OAK TREE-ISELIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

Fourth Sunday in Lent

1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ 08830
www.oaktree-iselinpres.org
(732) 283-1188
Email: info@oaktree-iselinpres.org

Sunday, March 15, 2026 10:30 a.m.

Service led by: Elder Linwood Bagby

Liturgist: Elder Len Mesonas Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

Gathering for Worship

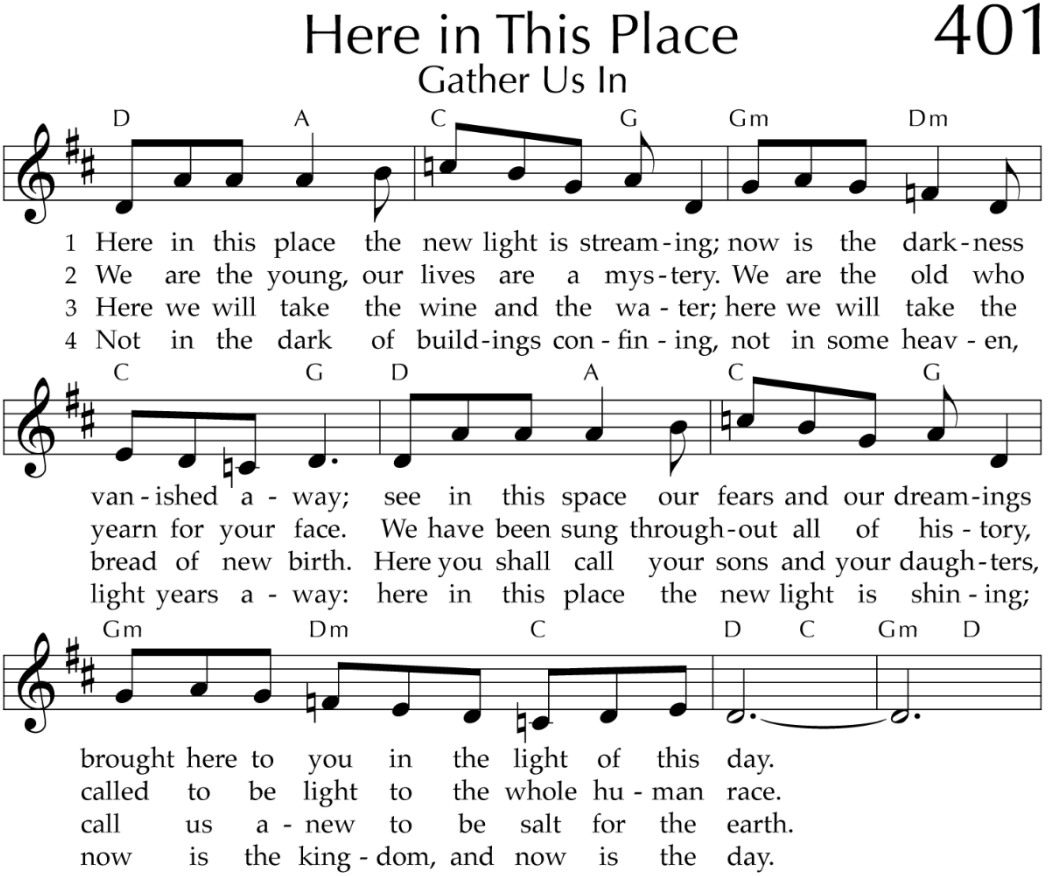
We request that you silence all electronic devices before service begins.
*Please rise in body or spirit.

Centering Thought

For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! - Romans 5:10

PRELUDE **Alaine Bolton Director of Music**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS **Len Mesonas**

CHORAL INTROIT # 401 *(verse 1)*

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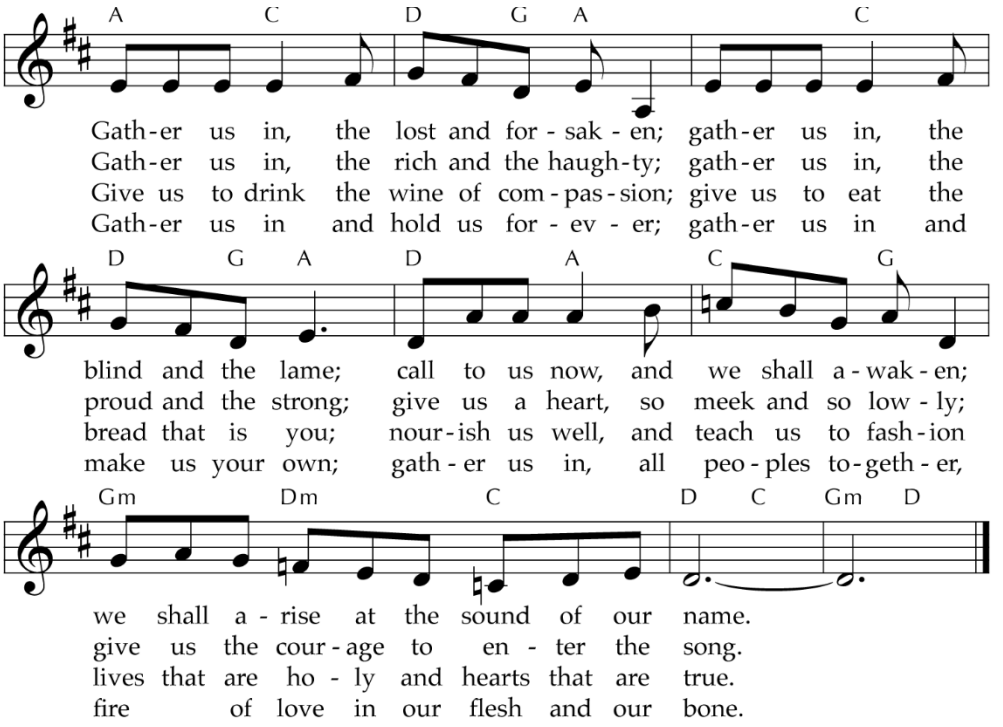


***THE CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)** **Len Mesonas**

(from Psalm 146)

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to God all my life long.

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord:

Who made heaven and earth, and all that is in them.

Who executes justice for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoner free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord watches over the strangers and upholds the orphan and the widow,

But the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. The Lord will reign forever.

Praise the Lord!

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

(from John 9:1-41)

Spirit of the Living God, move through this time of worship as you moved through the life of the man who received his sight— with power, with tenderness, with truth. Give us courage to see what is real, to name what is broken, and to follow the One who brings sight to the blind and exposes the blindness of the proud. Shape us into people who walk in your light and bear witness to your transforming love.

***HYMN # 32 I Sing the Mighty Power of God**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION **Len Mesonas**

(from Psalm 103:8)

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. Confident of God's character, let us confess our sins together so that we might receive healing and peace.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison) **Len Mesonas**

Almighty and merciful God, we continue to want more, blind to the blessings we already possess. We want everything now, blind to the value of patience and hard work. We take so much delight in our own accomplishments that we are blind to people in need. Forgive us! Cleanse us of our entitlement, anxiousness and pride. Help us see the world with your eyes so that we can be people of gratitude, courage and compassion, because of what we see in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

PERSONAL CONFESSION **Len Mesonas**

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

(Silence is kept)

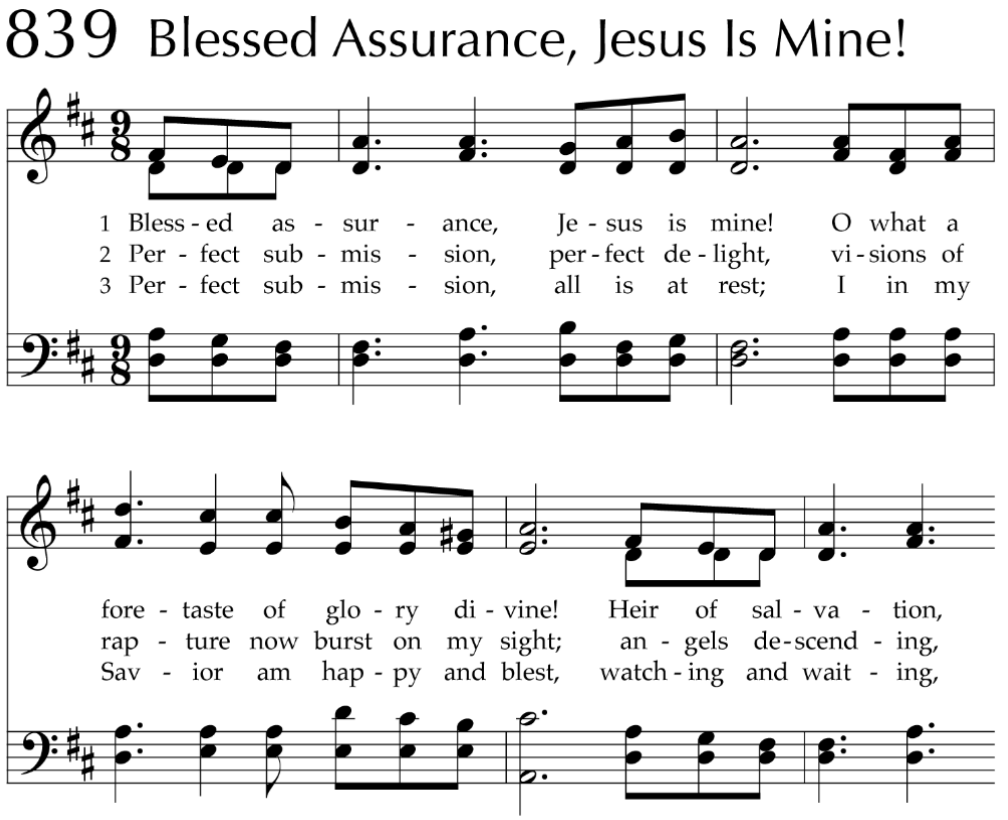
In the strong name of Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON **Linwood Bagby**

(from Jeremiah 33:31-34)

"The days are surely coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. I will put my law within them; I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. I will forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more."

We believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ, we are for given and our sins are remembered no more.

***THE RESPONSE # 839** *(verse 1)*

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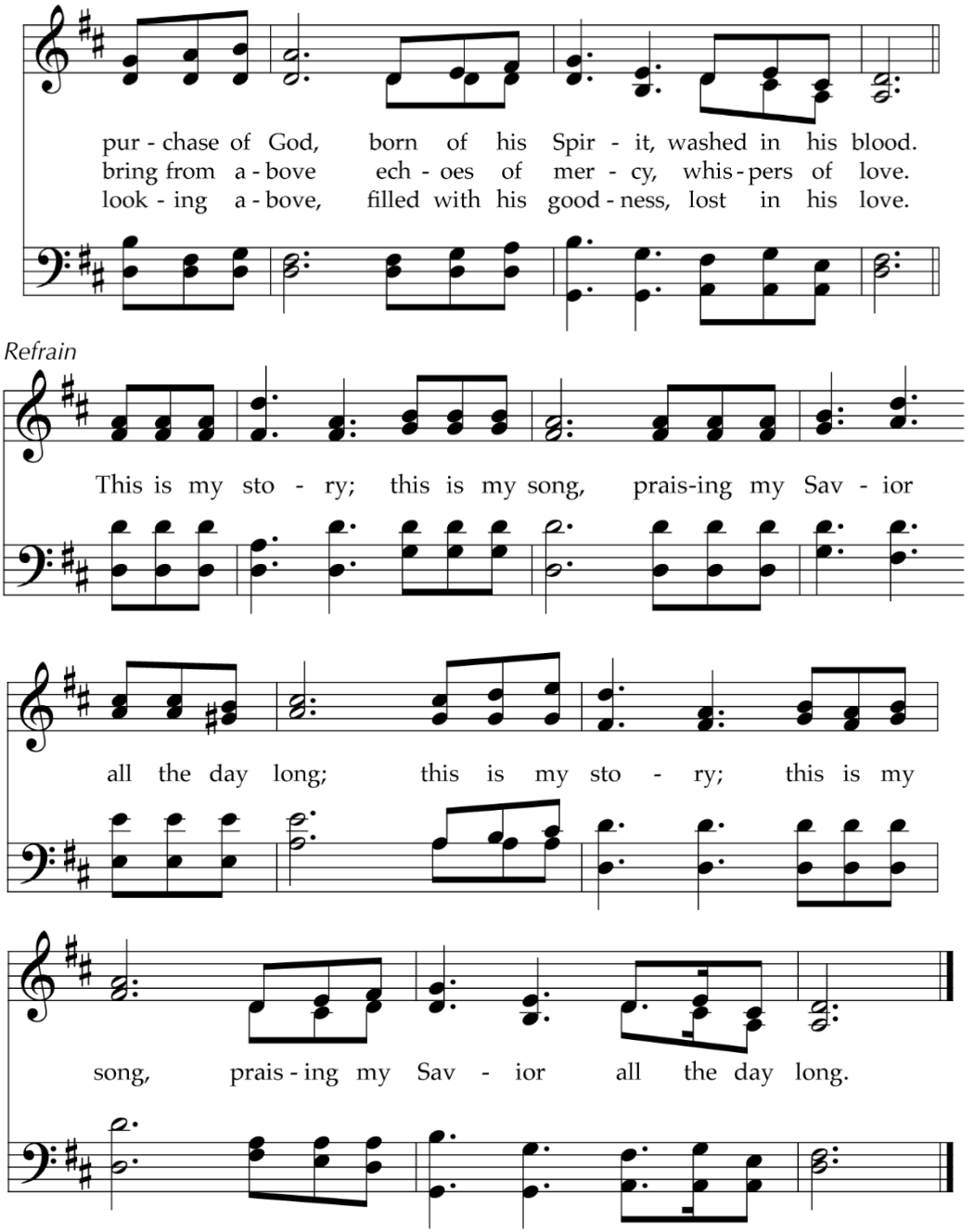

pur - chase of God, born of his Spir - it, washed in his blood.
bring from a - bove ech - oes of mer - cy, whis - pers of love.
look - ing a - bove, filled with his good - ness, lost in his love.
Refrain
This is my sto - ry; this is my song, prais-ing my Sav - ior
all the day long; this is my sto - ry; this is my
song, prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE** **Len Mesonas**

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 **Linwood Bagby**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION **Len Mesonas**

Holy, magnificent God, as the Scriptures are read and your Word pro claimed, allow us to see you clearly in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING **I Samuel 16:1-13 (pg. 291)** **Len Mesonas**

(*Liturgist, please ask everyone if they're on the page before you begin reading)*

NEW TESTAMENT READING **John 9:1–41 (pg. 1091)** **Linwood Bagby**

(Guest speaker, please ask everyone if they're on the page before you begin reading)

THE MESSAGE **The Light We Didn't Expect** **Linwood Bagby**

***HYMN # 314 Longing for the Light, We Wait in Darkness**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** **Linwood Bagby**

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
Pour out your grace, mercy and peace on all we have named. Make your presence known. May your name be glorified, because of all you have given us in Christ Jesus our Lord, who taught us to pray saying: **"Our Father…"**

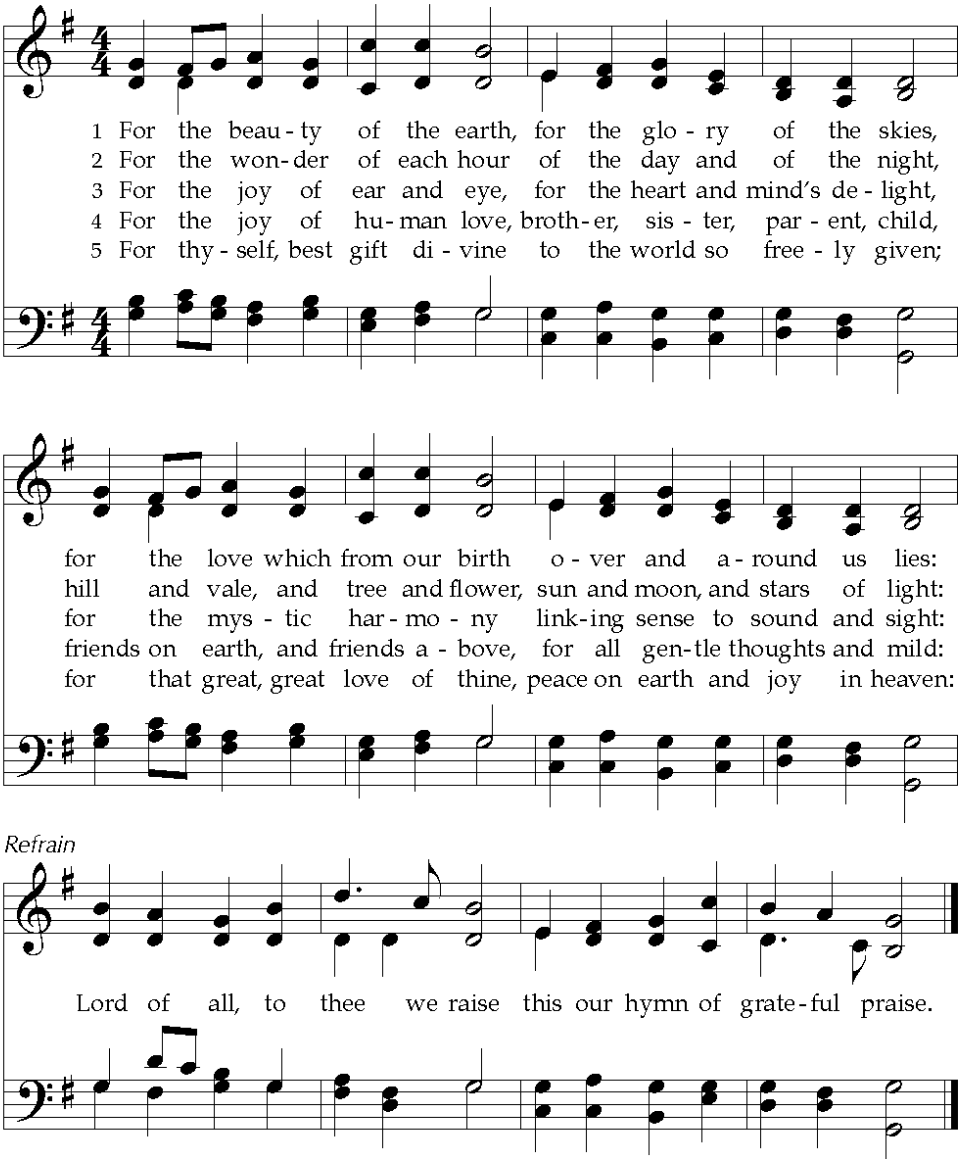
THE LORD'S PRAYER
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom,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

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



***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.

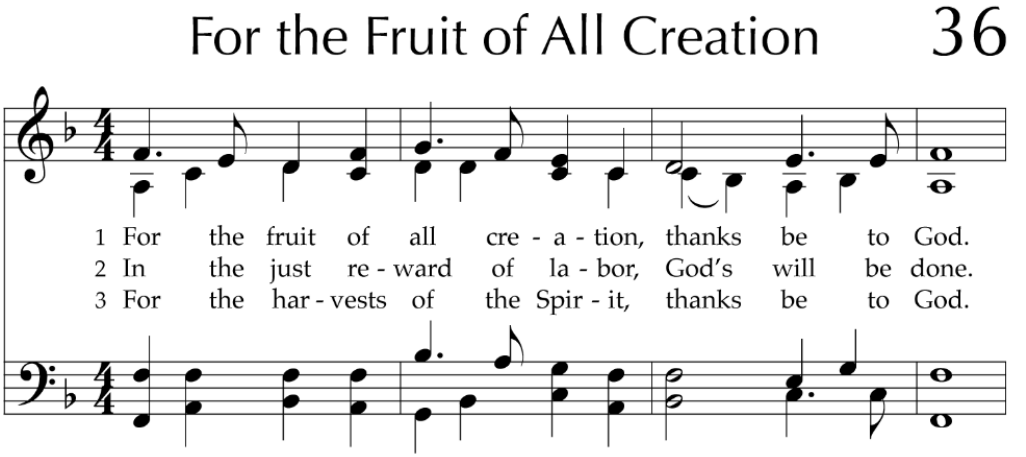
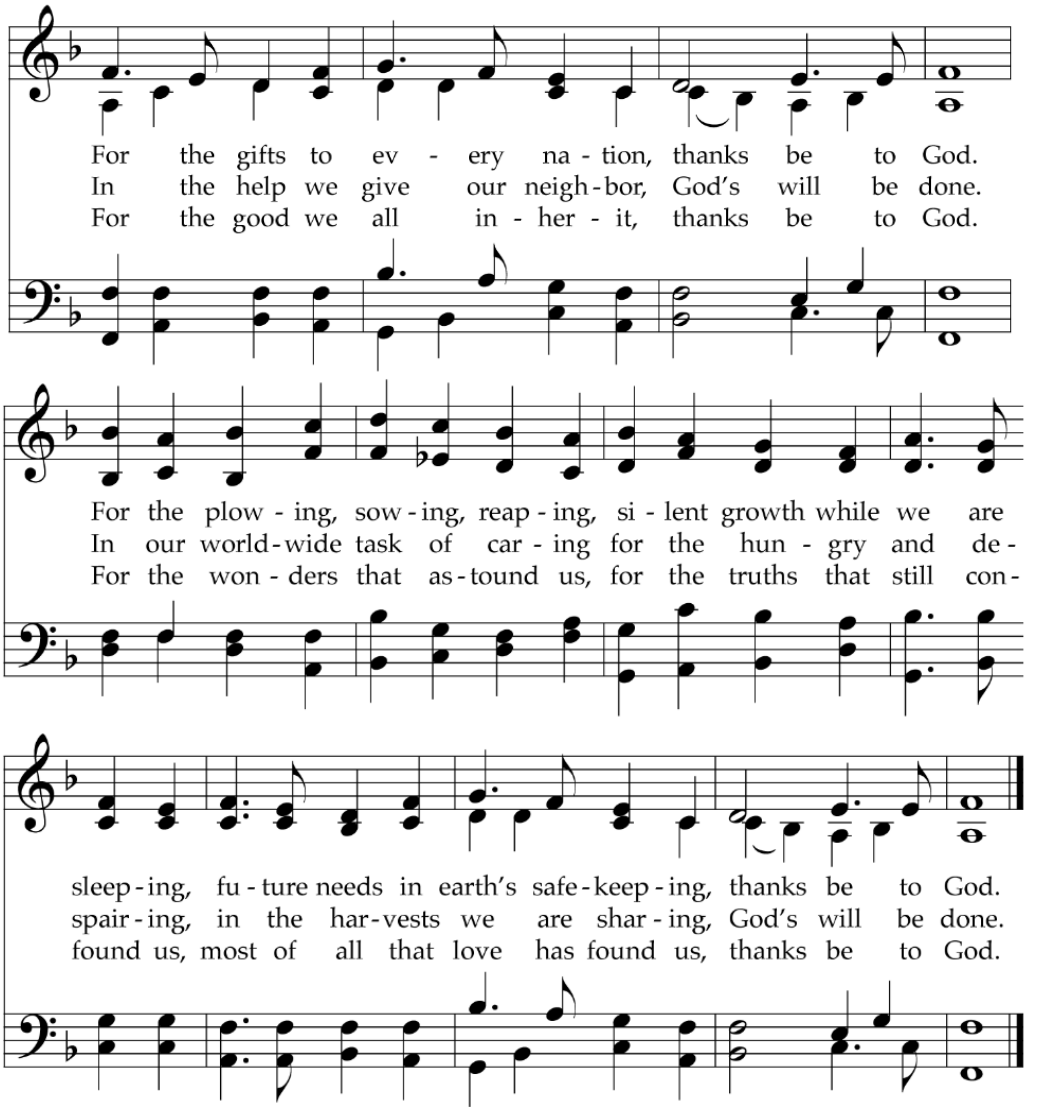
What language can we borrow to thank you, dearest Friend? Accept the gifts we give today to be for your glory and the good of your people, because of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Empowered to Spread God's Love

***HYMN # 192 Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining**

***BENEDICTION**
Let us go forth from this sacred gathering with new eyes to see God and each other more clearly. The blessing of God Almighty: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with us all!

***CHORAL BENEDICTION # 36** *(all verses)*



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!

Today, we welcome Elder Linwood Bagby, CRE to our pulpit.

Linwood Bagby is a native of West Deptford, New Jersey who received his Bachelor of Science degree from The College of New Jersey and his Master's Degree from Kean University. Both degrees were in Speech and Language Pathology. He resides in Union Township and retired in July 2021 as a Speech and Language Specialist with the Elizabeth Public Schools Board of Education.

Linwood is active in the community where he worked. In 1994, he founded Restore Ministries, Inc., and currently serves as its Chief Executive Officer. Restore Ministries, Inc, provides academic help, recreational, and cultural activities and experiences for children and teenagers.

In 2012 he was elected to serve as the Moderator for the Elizabeth Presbytery (now Northeast Presbytery of New Jersey). Linwood was the Chair of the Presbytery Cabinet (2014-2017). Linwood is an active member and leader within the Northeast Presbytery of New Jersey and serves on its Vision Team. In addition, he serves as a Ruling Elder at his church, Second Presbyterian in Elizabeth. He works part time as the Lead Facilitator where he coordinates and delivers the worship services and other pastoral duties.

Linwood's hobbies are reading fantasy and mystery novels, playing his acoustic guitar, cooking, and riding his bike.

2026 Per Capita - $42.00

Friendly Reminders

Sunday 03/29/2026	Rev. Linda Goeddel will lead worship	Palm Sunday
Thursday 04/02/2026	FPresWoodbridge at 7:30 pm	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
Saturday 04/11/2026	Men's and Ladies' Breakfast	9 am Fellowship Hall

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	Len Mesonas
03/22/26 (5th Sun. Lent)	Nancy Abel
03/29/26 (Palm Sunday)	Ron Stamboly

April 2026	
04/03/26 (Good Friday)	Sara Schweitzer
04/05/26 (Easter Sunday)	Sue Ramirez
04/12/26	Whitney Gilzean
04/19/26	Nancy Abel
04/26/26	Ron Stamboly

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

Scriptures to Reflect on During Lent

- **Psalm 51:10-12:** "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me".
- **James 4:8:** "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you".
- **John 3:16:** 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"
- **Genesis 3:19:** "...For you are dust, and to dust you shall return".

Session

Laura Reeves, Clerk of Session

Jim Durgana	Treasurer
Grace Rozger	Human Resources
Leonard Mesonas	Finance Chair, President of Corporation; Officer Nomination Committee
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
(see Sue Ramirez for confirmation)

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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Email us at: info@oaktree-iselinpres.org

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