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

October 2025

Worship on the Lord's Day: Word

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

Prayers of Intercession

In response to the Word, we pray for the world God so loves—joining Christ's own ministry of intercession and the sighs of the Spirit, too deep for words. These prayers are not the work of a single leader, but an act of the whole congregation as Christ's royal priesthood. We affirm our participation in the prayer through our "amen" and other responses. Prayers of intercession and supplication are offered for: the mission and ministry of the universal Church and the local congregation; care of creation and the right use of resources; peace and justice in the world; the leaders and peoples of all nations; the poor, hungry, and oppressed; compassion and reconciliation in the local community; healing and wholeness for all who suffer; and other special needs. These prayers may be led from the communion table or from the midst of the congregation. They may include musical responses or symbolic action. The peace of Christ may follow, if not previously shared. Because pastors are called to serve as good shepherds for God's people, it is fitting for a minister of the Word and Sacrament to lead the prayers of intercession and supplication. Because deacons are responsible for ministries of compassion and ruling elders are charged with the nurture of the congregation, it is also fitting for a deacon or ruling elder to lead these prayers. Other persons with a gift for prayer may be invited to lead the intercessions.

Offering and Lord's Supper

The collection of tithes and offerings and the celebration of the Lord's Supper take place as a response to the Word. These actions are signs of our gratitude for the grace of God proclaimed in the gospel. If the Lord's Supper is omitted, a prayer of thanksgiving and dedication follows the collection of the offering.

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

(continued next month)

Session Synopsis

While Pastor Bill was sharing in the adult mission trip at the PineRidge Indian Reservation, Rev. Dr. Jim Hegedus moderated the monthly regular Session meeting. Session learned of the passing of former member Marian Van Orden some time past.

Session also heard of conflict at the Marshall church attempting to be resolved by the Presbytery. Presbytery confirmed the same Presbytery portion of per capita for 2026 as was in 2025. Pastor Bill will be leading an Explorer's Class for prospective members throughout October . Any interested friends of the church wishing to learn of this church and congregation should contact Pastor Bill soon to participate with the class.

Session recognized the nonprofit Michigan Parkinson Foundation as a viable concern to allow solicitation for support and funds from the congregation. Church member Deb Shellenbarger is coordinating current efforts on behalf of the Foundation.

The Spiritual Growth Committee reported a successful summer Youth Triennium assembly. Attendees were encouraged to continue support of the greater church to include considering being a Youth Advisory Delegate at the 2026 General Assembly. Following clarification from the Finance Committee, the Spiritual Growth Committee is assisting the older youth, who have been paid volunteers to oversee the nursery kids, prepare the necessary federal and state payroll documents. Those continuing to volunteer will be subject to withholdings, sick time, and leave benefits as are the staff employees of the church.

The Administration Committee reported multiple electronic control board replacements to return the heating/air conditioning to working order in the west wing floors. Potential roof repair needs around the church office entry area are being investigated. Notice from the county Drain Commission has been received of an annual 20-year $221+ drain tax assessment for the church and playground portion of the area drains maintenance and upgrade. The committee is considering removal of the 20+ year old plastic playground equipment. The equipment is collapsing and is need of repair or removal. Saturday, November 8th is the fall yard clean-up day.

The Worship & Music Committee is exploring options for the communion bread, including gluten-free bread. Church youth are preparing a special recipe bread for World Communion.

The Mission Committee clarified the 2024 support for missionaries in Costa Rica, the recent chicken dinner returns ($1,400), and balances in General Fund and revolving Mission accounts.

The Nominating Committee is seeking a few more Deacon and Elder nominees. They will also be seeking nominees to serve on next year's Nominating Committee.

The Finance Committee is busy orientating the new Financial Secretary, Becky Moots, and consulting with an outside payroll tax consultant.

The Parish Life committee is supporting upcoming efforts for the Michigan Parkinson Foundation. The Foundation is having a Swiss steak dinner at the church and a Hero Walk at Hawk Island Park. The fall rummage sale will October 16-17th.

Bruce F Archer

Presbyterian Social Witness: Violence

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

These policies speak to violence and terrorism and to the pandemic of gun violence.

1. Resolution on Violence, Religion, and Terrorism (2004)

This report focuses on the role that religion plays in relationship to violence, most specifically the form of violence used to attack important centers and symbols of American power on September 11, 2001. It also examines actions that have been, or can be, mounted to counter such violence and the role religion plays in supporting or challenging those counter terrorist actions. This resource includes both the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) resolution on terrorism which was approved by the 216th General Assembly (2004), and six lesson plans for its study.

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/2-violence-religion-terrorism-2004.pdf (41 pages)

2. Faithful Living in a Time of Violence and Terrorism – A Study Guide on the Resolution on Violence, Religion and Terrorism (2004)

This six-session study guide was developed to help participants think about the relationship of faith and fear, explore issues of violence and terrorism, including the role religion plays, reflect theologically on responses to violence and terrorism, and consider practical ways to respond to violence and terrorism from the standpoint of faith. It includes extended learning opportunities, a bibliography and websites and a copy of the Resolution on Violence, Religion and Terrorism approved by the 215th General Assembly (2004).

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/rtvbook.pdf (76 pages)

3. Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call (2010)

This report, approved by the 219th General Assembly (2010), challenges our society's fatalism and numbness in accepting the highest gun death rates in the world, reviews past church positions and proposes a new "spiritual awakening" approach: a church-related, community-based strategy inspired by "Heeding God's Call" in Philadelphia, with similar groups in Richmond, Virginia and central New Jersey. The report looks at our culture of violence-acceptance, with its undercurrents of fear and desperation.

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/gun-violence-policy.pdf (40 pages)

4. Gun Violence: An action of the 225th General Assembly (2022)

This action of the 225th General Assembly (2022) provides an update to the statistics included in the 2010 "Gun Violence, Gospel Value: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call." It also provides new recommendations including the implementation of the PCUSA's 10-year campaign, the Decade to End Gun Violence.

https://pcusa.org/sites/default/files/0019-CPJ-ACSWP-Gun-Violence-Report-and-Recommendations-v2.pdf (12 pages)

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

Deacons

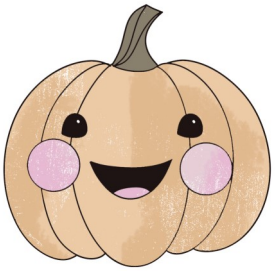
Welcome October!

The Coat Drive is on the schedule this fall. This community project collects and distributes warm winter coats, hats, gloves, boots, etc. to children and adults in need. Gently used or new items can be dropped off at the church any time. Deadline is October 22nd.

The Deacons are beginning to expand their outreach by offering home communion visits on a monthly basis, on the same day we celebrate communion in the Sanctuary. The Deacons are looking for volunteers who would be interested in helping to serve, perhaps once every three months if we get enough volunteers. Anyone who has ever served as an Elder or Deacon is welcome to participate in this effort. Please contact Sandy Leutscher or Bill Pinches for more information or to indicate your willingness to assist. Thank you!

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

- Nancy Sue MacDonald, Secretary



Parish Life

Birthdays in September

Kurt Immekus	10/02	Sam VanDyke	10/17
Jacob Edmonson	10/03	Becky Moots	10/27
Matthew McGonigal	10/04	Kate Barber	10/29
Sarah Fay-Koutz	10/06	Erin McGonigal	10/29
Doreen Chapman	10/14	Bill Pinches	10/30
Mary Garland Jackson	10/15	Tyler Harkness	10/31
Linda Peterson	10/15		

Spiritual Growth

Sunday School
Children- We are starting this year with a new curriculum entitled "Bible Basics". Our first lesson is from Isaiah 2:1-5 "swords into plows" which talks about Gods demands for justice for humankind and leads us into our Advent celebrations and traditions.

Teens- The teens will continue with their Groove curriculum that has been used the last few years with topics such as Dilemmas, Grace, I Am, and Inside out. This fall the topic is Relationships. These studies allow youth to apply God's word and scripture to their everyday life.

Youth Fellowship
Several youths from our church attended a Presbytery-wide event at the Hastings Presbyterian Church for a youth event that included a reunion with friends from our Triennium trip and a total of 70 youth in all participating!

Our youth group will again be serving food for the homeless in downtown Lansing (for the 6th time) on October 19th. The youth gather and make food on Friday evening and then take the food to Lansing on Saturday morning feeding well over 50 people each time. A big thank you to the Mission committee for funding this worthwhile project!

Adult Programs
This fall we will be using a curriculum entitled "The Wired Word". During our time together, we will relate current events to scripture passages and apply God's word to everyday life. It should provide for thought provoking and stimulating conversations about our world's current topics.

Special Announcements

Boy Scout Troop 763 is now conducting their annual holiday wreath sales. The 22" fresh fir wreaths remain at $25 each. You may place your order at the church office bulletin board (Bruce Archer) or with Scout Luke Mackey. The supply is limited, so don't hesitate too long. You can expect delivery of the wreath Thanksgiving week.

Hooray! **A new church directory is available.** If anybody needs to make a correction, let us know and we will publish an addendum later this fall.

Worship & Music

October 2025 Worship Calendar

October 5	17th Sunday after Pentecost World Communion Sunday
October 12	18th Sunday after Pentecost Mission Trip Presentation
October 19	19th Sunday after Pentecost Children's Sermon
October 26	20th Sunday after Pentecost Two-Cents-a-Meal Hunger Offering

October 2025

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 August 31, 2025

General Fund Balance: January 1, 2025	0
Income through August 2025	$ 266,142
Expenses through August 2025	$ 262,475
Ending Balance	3,667

General Fund Balance 8/31/2025	$ 3,667
Revolving Accounts Balance	$ 79,179
Reserve Accounts Balance	$ 59,108
Investments as of 8/31/2025	$ 565,595
Net Financial Position (8/31/2025)	**$ 707,549**

Anticipated pledged income through August
$177,989
Actual pledged income through August
$205,123

A Message from the Finance Committee:

It is time to thoughtfully plan giving commitments to our church for the 2026 fiscal year. Please return your pledge information by Sunday, October 26th, or earlier if you are unable to attend that day. This process enables us to prepare an accurate budget for 2026. The Session is dedicated to maintaining a balanced budget and will wait to finalize next year's financial plan until all congregational pledges have been received.

Last year, we began a new practice of asking each Committee to provide their estimated expenses for the upcoming year in September. This process helps members and friends understand how much funding is required for the next fiscal year. Church expenses for 2026 are estimated at $389,686, a 6% increase ($23,000) over the 2025 budget.

Each gift supports our church's ministries—including worship, education, outreach, and care ministries—and every pledge, regardless of size, matters to our congregation and community. Please consider how your contribution furthers our mission and reflects gratitude and stewardship. We trust you will thoughtfully determine your pledge to help sustain our work.

Please send your completed pledge sheet to the church office or send an email to bookkeeper@masonpresbyterian.org at your earliest convenience.

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 Ses-*

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
CHORAL MUSIC ACCOMPANIST - Le Ji ("Claire")
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.