

Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

1295 Oak Tree Road, Iselin, NJ

www.info@oaktree-iselinpres.org

Service Led by: Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

Liturgist: Deacon Sarah Hansen

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

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

****Please rise in body or spirit.***

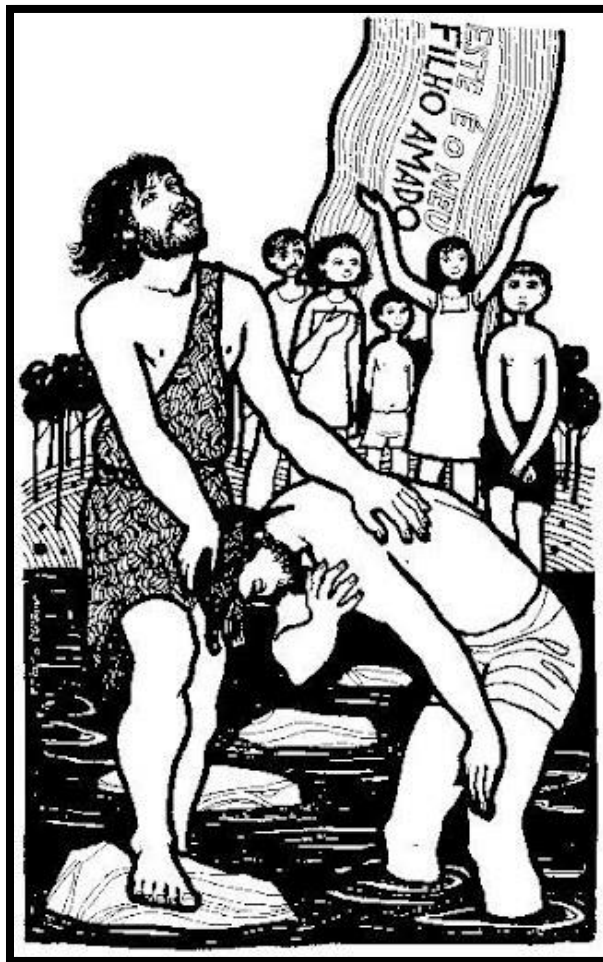
Centering Thought

The world is too dangerous for anything but truth and too small for anything but love.

- Rev. William Sloan Coffin

Sunday, January 12, 2025

10:30 A.M.



Gathering for Worship

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

ANNOUNCEMENTS

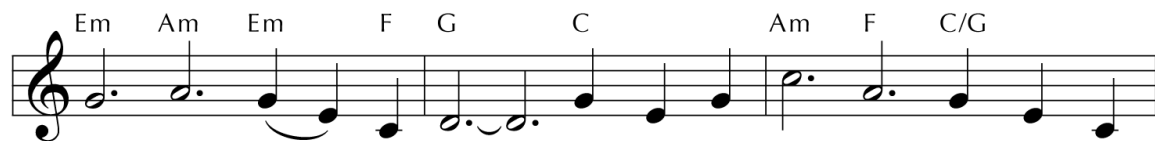
Sarah Hansen

CHORAL INTROIT # 482 Baptized in Water (vs 1 & 3)

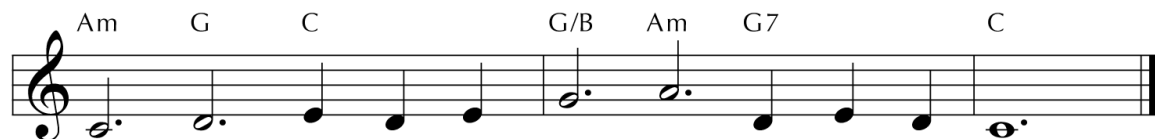
482 Baptized in Water



1 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, cleansed by the
2 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, dead in the
3 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the



blood of Christ our King; heirs of sal - va - tion, trust - ing the
tomb with Christ our King; one with his ris - ing, freed and for -
sign of Christ our King; born of the Spir - it, we are God's



prom - ise, faith - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
giv - en, thank - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

Sarah Hansen

But now, thus says the Lord
the One who created you, O Jacob,
the One who formed you, O Israel;
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

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

Sarah Hansen

Remembering our baptism and God's immense love, we gather in the early days of this new year opening our hearts and spirits to the living God. Even when the world may seem dangerous or our days filled with uncertainty, we have nothing to fear because of God's immense love for us. O, Holy One, fill us with your truth, open us to your love. May we receive the gifts you generously pour out upon your people. Amen.

***HYMN # 463 How Firm A Foundation**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Sarah Hansen

We belong to God. Nothing can break this covenant. Let us pray, then, with confidence to approach God and honestly confess our sins.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison)

Sarah Hansen

God, you call us to beloved community with you and with each other. But we exclude and reject those we deem different. You claim us as loved, but we turn against each other in anger and judgement. You liberate us and lead us in Christ's path of peace, but we build walls and invest in guns and dismiss peace as impractical and unrealistic. Redeeming God, forgive our worldly ways. Call us and claim us once again for the work of building your beloved community.

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

PERSONAL CONFESSION

Sarah Hansen

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

Our God is loving, just and merciful. God delivers us from sin and restores us by grace. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

***THE RESPONSE # 581 Glory Be to the Father**

Glory Be to the Father 581

The image shows the musical notation for the hymn 'Glory Be to the Father'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff for the vocal line and a bass clef staff for the piano accompaniment. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line begins with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by quarter notes on A4, Bb4, and C5. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords in the right hand. The lyrics 'Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the' are written below the vocal staff.

(Hymn continues next page)

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

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

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

***THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Sarah Hansen

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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Sarah Hansen

Help us, Holy God, to connect to your word in new and fresh ways. Open the Scriptures to us in a way that is life-giving. Encourage us to listen to the message of your Spirit made known in word and worship. Amen

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah. 43: 1-7 (Old Testament)

Sarah Hansen

43But now, thus says the Lord, the one who created you, O Jacob, the one who formed you, O Israel. Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are mine. ²When you pass

through the waters I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned and the flames will not consume you. ³For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you, ⁴because you are precious in my eyes and honored and I love you. I give men in return for you, peoples in exchange for your life. ⁵Fear not, for I am with you. I will bring your offspring from the east and from the west I will gather you; ⁶I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, ⁷everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 (New Testament)

Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

¹⁵As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming: I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear the threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

²¹Now all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

THE MESSAGE

Awash in Wonder: Reclaiming our Baptism

Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall

***HYMN # 177 I Will Come to You**

***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

WE WELCOME RETURNING MEMBERS:

Herbert Williams

Karen Wallner

Richard Wallner

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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

Let us now offer our gifts to God, so others might know that God's steadfast love is present with them in every moment. Amen.

*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 652 A Grateful Heart (vs. 1)

A Grateful Heart

652

(Psalm 111)

1 A grate - ful heart is what I bring, a song of
2 Your name is known in all the lands. You feed the
3 With sav - ing love you set us free, and still you

praise, my of - fer - ing. A - mong the saints I
poor with gen - tle hands. Your word is true, your
dwell in mys - ter - y with wis - dom none can

lift my voice: in you, O God, I will re - joice.
works are just; in you, O God, the faith - ful trust.
com - pre - hend. Your praise, O God, will nev - er end.

***THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Mighty and all loving God, how our hearts burn as we hear, once again of your immense love. We find ourselves awash in wonder and awe that you would call us your children, your beloved community. For the gifts with which you fill our days,

We give you our thanks and praise

Continue to guide us as we use these gifts in service to your people and in pursuit of peace and justice in our world, reconciliation among all peoples. For your love makes all things possible.

We give you our thanks and praise.

It is you who formed and shaped us; it is you who redeems and saves us from despair. We are your people, now and always.

We give you our thanks and praise, Amen.

Sending Us into the World

***HYMN # 688 Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart**

***BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION # 10 Sing Glory to the Name of God (vs 1)**

10 Sing Glory to the Name of God
(Psalm 29)

Unison

1 Sing glo - ry to the name of God, whose ho - ly splen-dor shines a -
2 The name of God is full of might: re - sound-ing thun-der, flash-ing
3 The name of God is wild and free, a - whirl in ho - ly mys - ter -
4 May God for - ev - er be our peace; may hymns of glo - ry nev - er

(Hymn continues next page)

Harmony *Unison*

broad.
light.
y.
cease:

Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia!

En-throned a-bove the
The wil-der-ness can-
y. A se-cret wrapped in
Let all the faith-ful

crash - ing waves,
not con - tain
smoke and fire,
peo - ple come;

the God of grace and glo - ry saves.
the ech - oes of the great re - frain:
still chant - ed by the tem - ple choir:
sing praise to God, the Three - in - One:

Harmony

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia,

Unison

al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

THE POSTLUDE

Welcome!



We are joined today by Coastlands Presbytery Relational Co-Leader, the Rev. Dr. Mary E. Westfall, who began her position in the summer of 2023. Mary has a long history in the PCUSA, having grown up in a presbyterian church in rural Colorado, later attending San Francisco Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1988. Since then, she has served in urban, campus, suburban/rural communities in pastoral and executive positions for over 35 years. In her current role, Mary serves as "pastor to the pastors," and resource and support to congregations, especially regarding innovation, justice and community out-reach.

Friendly Reminders

Sunday 1/12/2025	Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall, Guest Speaker	
Monday 1/20/2025	Office Closed – Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Observance	
Wednesday 1/22/2025	Session	
Sunday 1/26/2025	Cong. Meeting	Fellowship Hall, After worship

Please note that checks made out to **First Presbyterian Church of Iselin** or **Oak Tree Presbyterian Church** are no longer accepted by the bank. Going forward, checks are to be made to: **Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church.**

Ongoing Initiatives

SHOP-RITE GIFT CARDS: Gift cards will be available every Sunday after worship. Simply bring your check or cash and purchase your cards.

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES: We are collecting aluminum can tabs to donate to the Ronald McDonald House in New Brunswick throughout the year. Please place your donation of aluminum can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House in New Brunswick in the container in Fellowship Hall or give them to Heather Meyers. Tabs can come from a variety of cans (soda or other beverages, pet food, soup, etc.), but must be aluminum. How can you tell? Aluminum won't stick to a magnet.

Message from The Board of Deacons

Ministry of Compassion

With the rising costs of living, many families in Woodbridge Township find it hard to make ends meet. Your contribution can help to alleviate the hopelessness they sometimes feel. A bin has been set up in the hallway of the church, by the literature bookcase so that you can have the opportunity to help.

Items needed are:

Canned	Dry Goods
Vegetables / Beans / Fruit	Pasta / Rice / Instant Potatoes
Tuna fish / Pasta Sauce / Soup	Mac and Cheese
Canned Sweet Potatoes	Peanut Butter and Jelly

Our next distribution will be held on January 13, 2025. For more information, see Nancy Abel.

Scheduled Liturgists!

To all who answered the call to serve as liturgists, Thank you! We are covered through the end of January 2025. If you'd like to be considered for future liturgist opportunities for February and March 2025, please email Margarita Estrada at info@oaktree-iselinpres.org or call her at (732) 283-1188.

January 2025	
Today	Sarah Hansen
01/19/25	Betsy Christensen
01/26/25	Ron Stamboly

February 2025	
02/02/25	Ron Stamboly
02/09/25	Len Mesonas
02/16/25	Betsy Christensen
02/23/25	Lilliam Colon-Gilzean

March 2025	
03/02/25	
03/05/25	Ash Wednesday
03/09/25	Len Mesonas
03/16/25	
03/23/25	
03/30/25	Ron Stamboly

Regular Activities

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

Prayer Shawl – Every other Thursday, 7 pm to 9 pm in Choir Room

Men's Breakfast & CLEF Ladies Breakfast, 1st Saturday at 9 am

Sunday Bible Study - 9:00 am in Fellowship Hall

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

Choir practice: 1st and last Sunday of the Month at 9:30 am

Divine Worship: In the sanctuary and on Facebook Livestream,
Sundays at 10:30 am

Session

Laura Reeves, Clerk of Session

Betsy Christensen	Mission
Jim Durgana	Treasurer
Len Mesonas	Human Resources, Officer Nominating Committee
Len 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

Nancy Abel	Moderator/ Prayer Concern List/Board Secretary/Ministry of Compassion Chair
Roseanne (Cookie) Anthony	Hospitality Chair
Kate Scott	Session Board Liaison
Nikkie Hayase	Literature Chair
Joanne Mesonas	Flowers Co-Chairs
Susan O'Rourke-Sendelsky	
Joan Moscomagas	Deacon Assistance Fund / Welfare Chair / Deacon Nominating Committee
Sara Schweitzer	Ministry of Compassion
Pat Lillie	Cards Chair / Hospitality Co-Chair

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: Cerezo Barredo