

OAK TREE-ISELIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ 08830

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Third Sunday in Advent

We request that you silence all electronic devices before service begins.

*Please rise in body or spirit.

Sunday, December 14, 2025

10:30 a.m.

Service led by: Elder Herb Williams

Liturgist: Elder Ron Stamboly

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music



Let light banish darkness

Centering Thought

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. – James 5:7-10

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ron Stamboly

We light the Candle of Joy

Herb Williams: I bring you greeting in the name of the Lord: Watch and wait for Christ's coming! Light candles of hope, peace, joy, remembering the promises of God with prayer.

The Raghunandan Family:

We light this candle in hope. We light this candle for peace. We light this candle in joy! To those who live as exiles from home in a dark time, to those enslaved as exiles due to others' oppression, to those who are sin's exiles from their best God-promised selves, the Lord speaks the joy of good news. From the Gospel of John we hear:

Reader 1: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Reader 2: "I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the LORD.

Herb Williams: (*Isaiah 12:2-4, Philippians 4:4*)

Let us pray: Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid, for the LORD is my strength and my might; God has become my salvation. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice! Sing praises to the LORD, for God has done gloriously!

CHORAL INTROIT # 85 (vs 3)

Light One Candle to Watch 85 for Messiah



1 Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
2 Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
3 Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
4 Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the



light ban - ish dark - ness. He shall bring sal -
light ban - ish dark - ness. He shall feed the
light ban - ish dark - ness. Lift your heads and
light ban - ish dark - ness. He is com - ing;



va - tion to Is - rael, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
tell the glad ti - dings. Let your light be shin - ing.

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)**

Ron Stamboly

Is this the One who is to come?

The Lord upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.

The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed.

The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow.

The deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.

The Lord sets prisoners free, He lifts up those who are bowed down, He loves the righteous.

Enter Zion with singing!

The Lord our God reigns forever.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY (In Unison)**

Ron Stamboly

Our Father in Heaven, let not our joy depend on what is going on in our life, in our world, or the people that we are with. Let our joy not depend on the gifts we give or the gifts we find under the tree. No earthly thing can ever give us complete joy. Remind us that our joy comes from you; that the joy that flooded the hearts of the shepherds, the angels, the wise men, the hosts of heaven, and Mary and Joseph is the joy that still has the power to overwhelm our hearts with rejoicing. Father, we offer you that same joy because we know you and recognize Jesus as our Savior and Lord. Let us hold that joy close to our hearts always. You came to dwell among us; you went to Calvary's cross for us; you overcame death and rose from the dead for us. You forgive our sins and give us eternal life when we believe in you. Flood our hearts with joy this Advent season as we reflect on the good news of Jesus' birth. Flood our hearts with joy as we wait in faithful expectation of the day when Thy Kingdom finally comes. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.

***HYMN # 106 Prepare the Way, O Zion**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Ron Stamboly

We have all sinned, not one of us is clean; but there is mercy for those who call on the name of the Lord. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (Responsive)

Ron Stamboly

As Advent dawns again, O God, we lament that hateful chants, violence, and death have marked our streets.

Lord, have mercy!

God of all Advents, this season we cry, "If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!" But too often we forget that your arrival sets the captives free, separates the sheep and the goats, and judges those who hoard privilege at the expense of others.

Lord, have mercy!

Trusting in the promise that Christ is coming to save sinners, we lay bare before you our own failure to work for equality, our capitulation to injustice, and our enjoyment of benefits denied others because of their culture or the color of their skin.

Lord, have mercy!

Tear open the heavens, O God, dismantle all that destroys our community.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Help us to heed John the Baptist's call to repent, for the Lord is near. Put on our lips, and more importantly in our hearts, the question of faith that ripples through the ages, "What, then, should we do?"

Come, Lord Jesus!

Silence in us any voice but yours, so we will have the ears to hear the answer and the courage to do what you command.

Come, Lord Jesus!

O God of all Advents, make all things new, including us.

Amen

PERSONAL CONFESSION

Ron Stamboly

Merciful God, hear now our own personal confessions that we lift to you in silence.

(Silence is kept.)

In the strong name of Jesus Christ, we pray. **Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON


Herb Williams

Every valley is lifted up; every mountain, made low. Now the glory of the Lord is revealed, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, we are forgiven, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God.

*THE RESPONSE # 582


582 Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

Capo 3: (G) (D) (G) (D) (G) (D) (Em) (D)
B \flat F B \flat F B \flat F Gm F



1 Glo - ry to God, whose good - ness shines on me,
2 World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

(D) (G) (C) (G) (Em7) (A7)
F B \flat E \flat B \flat Gm7 C7



and to the Son, whose grace has par - doned me,
World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

(Hymn continues next page)

(A7) (D) (F#) (Bm)
C7 F A Dm

and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free.
World with - out end, with - out end. A - men.

(Bm7) (D) (Bdim7) (Em7) (Dm)(A7) (D)
Dm7 F Ddim7 Gm7 Fm C7 F

As it was in the be - gin - ning, is now and ev - er shall be. A - men.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Ron Stamboly

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please pass the peace with friends and loved ones)

Hearing and Responding to the Word Proclaimed

TIME FOR CHILDREN OR THE YOUNG IN HEART

Herb Williams

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Ron Stamboly

Lord God, pour out your Spirit upon us to bring good news to the oppressed, and let your word be fulfilled among us; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

A voice is crying in the wilderness: Listen to the word of the Lord.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Psalm 146:5-10

Ron Stamboly

⁵ Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God. ⁶ He is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and everything in them — he remains faithful forever. ⁷ He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free,

⁸ the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous. ⁹ The Lord watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. ¹⁰ The Lord reigns forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord.

NEW TESTAMENT READING Matthew 11:2-11 Herb Williams

² When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³ to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” ⁴ Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.” ⁷ As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.” ¹¹ Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

THE MESSAGE Is this the One who is to come? Herb Williams

***HYMN # 92 While We Are Waiting, Come**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH—Apostles’ Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third**

day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

The Thanksgiving

THE OFFERING

With grateful hearts, let us bring our tithes and offerings to the God from whom they came.

***THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 655** What Shall I Render to the Lord (vs.1)

(Hymn begins next page)

655 What Shall I Render to the Lord

(Psalm 116)

1 What shall I ren - der to the Lord; what
 2 Sal - va - tion's cup my soul shall take while
 3 Not light - ly dost thou, Lord, per - mit thy
 4 With - in God's house, the house of prayer, my

shall my of - fering be, for all the gra - cious
 to the Lord I pray, and with God's peo - ple
 cho - sen saints to die; from death thou hast de -
 soul shall bless the Lord, and prais - es to God's

ben - e - fits God hath be - stowed on me?
 I will meet, my thank - ful vows to pay.
 liv - ered me; thy ser - vant, Lord, am I.
 ho - ly name let all the saints ac - cord.

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(Guest Speaker will share a prayer)

Empowered to Spread God's Love

***HYMN # 82 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

***THE BENEDICTION**

(Guest Speaker will share benediction).

***CHORAL BENEDICTION # 384 Soon and Very Soon (vs 1)**

384 Soon and Very Soon

1 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
2 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
3 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
4 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Soon and Very Soon'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 2/2. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff, with four verses. The first verse is '1 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.' The second is '2 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.' The third is '3 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.' The fourth is '4 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.'

(Hymn continues next page)

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

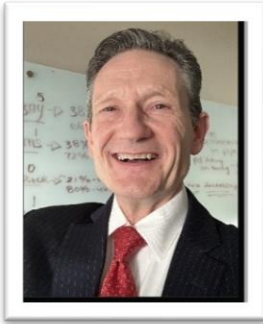
Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Hal-le - lu - jah, hal-le - lu - jah, we're going to see the King!

THE POSTLUDE

OFFERING: Whether you are just passing through town and wanted to stop in for church, this is your first visit of many future ones, or you are with us every week, we certainly appreciate your desire to give anonymously, but if you would like to receive a record of giving for tax purposes, please fill out a pew envelope, check 'I am visiting', and add your name and address. Please make checks payable to: Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church. We appreciate every generous gift and want to make sure we have a proper record of it to say, Thank you!

Welcome!



Today we welcome Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church Elder Herb Williams, to our pulpit. Herb grew up in Iselin and retired after a career in the Woodbridge Police Department. He attended Sunday school at the lower level of this church (formerly The First Presbyterian Church of Iselin). His mother, Ann Marie, served as an elder in the former Oak Tree Presbyterian Church, Edison, NJ, where she was a beloved member. Herb has two sons, one daughter, and three grandchildren.

A Message from The Ministry of Compassion: Thanksgiving and Christmas is a difficult time for many families in our community. We are requesting donations for the following items so that we can include them in the distribution packages for December 15th:

Instant Potatoes	Stuffing Mix	Gravy
Turkey Breasts	Cranberry Sauce	Frozen Turkeys
Frozen Chickens	Frozen Yams	Canned Yams

A Message from Your Director of Music

"Ring in the Christmas season with joy!"
We're preparing for the celebration of our Lord's birth with choir rehearsal every Sunday morning at 9:30 am and Bell Choir practice after worship.

Please see me for further information – Alaine Bolton

Per Capita

The per capita for 2025 is \$40.00

Friendly Reminders

Today & 12/21, 12/24	Service Led by: Elder Herb Williams	
Wednesday 12/17	Advent Fellowship: Light refreshment, song and scripture.	6-8 pm Fellowship Hall
Wed. 12/24 - Fri. 12/26	Office Closed – Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & Day After	
Wednesday 12/24	Christmas Eve Service – Lessons & Carols, service by Elder Herb Williams - No Communion	7 pm
Monday, 12/29-12/31; Jan 2 & 5	M. Estrada - Vacation	
Sunday 1/4/2026	Service Led by Elder Linwood Bagby	

Scheduled Liturgists!

In the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) context, a liturgist sets the tone for worship. They welcome everyone, lead and guide both the congregation and guests through the various parts of worship and assists the pastor throughout the worship service to create an atmosphere of peace, cohesiveness and unity. (). Please email Margarita at info@oaktree-iselinprs.org if you'd like an opportunity to serve as a liturgist.

December 2025	
Today (3rd Sunday in Advent)	Ron Stamboly
12/21/25 (4 th Sunday in Advent)	Betsy Christensen
12/24/25 (Christmas Eve)	Len Mesonas
12/28/25	Jim Durgana

Year 2026

January 2026	
01/04/26	Sue Ramirez
01/11/26	Len Mesonas
01/18/26	Betsy Christensen
01/25/26	Ron Stamboly

Session

Laura Reeves, Clerk of Session

Betsy Christensen	Mission
Jim Durgana	Treasurer
Leonard Mesonas	Human Resources, Officer Nominating Committee
Leonard Mesonas	Finance Chair, President of Corporation
Heather Meyers	Christian Education
Sue Ramirez	Worship and Music
Jeff Reeves	Buildings and Grounds
Ron Stamboly	Financial Secretary
Herb Williams	Mission

The Board of Deacons

Rose Anne Anthony, Moderator

Nikkie Hayase, Board Secretary

Kate Scott, Session Liaison

Cards	Marion Feliks, Chair
Deacon's Assistance Fund	Joan Moscomagas, Chair
Deacon's Nominating Comm.	Joan Moscomagas, Chair
Flowers	Joanne Mesonas & Karen Wallner Co-Chairs
Hospitality	Rose Anne Anthony, Chair
Literature	Nikkie Hayase & Nandai Sookho, Co-Chairs
Ministry of Compassion	Nancy Abel / Sara Schweitzer (non-deacons)
Prayer Partners	Nikkie Hayase, Chair
Welfare	Joan Moscomagas, Chair

Regular Activities

Church Office is open Monday - Friday, 9 am to 1 pm

Men's Breakfast & CLEF Ladies Breakfast meet 1st Saturday in Fellowship Hall.

Session meetings are held monthly (dates will be posted in the Friendly Reminders section).

Prayer Shawl Ministry, Thursdays at 7 pm, Choir Room. For dates, connect with Elder Sue Ramirez.

Choir practice: Every Sunday at 9:30 am

Divine Worship: In the sanctuary
Sundays at 10:30 am

Our Mission Statement



We are a warm and welcoming community of faith, living the teachings of Jesus Christ and open to God's presence through the power of the Holy Spirit. We seek new pathways of ministry and service to fulfil God's purpose for our diverse community. - approved by the merger committee on Wednesday, July 20, 2022 and ratified by congregational vote, June 11, 2023.

Dear Members and Guests, if you'd like to know more information about the latest news,



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