey



ELDERS:

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

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

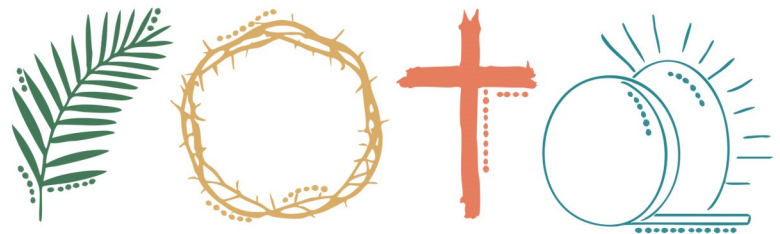
2028: Mary Garland Jackson, Greg Lang, Suzanne Lang, Monte Shuck.

DEACONS:

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

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

2028: Sandy Diehl, Pattie Yanz, Torrie Yanz.



A lot can happen in
seven days.