OAK TREE-ISELIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

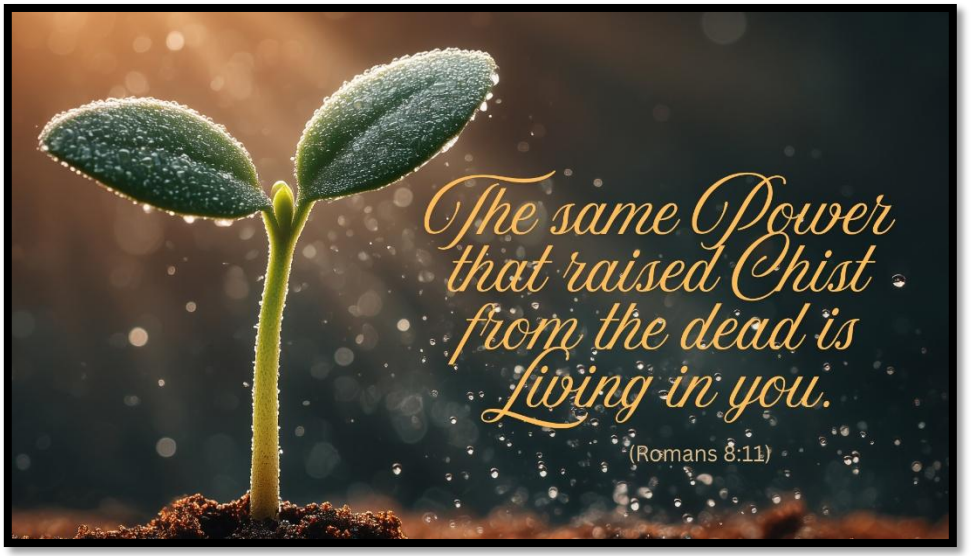
Fifth Sunday in Lent

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

Sunday, March 22, 2026 10:30 a.m.

Service led by: Elder Herb Williams

Liturgist: Deacon Nancy Abel 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

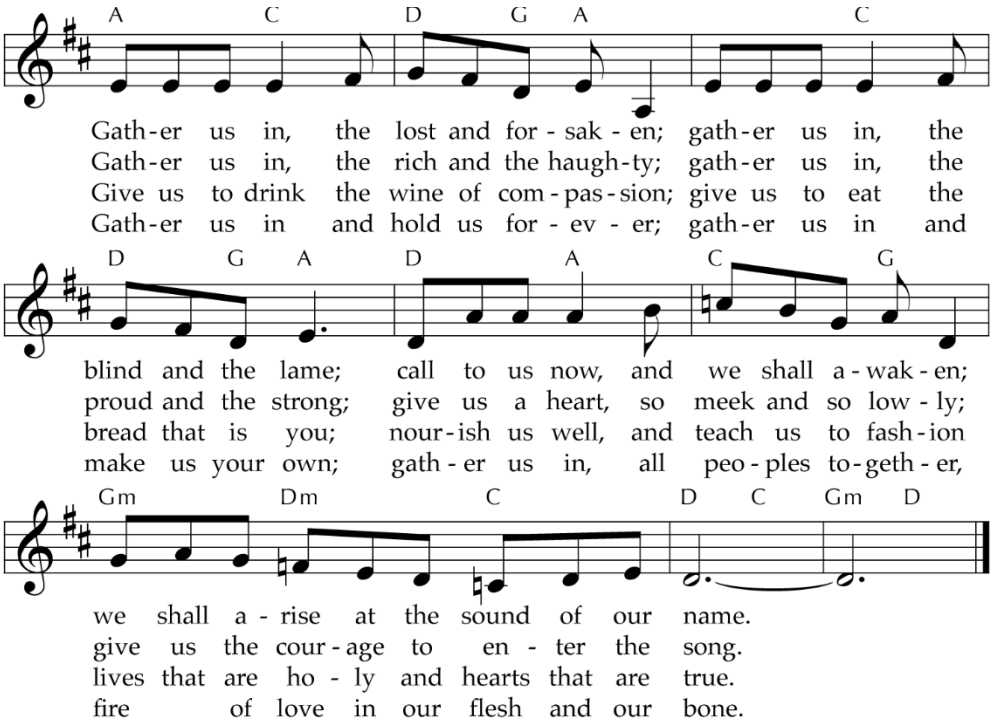
The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. - Romans 8:6

PRELUDE **Alaine Bolton Director of Music**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS **Nancy Abel**

CHORAL INTROIT # 401 *(verse 1)*

(Hymn continues next page)



***THE CALL TO WORSHIP** **Nancy Abel**

The Lord has set us in a valley of bones;
Give us hope, O Lord.
The Lord will open our graves and bring us up from them;
Bring us home, O Lord.
The Lord will put His Spirit in us and we will live;
What the Lord has spoken, the Lord will do.
Praise be to the Lord.
Amen.

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

You are merciful and just in the deliverance of your people, O God. You draw us up out of the depths of distress; you incline your ear as we call on your name. Our souls rest in you and in the promise of Christ's redeeming

love. Lay now your hand upon us, and draw us out by your Spirit, that we may sing praises to your great and holy name. Amen

***HYMN # 250 In the Bulb There Is a Flower**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION (REPONSIVE) Nancy Abel

For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.
May Christ give us the light, that we may awaken to his truth.
Walk as children of light as you pursue what is good, right, and true.
May Christ give us the light, that we may awaken to his truth.
Take no part in works of darkness but try to learn what is pleasing to God.
May Christ give us the light, that we may awaken to his truth.
With humble hearts let us confess our sins to the Lord and to one another.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison) Nancy Abel

Do not harden our hearts, O God, to the sound of your voice. We confess we don't listen to the word that you send. You give us Jesus, the Word of Life in our midst. We confess our delay in obeying the direction he brings. You promise the Holy Spirit, a source of counsel and power. We confess ignoring such guidance, since we do not respond. Forgive us our sin, and help us through Christ to enter the rest you have promised.

PERSONAL CONFESSION Nancy Abel

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 Herb Williams

Paul declares that if the Spirit of God dwells in us, the one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to our mortal bodies through God's Spirit which dwells in us. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of

God. Believe this word of promise and walk in newness of life. We are forgiven, we are forgiven, we are forgiven. **Praise Jesus Our Lord.**

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

(Hymn continues next page)

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** **Nancy Abel**

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 **Herb Williams**

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION **Nancy Abel**

God, source of all light, by your Word you give light to the soul. Pour out on us the spirit of wisdom and understanding that our hearts and minds may be opened. Guide us, O Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover peace. Let us be open now to the message you brought us together to hear today; through Christ our Lord, **Amen**.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Ezekial 37:1-14 **Nancy Abel**
Pew Bible pg. 888
Large Print Bible: pg. 1345

(L*iturgist, to create a unified experience for congregants, please ensure that everyone is on the same page before you begin reading.)*

NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 8:6-11 **Herb Williams**
Pew Bible pg. 1151
Large Print Bible: pg. 1756

(Guest Speaker, *to create a unified experience for congregants, please ensure that everyone is on the same page before you begin reading.)*

THE MESSAGE *L*ife of the Bones, Death of the Flesh **Herb Williams**

***HYMN # 286 Breathe on Me, Breath of God**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** **Herb Williams**

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

As we join together in prayer, take a moment now to slow down and center. Let go of the stresses and distractions that stand between you and God. Take a few deep breaths. Let your body and mind relax; feel the warm embrace of God. Let us pray.

Almighty God, we live in troubled times. There are conflicts amongst people within the borders of our country, within other nations and between nations. As opinions differ, peace for many appears distant and unattainable. Wars continue to rage resulting in death and trauma. The papers are full of troubling news. God, hear us now as we lay before you our worries and our fears confident in the healing and guiding presence of your Holy Spirit.

Lord, guide our minds and open our eyes to see your presence among us. We pray that you be with those who are suffering — from wars, from natural disasters, from economic unpredictably. Be with those who endure social injustice, political turmoil, and violence. May they find comfort, strength and guidance in your presence. Be with those who are suffering

from illness and emotional distress or despair. Be with those facing or recovering from surgery. May they find comfort, strength and guidance in your presence. Be with those who have lost loved ones. May they find comfort, strength and guidance in your presence. Be with the leaders of our cities, our states, our country, and the nations of the world. Guide their thoughts and actions towards peaceful solutions to problems that are tearing us apart. May they find strength and courage in your presence.

Open our eyes to be faithful stewards of your creation and your holy Word. May we see the needs of those around us and the ways in which we can work towards peace and justice. We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, with whom we entrust all our prayers and who taught us to pray by saying, "Our Father …"

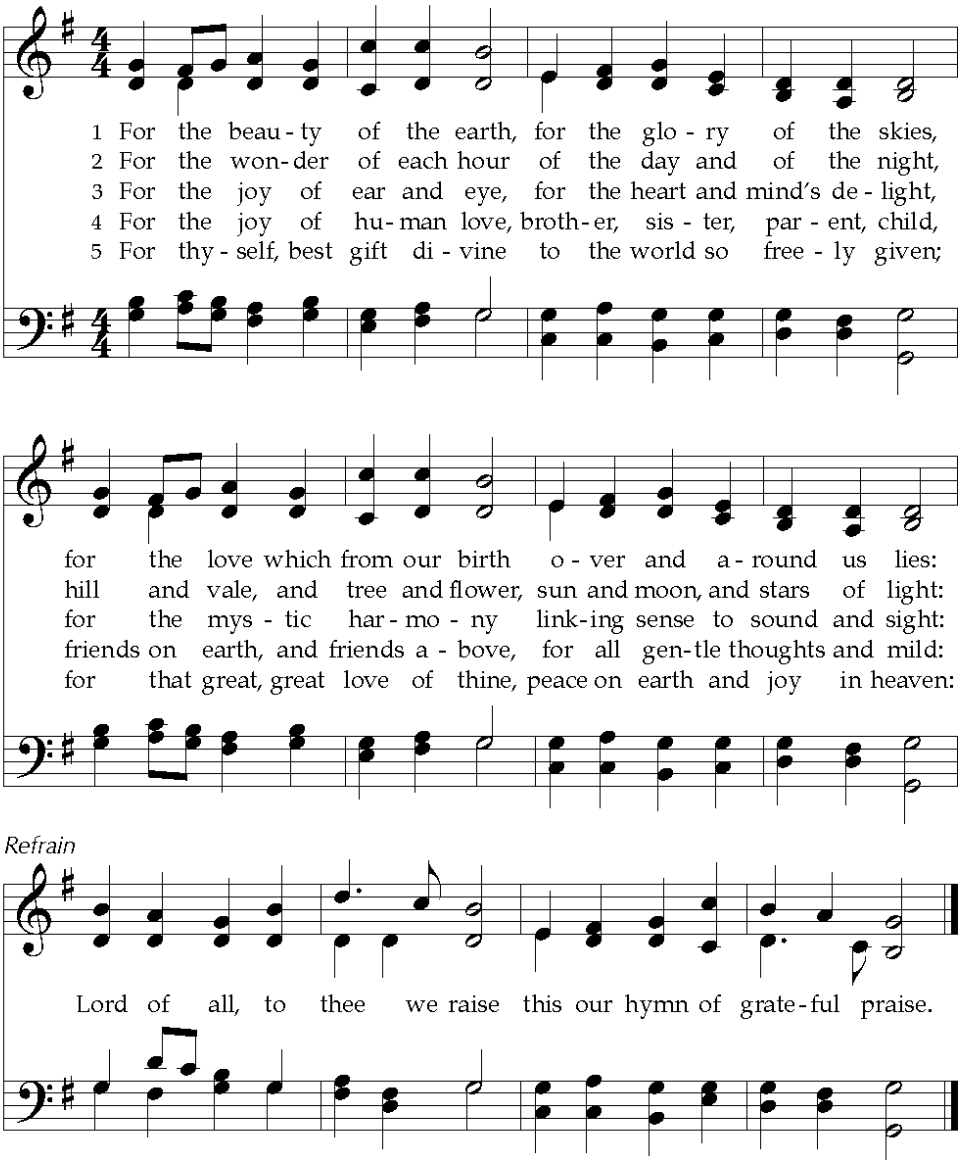
THE LORD'S PRAYER
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, For thine is the kingdom,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

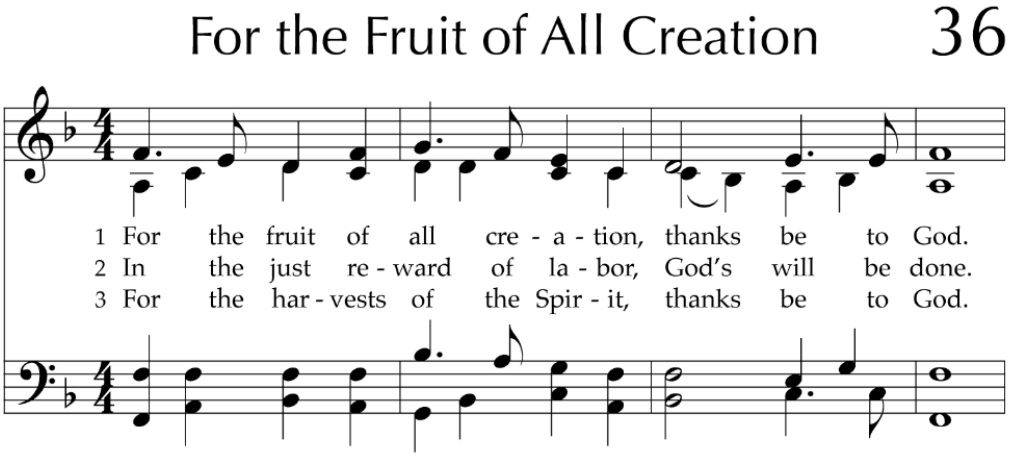
(Guest speaker will share a prayer)

Empowered to Spread God's Love

***HYMN # 66 Every Time I Feel the Spirit**

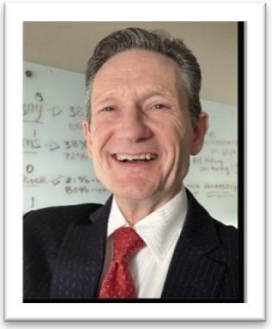
***BENEDICTION**
(Guest speaker will share benediction)

***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!



This morning, 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.

2026 Per Capita - $42.00

Per Capita is the annual $42 per-member contribution that connects and supports the shared ministry of the Presbytery of the Coastlands, the Synod of the Northeast, and the national PCUSA church. $26.49 supports the operations, mission, and ministry of Coastlands. We remit $4.25 per church member to the Synod and $11.26 to the General Assembly.

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 (5th Sun. Lent)	Nancy Abel
03/29/26 (Palm Sunday)	Betsy Christensen

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

May 2026	
05/03/26	
05/10/26	
05/17/26	
05/24/26	
05/31/26	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.

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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