

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: Elder Linwood Bagby, CRE

Liturgist: Elder Len Mesonas

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

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

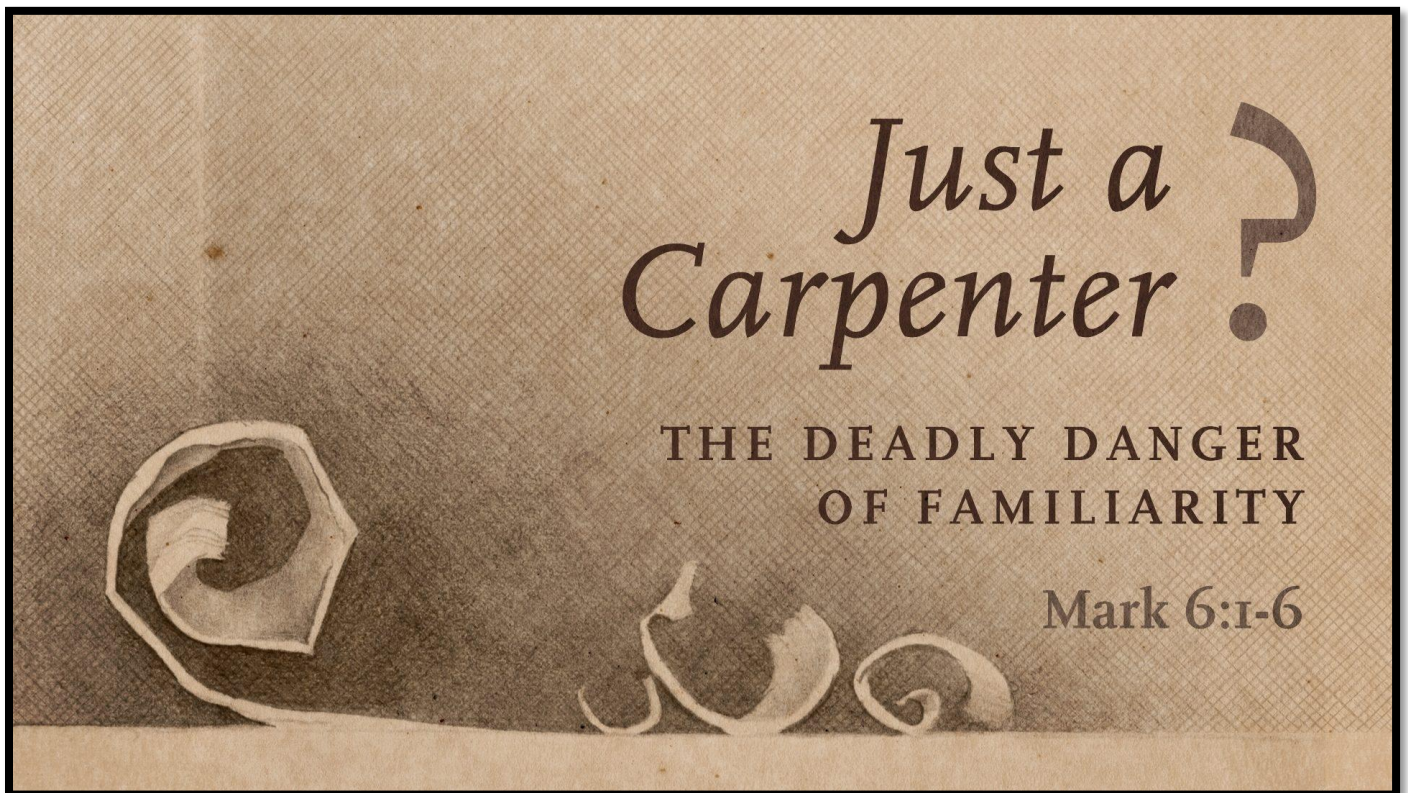
****Please rise in body or spirit.***

Sunday, March 9, 2025

10:30 A.M.

Centering Thought

*Develop enough courage so that you can stand up for yourself
and then stand up for someone else. - Maya Angelou*



Gathering for Worship

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

WELCOME

Elder Linwood Bagby, CRE.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Len Mesonas

CHORAL INTROIT # 518 Your Only Son (vs. 1 and refrain)

518

Your Only Son

Lamb of God



1 Your on - ly Son, no sin to hide, but you have
2 Your gift of love, we cru - ci - fied; we laughed and
3 I was so lost, I should have died, but you have



sent him from your side to walk up - on this guilt - y
scorned him as he died; the hum - ble King we named a
brought me to your side to be led by your staff and



sod, and to be - come the Lamb of God.
fraud and sac - ri - ficed the Lamb of God.
rod, and to be called a lamb of God.

Refrain



O Lamb of God, sweet Lamb of God, I love the



ho - ly Lamb of God! O wash me in his pre-cious



blood, my Je - sus Christ, the Lamb of God.

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP** (based on Psalm 91)

Len Mesonas

Where is our home?

Our home is in the shelter and shadow of God.

How can this be our refuge?

Because God's angels will guard your house and those in it from evil and threat.

How can we flourish?

Staying close to God's ways will bring our lives to abundance.

Let us worship God.

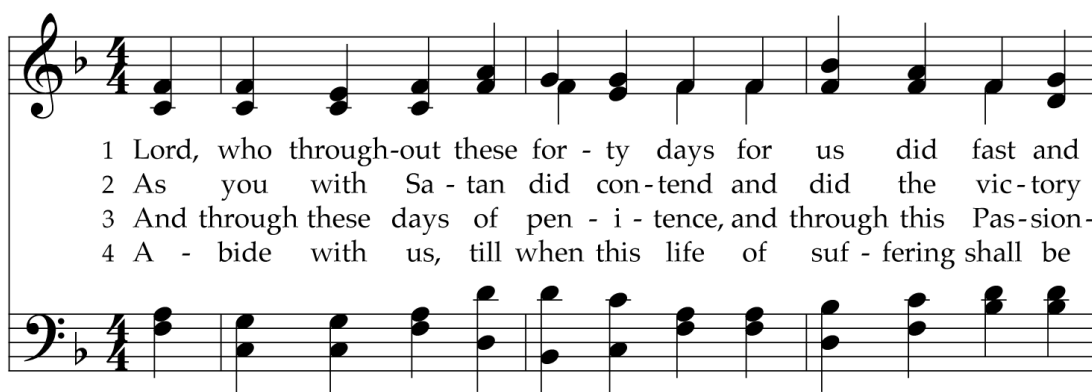
***PRAYER OF THE DAY (In Unison)**

Len Mesonas

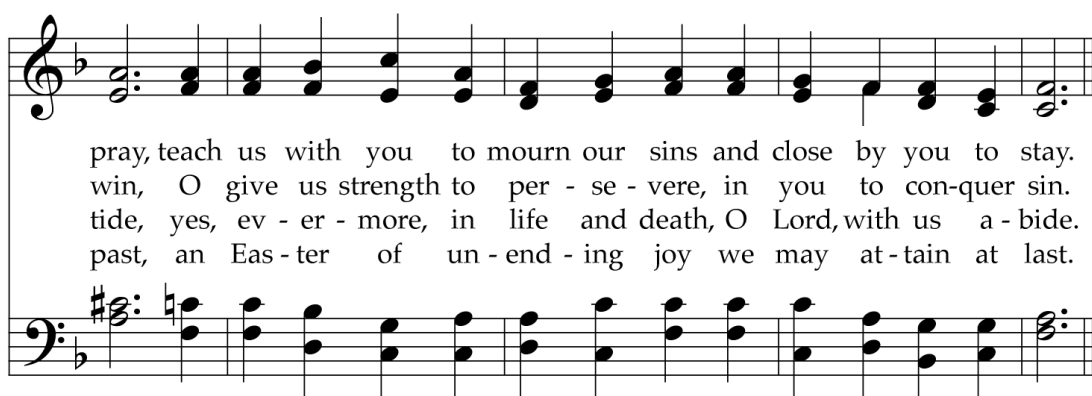
Gracious God, we gather before you today with grateful hearts, acknowledging your presence in this place and in our lives. As we come to worship, open our hearts to receive your word, renew our spirits with your grace, and guide our thoughts and actions to reflect your love in the world. May our worship be a true offering of praise and thanksgiving, in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

***HYMN # 166 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days**

Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days 166



1 Lord, who through-out these for - ty days for us did fast and
2 As you with Sa - tan did con-tend and did the vic-tory
3 And through these days of pen - i - tence, and through this Pas-sion-
4 A - bid with us, till when this life of suf - fering shall be



pray, teach us with you to mourn our sins and close by you to stay.
win, O give us strength to per - se - vere, in you to con-quer sin.
tide, yes, ev - er - more, in life and death, O Lord, with us a - bid.
past, an Eas-ter of un - end - ing joy we may at-tain at last.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION (based on Romans 10)

Len Mesonas

Scripture says, “No one who believes in Christ will be put to shame.” Therefore, we do not approach God with shame but with life-giving expectation grounded in our trust of God. For when we confess with our mouth and trust in our heart, we will find healing for ourselves and for the world.

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION (In Unison)

Len Mesonas

God of wide circles, we too often revert to our fear-filled instinct to cut off those unfamiliar and distant. May we evaluate others based on Your heart. In Romans, you remind us that when we lean into your kingdom agenda, our worldview is expanded to focus on our common humanity. May we embrace your created diversity and include all in our cherished life’s work.

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

PERSONAL CONFESSION

Len Mesonas

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON(based on Romans 10)

Linwood Bagby, CRE

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Having called upon the wide arms of our gracious God, know that you are forgiven. With joy, may we amplify God’s grace into the whole world. **Amen.**

***THE RESPONSE # 582** Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines On Me

582 Glory to God,
Whose Goodness Shines on Me

Capo 3: (G) (D) (G) (D) (G) (D) (Em) (D)
B \flat F B \flat F B \flat F Gm F



1 Glo - ry to God, whose good - ness shines on me,
2 World with - out end, with - out end. A - men.

(D) (G) (C) (G) (Em7) (A7)
F B \flat E \flat B \flat Gm7 C7

and to the Son, whose grace has par - doned me,
World with - out end, with - out end. A - men.

and to the Spir - it, whose love has set me free.
World with - out end, 7 with - out end. A - men.

As it was in the be - gin-ning, is now and ev - er shall be. A - men.

*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

CHILDREN'S TIME

Elder Linwood Bagby, CRE.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Len Mesonas

Author and source of our lives and of our redeemer, Jesus Christ, we know what is written can be used for evil or for good. Open our hearts to your Spirit that the words read and proclaimed would go beyond ink, paper, digital images and sound. Despite the imperfect mediums, may this Scripture be the spiritual imparting of your deepest desires for the world into our hearts.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Len Mesonas

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 32:1-4

32 Listen, you heavens, and I will speak; hear, you earth, the words of my mouth. ² Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants. ³ I will proclaim the name of the Lord. Oh, praise the greatness of our God! ⁴ He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.

New Testament: Mark 6:1-6

Linwood Bagby, CRE

6 Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. ² When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed. "Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing?" ³ Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the

brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him. ⁴ Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home." ⁵ He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. ⁶ He was amazed at their lack of faith.

THE MESSAGE

Familiarity Breeds Contempt

Linwood Bagby, CRE

*HYMN # 43 You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord

43 You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord

On Eagle's Wings (Psalm 91)

G
Leader or All

1 You who dwell in the shel - ter of the Lord, who a -

G *D/F#* *F*

bide in his shad - ow for life, say to the Lord, "My

Dm *F* *Gm* *Asus* *A*

ref - uge, my rock in whom I trust!"

Refrain *All* *D* *Em*

And he will raise you up on ea - gles' wings, bear you on the

A7 *D* *D7/F#* *G*

breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun,

(Hymn continues next page)

A Bm F#m Em7 A Dsus D *Fine*

and hold you in the palm of his hand.

Leader or All G D/F#

2 The snare of the fowl - er will nev - er cap - ture you, and

G D/F# F

fam - ine will bring you no fear: un - der his wings, your

Dm F Gm Asus A *to Refrain*

ref - uge, his faith - ful - ness your shield.

Leader or All G D/F#

3 You need not fear the ter - ror of the night, nor the

G D/F# F

ar - row that flies by day; though thou - sands fall a -

Dm F Gm Asus A *to Refrain*

bout you, near you it shall not come.

(Hymn continues next page)

G
Leader or All

4 For to his an - gels he's giv - en a com - mand to

G D/F# F

guard you in all of your ways; up - on their hands they will

Gm7 Am Gm7 Asus A
to Refrain

bear you up, lest you dash your foot a - gainst a stone.

***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

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

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

***THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 606 Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow**

606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Doxology

The musical score is written for two voices, Treble and Bass, in the key of D major (indicated by two sharps: F# and C#). The time signature is common time (C). The melody is simple and hymn-like, using mostly quarter and half notes. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise *him, all crea-tures
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.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Now we bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O Lord, have given me. We bow before you and shall celebrate with immigrants and strangers in our community the bounty of all you have given to us and our household.

Sending Us into the World

*HYMN # 165 The Glory of These Forty Days

165 The Glory of These Forty Days

1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de -
4 Then grant that we like them be true, con -

cel - e - brate with songs of praise; for Christ, by whom all
lov - ing God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,
liv - ered from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride-groom's
sumed in fast and prayer with you; our spir - its strength-en

things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

*BENEDICTION

May you center yourselves in God's ways and God's identity. May you see the faces of all, and our very planet, with the eyes of our Creator. May you know your welfare is inextricably entwined with that of your neighbor, the stranger you fear and the enemy you have named in your heart. May you be open to the transformation of your heart into God's heart. And may you walk humbly from this place to live life fully and generously everywhere you go and in all you do. Amen.

*CHORAL BENEDICTION # 765 May the God of Hope Go With Us

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

Welcome!



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.

Friendly Reminders

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**.

Wednesday 03/12/2025	Lenten Soup and Bible Study, every Wednesday during Lent (ends 04/09/2025) , led by Rev. Dr. Glory Thomas	6 pm in Fellowship Hall
Sunday 03/16/2025	Herb Williams – Guest Speaker	
Thursday 03/20/2025	First Day of Spring!	
Sunday 03/23/2025	Len Mesonas – Guest Speaker	
Friday 03/28/2025	M.Estrada – Vacation Day	
Sunday 03/30/2025	Linda Goeddel – Guest Speaker	

Per Capita

The per capita for 2025 is \$40.00

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.



Wednesdays in Lent, 6 p.m.

Soup is warm, comforting, and sets the tone for the Wednesdays Lenten Soup Suppers. If you have a favorite soup that is your specialty, you are invited to bring some (dates shown below). A sign-up sheet will be provided. See Sue Ramirez for details. Dates are: 3/12, 3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9.

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.

March 2025	
Today	Len Mesonas
03/16/25	Lilliam Colon-Gilzean
03/23/25	Laura Reeves
03/30/25	Jim Durgana

April 2025	
04/06/25	
04/13/25 (Palm Sunday)	Betsy Christensen
04/17/25 (Thurs. Tenebrae 7 pm)	
04/18/25 (Good Friday 3 pm)	Betsy Christensen
04/20/25 (Easter Sunday)	Len Mesonas
04/27/25	

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 March 10, 2025. For more information, see Nancy Abel.

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

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
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
Selvyn Thomas	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

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

Cover photo: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/PaintedGospelShop>