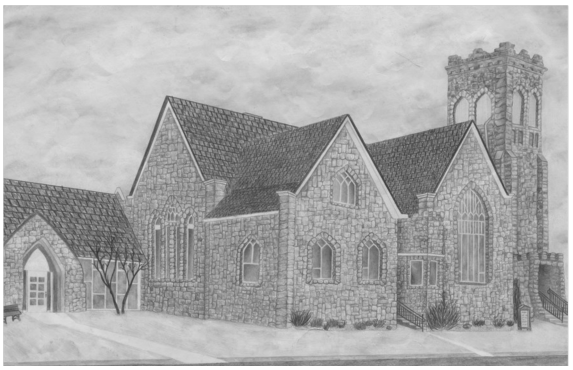
Mason First Presbyterian Church

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

March 2023

The Calling of the Church (Part 4)

The Marks of the Church

With all Christians of the Church catholic,
we affirm that the Church is "one holy
catholic and apostolic."
[Note: the word "catholic" simply means "universal".]

The Catholicity of the Church

Catholicity is God's gift to the Church in Jesus Christ.
In the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, by the power of the Spirit,
God overcomes our alienation and repairs our division.

Because in Christ the Church is catholic,
it strives everywhere to testify to Christ's
embrace of men, women, and children
of all times, places, races, nations,
ages, conditions, and stations in life.

The catholicity of the Church summons the Church to a deeper faith,
a larger hope, and a more complete love as it bears witness to God's grace.

from The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.,
"The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity"
"

Session Synopsis

At the January meeting of the Session the first order of business for the new year, 2023, was the appointment of the Clerk of Session for a 1-year term. Bruce Archer was again appointed, continuing in the role since 2006.

The ongoing review of misconduct and child protection policies presents challenges in instances where a child may be one-to-one with a non-family adult, notably during transport of children to church events. Session continues the discussion with the Spiritual Growth Director for possible enhancement to policy and procedures.

Session approved the PCUSA Annual Statistical Report establishing the Active membership at 134 members to begin 2023. This statistic will become the basis for determining 2024 Per Capita.

Pastor Bill reported two candidates are being considered for the position of part-time Office Assistant. Subsequently, Nancy Sue MacDonald was selected. The Pastor also reported ongoing issues on copyright matters on livestream broadcasts. A meeting is being arranged with representatives of the Evangelical Coventry Fellowship on their detailed needs should Session consider their request to use the church facilities for their worship.

The Worship & Music Committee is seeking donations for the new pew Bibles and hymnals. Donors or memorial names will be individually annotated eventually in the new books. The committee announced BSA Troop 763 would participate in the first Sunday worship in February, commemorating the birthday of Boy Scouting in the USA. The committee continues review on enhancing details for special service events such as communion.

The Mission Committee is looking forward to sharing the increased resources budgeted in 2023 after recent years of decline.

A couple of Mason young adults (two of the Pastor's sons) attended the collegiate January retreat at Montreat, N.C. representing U-Kirk.

The Finance Committee is pleased to be able to consider fund requests for additional projects from the remaining unallocated funds of 2022. The committee also acknowledged year-end contributions of $5,000 to the Scholarship Fund and $5,000 for outreach to Advent House. Deficit balances in some revolving account items are soon to be remedied.

The Security Team will begin review on current policies and procedures for possible enhancements.

The Personnel Committee will be arranging an interview with at least one candidate for the new part-time position of Sexton. Thanks were acknowledged from staff members for the holiday gift bonus. A review of the Child Protection Policy and the responsibilities of the Office Manager are underway.

The Administration Committee is working with the Personnel Committee in filling the Sexton position and with the Pastor on the potential building use by the Evangelical Covenantry Fellowship. The church sewer line to the city system was cleared of a bulk of tree roots relieving flooding in the sub-basement.

With the new year, Session made appointments and reappointments for 2023 that included Elder Doreen Chapman as Elder Commissioner to the Presbytery of Lake Michigan, Vern Schrock as Treasurer, Jamie Robinson and Sue Riley as Assistant Treasurers, Sheren Wright as Financial Secretary, and Sandy Diehl as Assistant Financial Secretary. Assignment of Session Elders to liaison with Session committees is still pending. Elder Lucinda Davenport was appointed Interim Moderator of the Nominating Committee to continue seeking nominees for one Session Elder vacancy and more Deacons, hopefully for election at the annual February Congregational meeting.

There was no regular Session meeting in February due to a lack of a Moderator while Pastor Bill attended to his family's medical needs in Kansas City. An attempt for a substitute Moderator on relatively short notice was to no avail.

Bruce F Archer
Clerk of Session

Worship & Music

March 2023 Worship Calendar

March 5	**The Second Sunday in Lent** ~ Communion
March 12	**The Third Sunday in Lent**
March 19	**The Fourth Sunday in Lent** ~ Children's Sermon
March 26	**The Fifth Sunday in Lent** ~ 2-Cents-a-Meal Offering

Finance

Financial Report through January 2023

General Fund Balance January 1, 2023	0
Income through January - includes $21,581 from 2022 that is unallocated for 2023	$55,926
Expenses through January	$37,923
Ending Balance (1/31/23)	$18,003

General Fund Balance 1/31/23	$ 18,003
Revolving Accounts Balance	61,891
Reserve Accounts	90,131
Investments as of 9/30/22 (end of 4th quarter 2022)	445,056
Net Financial Position (1/31/23)	$ 615,081

Anticipated pledged income through January
$24,471
Actual pledged income through January
$19,998

We are no longer asking for a per capita payment in addition to your pledge. We are treating our obligation to the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly as a normal expense in our budget.

If you recently sent a per capita payment, be assured that it has been recorded as part of your offering.

Thank you for your faithful support!

Parish Life

Birthdays in March

Liam Blonshine	3/01	Vern Schrock	3/12
Ray Strayer	3/01	Steve Ware	3/13
Isaiah Hawkins	3/02	Deb Melse	3/14
Connie Cantrell	3/03	Bruce Archer	3/15
Ruth Sablich	3/05	Brenda Strayer	3/18
Ben Pinches	3/06	Luke Mackey	3/20
Travis Archer	3/07	Violet Mackey	3/20
Jacob Castle	3/08	Shirley Day	3/22
Peter Robinson	3/11	Mary Torrey	3/26

We're missing some birthdays - especially for new people!
If you've not been celebrated in the *Living Stones* or *The Cornerstone*,
please let the office know the date of your special day!

Any charitable donations for special emergencies like the earthquake in Syria and Turkey or for assistance to MSU students, faculty, and staff, for instance, may be sent to the church. Just put the specific destination in the memo line and we'll get it to the appropriate group. This will also be reflected in your giving statement.

Interested in joining the church?
Or just want to learn about all the things that go on around here?

Come to the five-week Explorers Class, following worship, beginning on March 5. Pastor Bill will lead the class and you will have an opportunity to get to know a variety of people in various positions of leadership in the church.
Lunch will be provided!

Spiritual Growth

Youth Program

Pre-K and Elementary Sunday School –
The youth are dismissed during the worship service and gather for snacks and Sunday school in the upstairs youth education room. Our current lessons focus on Lent activities, and the Miracles of Jesus.

Middle / High Sunday School & Fellowship –
The youth are dismissed during the worship service and gather for snacks and Sunday school in the downstairs youth fellowship room. This group will finish the curriculum topic entitled "Dilemmas" which explores making deliberate, thoughtful, and faithful decisions consistent with their character and their faith.

The next curriculum topic will be "Grace" which is designed to show youth that grace is a real, practical force in their lives in the mist of fear, doubt, and stress. Older youth will provide assistance with the Lenten Meal.

Wonderful Wednesday –
Takes place every Wednesday after school, and the program concludes with a community dinner at 6:15pm. Lent activities will include participation in the Ash Wednesday Lenten dinner with food and liturgy. Jesus's walk to the cross will be the focus of lessons during the month.

Adult Program

Wednesday Prayer Service -
Please join us for the Wednesday prayer service at noon in the downstairs chapel. This 20-minute guided prayer time is led by Michelle Mackey. Together we pray for and with one another.

Adult Bible Study -
Please join us after worship for an exciting video series entitled "The Chosen" during Lent. This is a multi-season show retelling the Gospel story primarily from the perspective of the people whom Jesus interacts with. Steve VanDyke has been raving about this series for a couple years now. Pastor Bill has watched the first couple episodes and has been very impressed. The video includes an accompanying Bible study and discussion time.

Community Volunteer Opportunity

Mason Community Services is looking for volunteers to work at the Freely Given Clothing Closet. If you're interested, you can go to the Mason Community Services website at

https://www.masoncommunityservices.org/

click on " Volunteer Mason" then select the Freely Given Clothing Closet, fill out the contact information. We will then add you to the Sign-Up Genius site. Weekly and then monthly a list of volunteer opportunities will be sent by email.

New Bibles and Hymnals

We are inviting members and friends of the congregation to contribute to the recent purchase of new pew Bibles and hymnals by donating a Bible or hymnal in memory of a loved one.

The Bible is the brand-new Updated Edition of the New Revised Standard Version, which is what Pastor Bill has been using from the pulpit since it was released online about a year ago. The text of the pew Bible will match what is read from the pulpit and shown on the screens. The NRSVue (as it is called) is the long-awaited official revision of the New Revised Standard Version, which was first published in 1989.

The hymnal is the *Glory to God* hymnal that was published by our denomination in 2013. Our choir has been using this hymnal for supplementary music for several years, and most other Presbyterian churches have already made the switch in the pews. It contains over 850 hymns and service music, many of which are old favorites and some of which are new. Generally speaking it is good practice to update the hymnals in the pews about once a generation, as new music is being written all the time. Some of that new music will turn out to be popular and long-lasting; every single hymn that you know and love was, at some point, a brand new hymn that was unfamiliar to people in the pews!

The new pew Bibles have replaced the Common English Bible that has been in the pews. The new hymnal, on the other hand, has been added to the pews, without removing *The Worshiping Church* for the time being. We will leave both hymnals in the pews for a while (maybe about a year?) while we get used to using the new hymnal. The new pew Bibles are black, and the new hymnals are purple.

We are inviting members and friends of the congregation to participate in this effort by donating one or more pew Bibles or hymnals to the church in memory of a loved one. Labels will be placed inside the front cover of the Bibles and hymnals, like a bookplate. The Bibles cost $17.50 and the hymnals cost $20.00. Please use the form below. Add additional forms as needed.

- - - -

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 10:00 am 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
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
ADULT SPIRITUAL GROWTH COORDINATOR - Michelle Mackey

ELDERS:
2023 - Bruce Archer, Tim Hammond, Mary Ozee, Steve Sowles.
2024 - Jerry Ambrose, Lucinda Davenport, Loren Harkness, Tonya Seely.
2025 - Anita Cote, Mary Garland Jackson, Monte Shuck.
Clerk: Bruce Archer.

DEACONS:
2023 - Lisa Castle, Jay Harkness, Vern Schrock, Steve VanDyke.
2024 - Donna Hujsak, Issie Nielsen, Camille Subject.
2025 - Marge Clarke, Julie Dart, Timothy Pinches.
Moderator *Pro Tem*: Lisa Castle

Weather-Related Cancellation of Church Worship Services and/or Other Activities

If local authorities declare a state of emergency (such as an ice storm, blizzard, or extreme freezing temperatures), then worship service, committee meetings, after-school activities, and/or other church events will be cancelled for the duration of the emergency.

If Mason Public Schools are closed on Wednesday, then youth activities and the fellowship dinner, if scheduled, will be cancelled.

Other regularly scheduled activities (choir rehearsal, committee meetings, etc.) not affected by school closures will proceed as planned, *unless participants are notified otherwise*.

Whenever safe travel is questionable due to weather or road conditions, use your best judgment. Your personal safety is key, regardless of the church activities calendar.