

OAK TREE-ISELIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ 08830

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(732) 283-1188

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Sunday, March 1, 2026

10:30 a.m.

Service led by: Elder Sean Starke

Liturgist: Elder Laura Reeves

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music



Gathering for Worship

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

*Please rise in body or spirit.

Second Sunday in Lent

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton Director of Music

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Laura Reeves

CHORAL INTROIT # 401 (verse 1)

Here in This Place

401

Gather Us In



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa - ter; here we will take the
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con - fin - ing, not in some heav - en,



van - ished a - way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings
yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his - tory,
bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,
light years a - way: here in this place the new light is shin - ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.
called to be light to the whole hu - man race.
call us a - new to be salt for the earth.
now is the king - dom, and now is the day.

(Hymn continues next page)



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en; gath-er us in, the
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion; give us to eat the
Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en;
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly;
bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.
give us the cour-age to en - ter the song.
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

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

Laura Reeves

Leader: The Lord be with you

People: And also with you

Leader: Jesus calls us to take up the cross and follow

People: We come trusting God's promise

Leader: Those who lose their life for Christ's sake will find it

People: We come to worship, to listen, and to follow.

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

Laura Reeves

Father of the universe, we come before you like Nicodemus, seeing with earthly eyes, asking earthly questions, concerned with earthly things.

Open our eyes and our souls to your heavenly vision. Fill our hearts with your Grace and Love that surpasses all human understanding so that we

may walk ever closer to your path and shine your light in a world that seems so dark. Amen.

***HYMN # 366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Laura Reeves

Friends, as Christians we know we sin, and we do not hide from it. We come before our God and lay bare our souls, confessing our sins before the throne of God's eternal grace. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison)

Laura Reeves

Heavenly Father, we come before you a broken and sinful people. Through your Word and the life of your Son you show us the true path of grace and justice but still we insist on going our own way, focusing on our inward wants and desires while turning a blind eye to the pain and suffering that we know exists all around us. Open our eyes to our neighbors in need. Soften our hearts to the poor and hungry. Change us from people who drudgingly live to work to people who joyfully work to live to share your witness with those we encounter starting right here, right now.

PERSONAL CONFESSION

Laura Reeves

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

(Silence is kept)

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Sean Starke

Friends, God is for us! For that very reason God sent the Son in to the world: that the world might be saved through Him. Believe the good news, in Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Amen

*THE RESPONSE # 839 (verse 1)

839 Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!



1 Bless - ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine! O what a
2 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, per - fect de - light, vi - sions of
3 Per - fect sub - mis - sion, all is at rest; I in my



fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine! Heir of sal - va - tion,
rap - ture now burst on my sight; an - gels de - scend - ing,
Sav - ior am hap - py and blest, watch - ing and wait - ing,



pur - chase of God, born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.
bring from a - bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
look - ing a - bove, filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.

(Hymn continues next page)

Refrain

This is my sto - ry; this is my song, prais-ing my Sav - ior

all the day long; this is my sto - ry; this is my

song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Laura Reeves

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 AT HEART

Sean Starke

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Laura Reeves

Let us hear with new ears these familiar words of the Psalmist so that they may fill us with comfort at the eternal guidance, protection, and deep abiding care that our Lord has for us. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 121

Laura Reeves

- ¹ I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
² My help comes from the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.
³ He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
⁴ indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
⁵ The LORD watches over you—
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
⁶ the sun will not harm you by day,
nor the moon by night.
⁷ The LORD will keep you from all harm—
he will watch over your life;
⁸ the LORD will watch over your coming and going
both now and forevermore.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

John 3:1-17

Sean Starke

3 Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. **2** He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

³ Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again.”

⁴ “How can someone be born when they are old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother’s womb to be born!”

⁵ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. ⁷ You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ “You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? ¹¹ Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony.

¹² I have spoken to you of earthly things, and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. ¹⁴ Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵ that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.”

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Ordination and Installation

Elder Ordination: Grace Rozger
Deacon Installations: Nancy Abel and Sara Schweitzer

Leader: There are varieties of gifts,
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

People: There are different ways of serving God,
but it is the same Lord who is served.

Leader: God works through each person in a unique way,
but it is God's purpose that is accomplished.

**People: To each is given a gift of the Spirit to be used for the
common good.**

Leader: Together we are the body of Christ, and individually members
of it. (1 Cor. 12:4-7, 27)

Statement on Ordination

Constitutional Questions

Questions for the Congregation

1) Do we, the members of the church, accept Grace as Ruling Elder,
and Nancy and Sara as Deacons, chosen by God through the voice of
this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

2) Do we agree to pray for them, to encourage them, to respect
their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ,
who alone is Head of the Church?

PRAYER OF INSTALLATION

***HYMN And Can It Be That I Should Gain** (*see insert*)

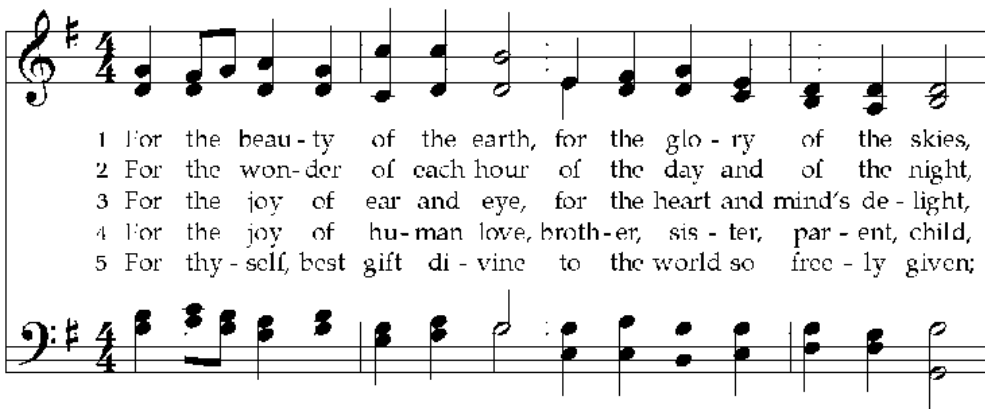
We Give, in Appreciation for God's Gifts

THE OFFERING

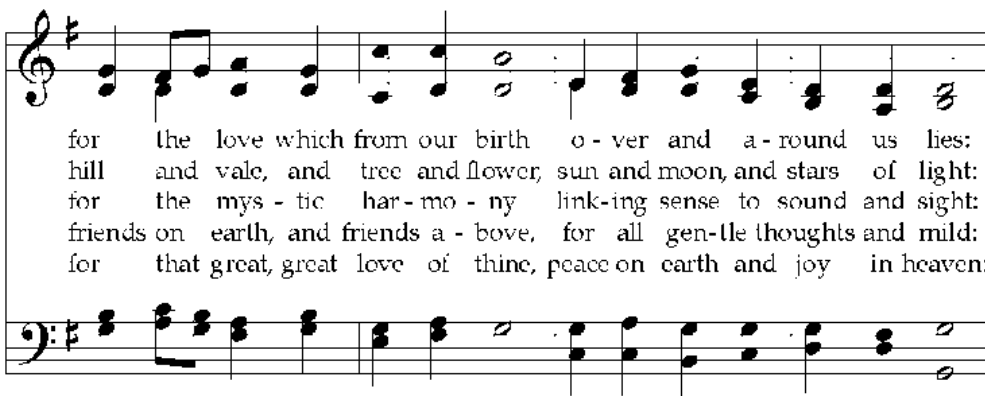
With grateful hearts, let us bring our tithes and offerings to the God from whom they came.

*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 14 (verse 1)

For the Beauty of the Earth 14



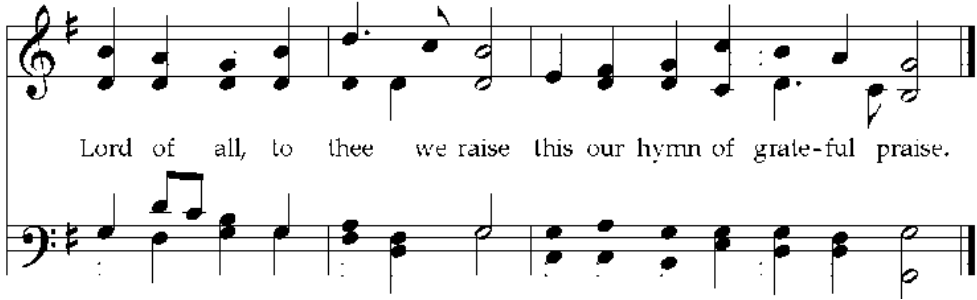
1 For the beau-ty of the earth, for the glo-ry of the skies,
2 For the won-der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's de-light,
4 For the joy of hu-man love, broth-er, sis-ter, par-ent, child,
5 For thy-self, best gift di-vine to the world so free-ly given;



for the love which from our birth o-ver and a-round us lies:
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:
for the mys-tic har-mo-ny link-ing sense to sound and sight:
friends on earth, and friends a-bove, for all gen-tle thoughts and mild:
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:

(Hymn continues next page)

Refrain



Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grate-ful praise.

***THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up 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 # 300 We Are One In The Spirit**

***BENEDICTION** *(Guest Speaker will share benediction)*

*CHORAL BENEDICTION # 36 (all verses)

For the Fruit of All Creation 36

1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will be done.
3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.

For the gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will be done.
For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.

For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are
In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de -
For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con -

sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
spair - ing, in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will be done.
found us, most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

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!



This morning, we welcome Elder Sean Starke to our pulpit.

Sean is an Elder at the Presbyterian Church at Shrewsbury and has served on the Commission on Ministry for the Coastlands Presbytery for the past 4 years. He and his wife have lived in Middletown since 1997.

Friendly Reminders

Sunday 03/29/2026	Rev. Linda Goeddel will lead worship	Palm Sunday
Thursday 04/02/2026	To Be Determined	Maundy Thursday
Friday 04/03/2026	Rev. Jeremy Campbell will lead worship	Good Friday Time 3 pm
Sunday 04/05/2026	Rev. Donald Pitches will lead worship	Easter Sunday

2026 Per Capita - \$42.00

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.

March 2026	
Today	Laura Reeves
03/08/26 (3 rd Sun. Lent)	Chris Madsen
03/15/26 (4 th Sun. Lent)	Betsy Christensen
03/22/26 (5 th Sun. Lent)	
03/29/26 (Palm Sunday)	Ron Stamboly

April 2026	
04/02/26 (Maundy Thursday)	
04/03/26 (Good Friday)	
04/05/26 (Easter Sunday)	
04/12/26	Betsy Christensen
04/19/26	
04/26/26	Ron Stamboly

To all who answered the call to serve as liturgists, Thank you!
Please email Margarita Estrada at info@oaktree-iselinprs.org or call her at (732) 283-1188, if you'd like further opportunities to serve as liturgists.

Session

Laura Reeves, Clerk of Session

	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 & Nancy Abel, Co-Chairs
Literature	Nikkie Hayase & Nandai Sookho, Co-Chairs
Ministry of Compassion	Nancy Abel, Chair / Sara Schweitzer, Co-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, every other Thursday at 7 pm, Choir Room

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,



Visit Scan QR code to website! Visit us on Facebook and Instagram, @oaktreeiselinpreschurchnj and YouTube @oaktreeiselinpresnj. Email us at: info@oaktree-iselinpres.org

Cover Photo: Artist James Tissot, painted between 1886 and 1894.