

# *Mason First Presbyterian Church*

## *The* **CORNERSTONE**



*March 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)*

#### ***Profession of Faith***

Candidates for Baptism or their parents shall renounce evil and profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who are being baptized upon profession of faith declare their intent to participate actively and responsibly in the church's worship and mission. Together with the congregation they profess their faith, using the Apostles' Creed, the baptismal affirmation of the early Church.

#### ***Thanksgiving over the Water***

At the place of baptism, a minister of the Word and Sacrament leads the people in prayer: giving thanks for God's covenant faithfulness through history; praising God's gracious and reconciling action in Jesus Christ; and asking the Holy Spirit to attend and empower the Baptism, give deliverance and rebirth, and equip the church for faithfulness.

#### ***The Act of Baptism***

Accompanied by a visible and generous use of water, the minister of the Word and Sacrament shall address each person by their Christian or given name and say: "[Name], I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matt. 28:19). The water used for Baptism should be from a local source, and may be applied with the hand, by pouring, or through immersion.

Other actions signifying the gift of the Holy Spirit, such as the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, may be included. However, the central act of baptizing with water in the name of the triune God must not be overshadowed.

#### ***Welcome***

The newly baptized person is welcomed as a member of the Church, the body of Christ. Appropriate gifts may be given, such as a candle (reflecting the light of Christ) or a baptismal garment (signifying being clothed with Christ). The peace of Christ may be exchanged, if not previously shared.

The Church's way of welcome into the body of Christ involves the unrepeatable Sacrament of Baptism and the repeatable Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Christ bathes us with mercy, then feeds us with grace. Since this ancient pattern of initiation includes both Sacraments, the Lord's Supper appropriately follows Baptism; those who have just been baptized may be invited to receive communion first.

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

(continued next month)

## Session Synopsis

Pastor Bill has been appointed as the moderator of the Presbytery's Administrative Commission dealing with the future relationships of Dimondale and Delta Presbyterian Churches. He also accepted invitations to the (Lansing) Mayor's Ramadan Unity Dinner at the East Lansing Islamic Center and the as guest speaker at the Mason Lions Club. Pastor Bill is hoping enough prospective members come forth to initiate a spring Explorer's Class for church membership.

The Finance Committee reported that all forms and reports for the 2025 tax year were submitted on time. The Memorial Committee accepted a generous donation from the Lockwood family in gratitude for our church's support following the passing of Ethan Lockwood.

Parish Life was busy with gifts and plants to support the Men's Fellowship hosting 88 area Sweethearts at the annual Sweetheart's Luncheon on Valentine's Day. The committee is now preparing to host with the Spiritual Growth Committee a family game night at 6 PM on March 14th. Session approved the committee's recommendation to transfer Aimee Cruikshank and Cody Cameron from the Active Member Roll to the Associate Member Roll.

Session also approved the recommendation of the Security Team to appoint Dan Baker as Team Leader. Tim Hammond remains active on the Team, but can now dedicate more family time to youth sports coaching.

The Personnel Committee conducted a 5-month review with Financial Secretary Becky Moots. The Finance Committee will be reviewing revisions to detailed responsibilities of the position. The annual performance review of Choir Director Deb Melse is scheduled for this month.

The Spiritual Growth Committee has been researching mental and behavioral care programs. One such program will soon be submitted for Session review. Session supported the Committee's recommendation for the youth to host a Camp Greenwood fundraising dinner with a dessert auction on March 4th. There will be no Wednesday children activities on February 28<sup>th</sup> or March 4<sup>th</sup> while Spiritual Growth Director Lori is on vacation.

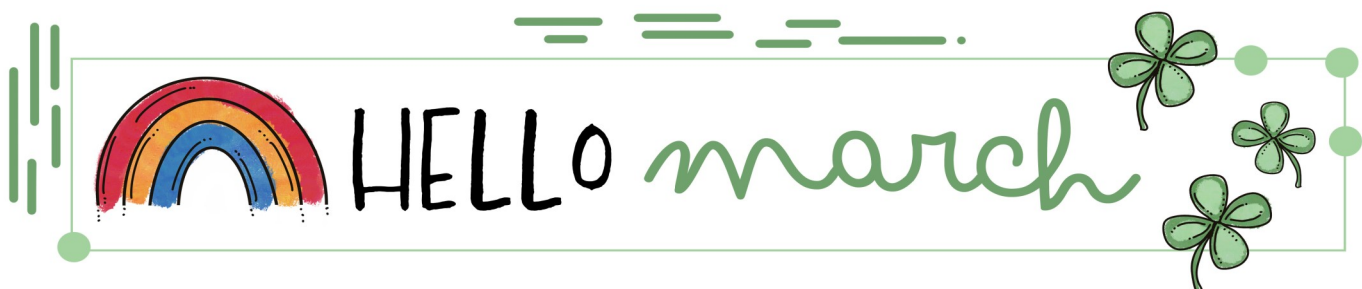
The Administration Committee addresses potential roof leaks in the choir room, choir loft lighting, noisy kitchen plumbing, slow drains, and upgrades to livestream equipment. The heating system to the education wing is operating in a back-up mode. A new compressor is on the way with an estimated \$10,700+ replacement cost. The cost includes also replacing all the costly refrigerant in the unit. Session approved funding the repair from the Webb Fund. The committee will proceed to correct the church name filed with the State of Michigan after the action taken at the Annual Congregational meeting.

The Worship & Music Committee reported a large turnout for the Ash Wednesday service, in the Sanctuary prior to the Wednesday dinner. They may consider eliminating the noon time service next year. The Sanctuary can provide access to livestreaming the service in future years.

As in past years, the budgeted benevolent mission funds to Synod and General Assembly will continue to be forwarded directly to each agency. Support of Presbytery mission projects will also be directed to each project. This practice continues while Presbytery continues merging per capita (administrative) funds with mission funds for ALL Presbytery operations.

The closing action of Session was the appointment of Ginnie Gibson as 2026 Alternate Elder Commissioner to Presbytery. Monte Shuck is the 2026 Elder Commissioner with Ginnie willing to attend, if needed, in his stead.

Bruce F Archer



## Presbyterian Social Witness: Family, Aging, and Pastoral Care (Part 2)

*This is the 14<sup>th</sup> part of a series exploring different aspects of our church's social witness policy.*

These policies address a range of topics, including child abuse, domestic violence, changing families, pornography, gambling, contraception and abortion, aging, end-of-life issues, elder care, and elder abuse.

### 4. Pornography – Far from the Song of Songs (1988)

Pornography is a powerful symptom of injustice and alienation in human society. Through words and images, pornography debases God's intended gifts of love and dignity in human sexuality. Although humankind was created male and female, equally and fully in the image of God, the history of humanity reveals a fundamental pattern of dominance and subjugation. While this historic pattern of systematic oppression has been exposed more fully in our time than ever before, we live in an age also marked by the shattering of many norms of behavior and the subsequent loss of moral restraints.

[https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/6-pornography-far-from-song-of-songs-1988\\_o.pdf](https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/6-pornography-far-from-song-of-songs-1988_o.pdf) (200 pages)

### 5. Turn Mourning into Dancing! A Policy Statement on Healing Domestic Violence (2001)

This policy statement gives renewed definition to Presbyterian understandings concerning the root causes of domestic violence and the church's complicity and response to the problem. The term "domestic violence" in this policy statement and its rationale is used as an inclusive term to broadly encompass the abuse found in child/child, parent/child, spouse/spouse, partner/partner, adult child/aging parent relationships, as well as violence that occurs in sibling and dating relationships. The policy statement comes with a study and action guide, in the hope that we may all become more aware of our call to be God's people in our daily lives and work.

<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/5-dancing-2001.pdf> (63 pages)

### 6. Resolution on the Ministry of Caregiving in Relation to Older Adults (2001)

This resolution explores what the ministry of caregiving means as an aging population rapidly increases. People of faith and the congregation in which they serve must assess the needs of the aging population in their community and seek ways to support and sustain family caregivers. The church can play a vital role in developing models that provide caregiving to all who are in need.

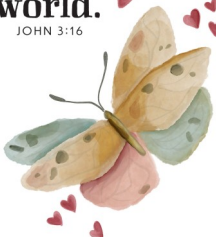
<https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2024-11/caregiving-older-adults-resolution-2001.pdf> (9 pages)

### 7. Transforming Families (2004)

The sovereign love of God, the gracious lordship of Jesus Christ, and the empowering fellowship of the Holy Spirit ground our lives as Christians; yet we are also rooted in family structures that evidence the corrosive pressures around and within us, as well as the failed relationships among us, even as they remain sites of God's gracious presence and activity. Our family lives, like the other spheres of our existence, need transformation by the Holy Spirit; and our world needs the transformative agency of families that understand the breadth of their vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ.

[https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/transformingfamilies1\\_o.pdf](https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/transformingfamilies1_o.pdf) (84 pages)

**For God  
so loved  
the world.**  
JOHN 3:16



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

## Spiritual Growth

### Children's Sunday School

We will be covering lessons from the Book of Matthew in March including The Lord's Prayer, The Birds in the Sky, The Golden Rule, plus many more.

### **Wonderful Wednesday**

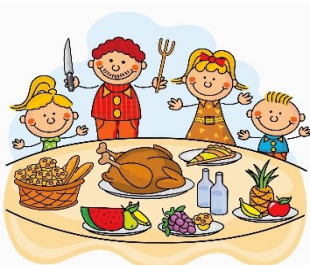
Seven Valentine's Day gift packages were mailed to our youth in college. The packages were filled with crafts and sweets made by our Wonderful Wednesday kids. The youth also decorated 80 lunch bags with Valentine themes for the Mission committee to use for their weekly lunches they prepare and deliver to Advent House. The kids had fun decorating the youth room for Easter/Spring. We have many fun springtime activities planned, including making goodies for the Deacons to be distributed in their baskets for homebound and "special" members of the church.

### **Youth Fellowship**

During Lent the teens will be 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.

### **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.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown  
invited and a light dinner will be served.

### Important Dates

Please join us for the Wednesday Night Dinner and Dessert Auction on **March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6pm**. Youth Fellowship will be assisting with the dinner and all proceeds will benefit our beloved Camp Greenwood.

Mark your calendar for a Family Game Night **Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 6pm!** Everyone is



## Mission

Would you like to see a heartwarming story that involves some of the 'Friends' whom we, through Mission, sponsor for social health and activities on the second Tuesday of every month? The Friends are special needs kids of age 26 and up, therefore graduates of local development programs at Heartwood. We organized through Mason Community Services to provide them a place and good supervisors like social workers, etc. The heartwarming story is available through [campricstar.org](http://campricstar.org). Go to that site and see what some of us --- youth of our gathering of friends--- are enjoying once a year, as far as musical camaraderie and fun. It's a summer camp for mostly local youth, Camp Ricstar, very effective and, it seems, soon to be imitated in other parts of the country. Go to [campricstar.org](http://campricstar.org). It began as a memorial tribute by his parents to a cerebral palsy kid, Richard Star, who was musically inclined and even a composer, who lived for the kind of community that we, too, at Mason Presbyterian, support and appreciate.

Rex Hauser



# M · A · R · C · H

## Deacons



Hello All! We've made it to March and we've got Spring to look forward to! Thank you Jesus!

Thanks to you, 239 pounds of food was collected and delivered to the Mason Food Bank in February. We now have a new grocery list with needed items that include: ranch salad dressing, tomato and chicken noodle soup, macaroni & cheese, cereal, oatmeal, breakfast bars, chili with beans, diced tomatoes, and 16 oz jars of peanut butter. Please bring donations to the table in the memorial room. The end date for this collection is March 29 (Palm Sunday). Thank you for your continuing generosity to help those in need!

In case you ever wondered, the Mason Food Bank used to be under Capital Area Community Services and operated as Mason Food Bank since the 1990s. In 2016, a group of people decided to file for their own nonprofit status along with their blessing and some start money. Once they were on our own, they received tremendous support from the community and have made many improvements to assist the low income population of Mason with food.

They serve about 110 families each month which comes to 1,329 food orders for the year. They have thirteen volunteers who help in many ways like handing food out on distribution days (Tuesday and Thursday), going shopping for items to stock the shelves, and helping unload food donations that are delivered by various groups in the community - like us!

Please continue to pray for those in our church family that are in need of our love, care and support.

## Parish Life

### **Birthdays in March**

Ray Strayer	3/1	Bruce Archer	3/15
Isaiah Hawkins	3/2	Amelia Tessman	3/16
Ruth Sablich	3/5	Brenda Strayer	3/18
Ben Pinches	3/6	Luke Mackey	3/20
Travis Archer	3/7	Violet Mackey	3/20
Jacob Castle	3/8	Dan Baker	3/21
Peter Robinson	3/11	Nora Edmonson	3/21
Vern Schrock	3/12	Shirly Day	3/22
Steve Ware	3/13	Mary Torrey	3/26
Deb Melse	3/14		



# MARCH

# Worship & Music

## March 2026 Worship Calendar

March 1	Second Sunday in Lent	Communion
March 8	Third Sunday in Lent	
March 15	Fourth Sunday in Lent	Children's Sermon
March 22	Fifth Sunday in Lent	
March 29	Palm Sunday	Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering

March 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	31				



## Financial Report through January 31, 2026

General Fund Balance: January 1, 2026	0
Income through January	\$ 39,884
Expenses through January	\$ 26,002
Ending Balance	\$ 13,883

General Fund Balance 1/31/2026	\$ 13,883	Anticipated pledged income through January
Revolving Accounts Balance	\$ 20,838	\$24,910
Reserve Accounts Balance	\$ 47,233	Actual pledged income through January
Investments as of 1/31/2026	\$ 583,083	\$32,760
Net Financial Position (1/31/2026)	<b>\$ 757,086</b>	



- The Women's Association are asking for donations for the spring rummage sale, being held on April 16th and 17th. Please contact Gladys Welker with any questions.



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 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.

