

# OAK TREE-ISELIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ*

1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ 08830

[www.oaktree-iselinpres.org](http://www.oaktree-iselinpres.org)

(732) 283-1188

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Sunday, September 14, 2025

10:30 a.m.

Service led by: Rev. Donald Pitches, Guest Speaker

Liturgist: Elder Betsy Christensen

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

We thank you for the beauty of this worship service, the singing of Your praises, the rhythm of the seasons, and the fullness of this day. We remember those whom Christ prioritized in his midst: Remind us that Christ not only welcomed those presumed to be unworthy but liberated their full dignity and humanity. Show us how this is something Christ continues to do in our midst despite the narratives of division that try to put Christ back in the tomb. Give us eyes to see. Give us courage to act and move forward.

**PRELUDE**

**Alaine Bolton Director of Music**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Betsy Christensen**

**CHORAL INTROIT # 515 I Come with Joy (vs 1 & 2)**

### I Come with Joy

515

Capo 3: (D) (G) (A) (D) (Bm)  
F B<sup>b</sup> C F Dm



1 I come with joy, a child of God, for - giv - en, loved, and  
2 I come with Chris-tians far and near to find, as all are  
3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each proud di - vi - sion  
4 The Spir - it of the ris - en Christ, un - seen, but ev - er  
5 To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound by all that God has

(Asus) (Am) (G) (F#m) (D)  
Csus Cm B<sup>b</sup> Am F



free, the life of Je - sus to re - call, in  
fed, the new com - mu - ni - ty of love in  
ends. The love that made us, makes us one, and  
near, is in such friend - ship bet - ter known, a -  
done, we'll go with joy, to give the world the

*(Hymn continues next page)*



work even now, giving us what we need to share our faith with others. In the name of our resurrected Lord we ask, we plead, we pray. Amen

**\*HYMN # 12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise**

**INVITATION TO CONFESSION** (*based on 1 Timothy 1:15*) **Betsy Christensen**

The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. With confidence born out of faith in Christ's power to save and deliver us, let us confess our sin.

**PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison)**

**Betsy Christensen**

(*based on Psalm 51:1-10*)

**God of loving kindness, have mercy on us. According to your multitude of tender mercies, blot out our transgressions, thoroughly wash us from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. We know our transgressions, our sin, our evil done against you as we distort your love and corrupt your creation. From the moment of our conception we have worked to separate ourselves from your love. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach us wisdom, purge and clean our hearts, put your Spirit anew within us. Let us hear joy and gladness so that our weary bones might rejoice with you. Amen.**

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

**PERSONAL CONFESSION IN SILENCE**

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

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON** (*based on 1 Timothy 1:14,16*) **Rev. Donald Pitches**

Hear the good news:

With utmost patience, Christ offers mercy so that we may thrive in eternal life. In Christ's name, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! May the grace of our Lord overflow for you with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

\*THE RESPONSE # 581 Glory to God (2x)

# Glory Be to the Father

581

Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the

The first system of music is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The vocal line begins with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by eighth notes on A4 and Bb4, then quarter notes on C5 and Bb4, and a quarter rest. The bass line consists of a series of chords: a dotted quarter note on G2, quarter notes on A2 and Bb2, quarter notes on C3 and Bb2, and a quarter rest.

Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be -

The second system continues the melody. The vocal line has quarter notes on C5 and Bb4, a dotted quarter note on A4, quarter notes on G4 and F4, quarter notes on E4 and D4, quarter notes on C4 and B3, and quarter notes on A3 and G3. The bass line has chords: quarter notes on G2 and A2, quarter notes on Bb2 and C3, quarter notes on D3 and E3, quarter notes on F3 and G3, quarter notes on A3 and B3, quarter notes on C4 and B3, quarter notes on A3 and G3, and quarter notes on F3 and E3.

gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be,

The third system continues the melody. The vocal line has quarter notes on D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, and E3. The bass line has chords: quarter notes on G2 and A2, quarter notes on Bb2 and C3, quarter notes on D3 and E3, quarter notes on F3 and G3, quarter notes on A3 and B3, quarter notes on C4 and B3, and quarter notes on A3 and G3.

world with - out end. A - men, a - men.

The fourth system concludes the piece. The vocal line has quarter notes on D4, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, and E3, followed by a whole note on D4. The bass line has chords: quarter notes on G2 and A2, quarter notes on Bb2 and C3, quarter notes on D3 and E3, quarter notes on F3 and G3, quarter notes on A3 and B3, quarter notes on C4 and B3, and a final whole note on D2.

# Hearing and Responding to the Word Proclaimed

## CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Donald Pitches

## PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Betsy Christensen

(based on Luke 15:1-10 and Psalm 51:10)

Lord who welcomes sinners, send your Spirit to sit with us as we hear your Word proclaimed. Find us where we are lost, create in us clean hearts, and help us to see the joy of your mercy. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE READING

Deuteronomy 34: 5-12

Betsy Christensen

<sup>5</sup>And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. <sup>6</sup>He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is. <sup>7</sup>Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. <sup>8</sup>The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over. <sup>9</sup>Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses. <sup>10</sup>Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, <sup>11</sup>who did all those signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt—to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. <sup>12</sup>For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

## SCRIPTURE READING

Joshua 1: 1-9

Rev. Donald Pitches

<sup>1</sup>After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua, son of Nun, Moses' aide: <sup>2</sup>"Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites. <sup>3</sup>I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. <sup>4</sup>Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates—all

the Hittite country—to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. <sup>5</sup>No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. <sup>6</sup>Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. <sup>7</sup>“Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. <sup>8</sup>Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. <sup>9</sup>Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.”

## **THE MESSAGE**

**Big Sandals to Fill**

**Rev. Donald Pitches**

**\*HYMN # 442 Just as I Am, without One Plea**

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

**Rev. Donald Pitches**

**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 SHARED**

**Pastor; Lord in your Mercy, or, Lord in Thanksgiving\***

**Response: Hear Our Prayer**

*\*Pastor will use either prompt depending on concern raised.*

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Holy One who creates, liberates and loves, we are your creation. You have set us free, and you have sought us out with love. Trusting in your character, living with your memory, and believing in the movement of your Spirit, we ask that your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Open your ears to your creation, to your people, to your children, who you have called, who you have rescued, who you love and who now are before you and open the contents of our hearts to you in prayer.

(a period for silent prayer)

God, who seeks us, who offers us grace, and who celebrates our presence, hear us as we join together in prayer using the words Jesus taught his disciples, 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.**

## *The Thanksgiving*



## **THE OFFERING**

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

**\*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 606**

*(hymn begins next page)*

# 606 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise \*him, all creatures  
here be - low; praise \*him a - bove, ye heaven - ly host; praise  
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

## **\*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.**

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION (based on Luke 15:1-10)

**We give because we have been given so much. Lord, take these gifts and use them to nourish you Body as we strive to faithfully serve others. Allow your work to be continued in the world where it is most needed. Amen.**

### *Sending Us into the World*



*18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.– Matthew 28:18-20*

**\*\*HYMN # 634 To God, Be the Glory**

### **\*BENEDICTION**

Jesus says: ‘As the Father has sent me, so I send you.’ The work of church is not over; it has just begun. Go with joy where the crucified and risen Christ is sending you. And as you go, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, go with you, now and forevermore. **Alleluia! Amen!**

**\*CHORAL BENEDICTION # 765**

# May the God of Hope Go with Us 765

Song of Hope / *Canto de esperanza*



May the God of hope go with us ev - ery day, fill - ing all our  
*¡Dios de la es - pe - ran - za, da - nos go - zo y paz! Al mun - do en*



lives with love and joy and peace. May the God of jus - tice speed us  
*cri - sis, ha - bla tu ver - dad. Dios de la jus - ti - cia, mán - da -*



on our way, bring - ing light and hope to ev - ery land and race.  
*nos tu luz, luz y es - pe - ran - za en la os - cu - ri - dad.*



Pray - ing, let us work for peace; sing - ing, share our joy with all;  
*O - re - mos por la paz, can - te - mos de tu a - mor.*

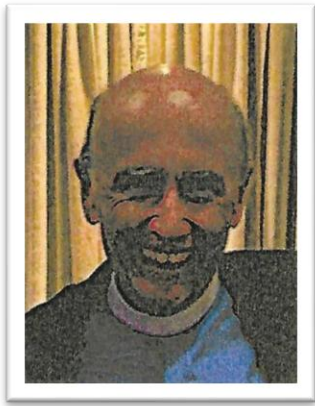


work - ing for a world that's new, faith - ful when we hear Christ's call.  
*Lu - che - mos por la paz, fie - les a ti, Se - ñor.*

## THE POSTLUDE

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[pres-outlook.org](http://pres-outlook.org)

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!*

Rev. Donald Pitches

I was ordained by the Hudson River Presbytery in 1976 in the Dayspring PC in Yonkers, NY. My first church was the Immanuel PC in Amsterdam, NY, and The First Presbyterian Church of West Galway, from 1976-1984. Moving to New Jersey in 1984 I became a member of the Presbytery of the Palisades. In September 1984, I was an occasional Pulpit Supply at the First PC of Carlstadt, NJ

In January 1985, I became the part-time Stated Supply Pastor for the Frist presbyterian Church of Carlstadt, while also serving as a hospice chaplain in Montclair and as NJ State Correctional Chaplain. From 1991-2019, I served the Carlstadt church full-time, retiring at the end of December 2019. During my Pastorate I was active in many Borough, civic and community organizations, including the Bergen County Council of Churches, serving as President for four years. I was a Child Assault Prevention Educator with NJ-CAP for twenty years. I also participated in the Bergen County Brotherhood and Sisterhood Committee. I served the Carlstadt Fire Department as Chaplain from 1986 to 2019, and from 1998 until 2019 as a firefighter with Engine Company 1, rising to the rank of Captain.

Following retirement, my wife and I moved to Franklin Park, NJ to be near our daughter and her family in Kendall Park, NJ. Since then, my primary retirement occupation has been caring for two granddaughters, Beatrice, and Emily, before and after school. In addition, I served a term as session moderator and pulpit supply at Grace Presbyterian Church in Kendall Park, where I was privileged to work with the student minister, Rev. J. Warner. Since then, I have served as pulpit supply in numerous presbytery churches.



## *Akhtar Javed Memorial Service*



*Date of Birth: February 27, 1952*

*Date of Death: August 3, 2025*

Your life was a blessing to us all,  
Full of love, kindness, and grace,  
And though you're no longer with us,  
Your memory we'll forever embrace.

We'll remember the way you made us feel,  
The joy you brought into our lives,  
And though we miss you dearly,  
We know that you've now in paradise.

Rest now, dear one, in God's loving arms,  
Where there is no pain or sorrow,  
And know that you'll always be with us,  
In our hearts, today and tomorrow.

So goodbye for now, our dear one,  
We'll see you on the other side,  
And until then, know that you're loved,  
And you'll forever be a part of our lives.

*The Javed Family would like to invite all of you to a simple memorial service during fellowship hour. They will say a few words, Rev. Pitches will bless the food, then all are welcome to partake in the meal as we share memories about Akhtar.*

# *Special Congregational Meeting*



A special meeting of the Congregation of the Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church, Iselin, NJ, has been called for Sunday, September 28, 2025, for the purpose of electing the following members to serve as:

## **Elder**

Herb Williams

## **Deacon**

Nandai Sookhoo

Karen Wallner

*All are encouraged to attend. G-7.0301 All ACTIVE Members who are present are eligible to vote.*

## *Friendly Reminders*

<b>Sunday</b> <b>Today, 9/21,</b> 9/28	Rev. Donald Pitches, Guest Speaker	
<b>Sunday</b> 9/14/2025	Sunday School begins	10:30 am
<b>Sunday</b> 09/14/2025	Deacons Resume Hospitality after worship.	The Javed Family will host fellowship hour. Thoughts about Akhtar will be shared by his family.
<b>Sunday</b> 09/28/2025	Special Congregational Meeting	During Worship
<b>Saturday</b> 10/04/2025	Men's Breakfast and CLEF Ladies' Breakfast	9:00 am in Fellowship Hall.
<b>Sunday</b> 10/05/2025	Worship will be at First Pres. Church Avenel, 621 E. Woodbridge Ave., Avenel, NJ	Time: 10:00 am

### *Per Capita*

**The per capita for 2025 is \$40.**

## 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. ([www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org))

<b>September 2025</b>	
<b>Today</b>	Betsy Christensen
09/21/25	Lilliam Colon-Gilzean
09/28/25	Ron Stamboly

<b>October 2025</b>	
10/05/25	Worship at FPresAvenel
10/12/25	Leonard Mesonas
10/19/25	Betsy Christensen
10/26/25	Ron Stamboly

<b>November 2025</b>	
11/02/25	
11/09/25	Herb Williams
11/16/25	Betsy Christensen
11/23/25	
11/30/25 (1 <sup>st</sup> Day of Advent)	Ron Stamboly

<b>December 2025</b>	
12/07/25	
12/14/25	Herb Williams
12/21/25	Betsy Christensen
12/24/25	
12/28/25	Ron Stamboly

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



## *Sunday School Begins Today!!*

We welcome children age 3 (must be potty trained) to 9th grade. Classes will be held in the Meeting Room. Please note that on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month (Communion Sunday), there is no Sunday School. We encourage you to bring your children to church and worship as a family.

If you have any questions, please contact Heather Meyers at 732-762-3552 or [hellohmm@aol.com](mailto:hellohmm@aol.com). Registration forms are available at the back of the sanctuary.



## *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

## *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 / Susan Sendelsky, Co- Chairs
Hospitality	Rose Anne Anthony, Chair
Literature	Nikkie Hayase, Chair
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 1<sup>st</sup> 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: 1<sup>st</sup> and last Sunday of the Month 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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Commission by He Qi.