



# the Spire

**Newsletter of the  
Oak Tree-Iselin  
Presbyterian Church**

**MARCH 2025**

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*the Spire* is published for distribution electronically the first day of the month and sent by post the next business day. The deadline for submitted articles is the previous Wednesday.

We welcome any news you would like to share with the congregation. Please e-mail your WORD documents to:

Betsy Christensen, editor,  
at [Betson42@comcast.net](mailto:Betson42@comcast.net) or leave written articles in the mail box marked "*the Spire*".

*Minds, hearts, hands, and voices in Christ.*

✚ The Pastor Nominating Committee is meeting weekly. The Ministry Discernment Profile (MDP) has been approved by the Committee on Ministry (COM) of Presbytery and submitted.

We are now waiting for resumes.

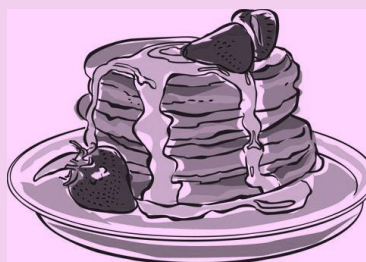
In the meantime, Worship and Music chair Sue Ramirez has seen to it that our pulpit will be filled through Easter.

Please keep the committee and our church in your prayers, keeping faith and trusting that God will send us the right person.

**Mutts** by Patrick McDonnell



**Well, we got 'em... And more!**



**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**

**With bacon and sausage**

**March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm**

**In Fellowship Hall**

**Donations will benefit ChildFund**

# CROESO

**Oak Tree- Iselin  
Presbyterian Church**



**Join us  
on Sunday morning  
at 10:30 am  
in the Sanctuary,  
or on Facebook LIVE.**



Adult Bible Study  
Will resume  
shortly

**Children's Sunday School**

begins at 10:30 am in the  
Sanctuary for morning  
worship and is dismissed to  
classes.

**PER CAPITA  
APPORTIONMENT  
FOR 2025  
REMAINS AT  
\$40**

**PER MEMBER**  
YOU MAY USE THE BLUE  
ENVELOPE IN YOUR GIVING  
BOX OR A PEW ENVELOPE  
MARKED WITH YOUR NAME  
AND "PER CAPITA"

Welcome - Welsh

## **Session Actions of February 8, 2025**

1. Motion to put Ron Stamboly on the inactive list as per his request.
2. Motion to appoint Betsy Christensen as the Elder Commissioner for the upcoming February 25<sup>th</sup> Presbytery meeting.

## **From the Book of Order: G-2.0404**

*Ruling elders and deacons shall be elected to serve terms of no more than three years on a session or board of deacons and may be eligible for re-election according to congregational rule. However, no ruling elder or deacon shall be eligible to serve more than six consecutive years, and a ruling elder or deacon who has served six consecutive years shall be ineligible for election to the same board for at least one year. Election shall be to classes as nearly equal in number as possible, with the term of only one class ending each year. The presbytery may, upon written request and by majority vote, grant a congregation a waiver of this limitation on terms.*

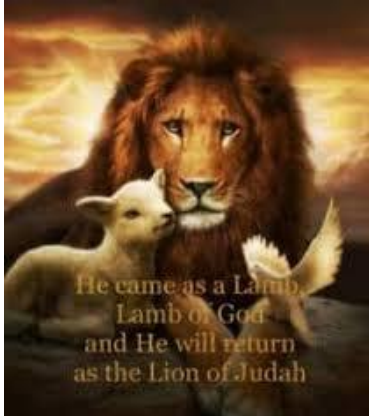
**Our ruling elders had already served on their previous boards before the merge and have continued to stay on the session through the merge to the present. Please prayerfully consider saying 'yes' the nominating committee when they ask you to serve a term.**



We will worship together  
at the White Church in Woodbridge  
600 Rahway venue, Woodbridge  
with the members of  
the Community Presbyterian Church  
and our combined choirs  
**Service begins at 7:00 PM**

Transportation can be arranged  
Call Betsy at 732/407-2965

## Liturgy for March



**Sunday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Transfiguration of the Lord**

Exodus 24:29-35  
Psalm 99  
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2  
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

**March 5<sup>th</sup> - Ash Wednesday**  
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12  
Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

**Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**  
**First Sunday of Lent**  
Deuteronomy 26:1-11  
Psalm 91:1-2, 6-16  
Romans 10:8b-13  
Luke 4:1-13

**Sunday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**Second Sunday of Lent**  
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18  
Psalm 27  
Philippians 3:17-4:1  
Luke 13:31-35 or Luke 9:28-36

**Sunday March 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Third Sunday of Lent**  
Isaiah 55:1-9  
Psalm 63:1-8  
1 Corinthians 10:1-13  
Luke 13:1-9

**Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>**  
**Fourth Sunday of Lent**  
Joshua 5:9-12  
Psalm 32  
2 Corinthians 5:16-21  
Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

## Happy Birthday, Heather

Our church family celebrated a milestone birthday with Heather on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.



# LENTEN

## SOUP AND BREAD

## SUPPER

AND

## BIBLE STUDY

Hosted by the Worship and Music Committee  
Bible Study Led by Rev. Dr. Glory Thomas

**Wednesday nights during Lent:**  
March 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and April 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>  
**At 6:00 PM**

**We need 3 pots of soup each week.**  
**If you have a favorite family recipe you would like to make, or would like to provide bread, call Sue Ramirez at 732/306-7607 or register on the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.**

## Ronald McDonald House



We are again collecting aluminum soda can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Mission effort of the Avenel Presbyterian Church. Together, let's make a difference! You will find a collection canister in Fellowship Hall.



## Shop-Rite Gift Cards

are available each week during Fellowship Hour in \$25, \$50, and \$100 denominations. Simply bring cash or check and receive your card(s).

Oak Tree-Iselin  
Presbyterian Church receives  
5% back on each card sold.

## March Memory Verse

<sup>10</sup>Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and put a new and right spirit within me.

<sup>11</sup>Do not cast me away from your presence,  
and do not take your holy spirit from me.

<sup>12</sup>Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain me with a willing spirit.

<sup>13</sup>Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

<sup>14</sup>Deliver me from bloodshed, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your  
deliverance.

Psalm 51:10-14



## Happy Birthday to You

Chris Alonso

March 1<sup>st</sup>

Katherine Pintak

March 29th

*From the Deacons*

## Ministry of Compassion

A receptacle has been placed in the foyer for donations to the food pantry. Items needed are:

### **Canned:**

**vegetables, beans, fruit, tuna fish,  
pasta sauce, soup, gravy**

**Peanut Butter, Jelly, Pasta,  
Instant potatoes Rice, Stuffing mix,  
Mac'n'Cheese, Cranberry sauce**

**Distribution will be on  
March 10th**

**Sunday, March 9th**

Woodbridge Twp. St. Patrick's Day Parade  
1:30 pm

Also, Daylight Savings Time begins



## Prayer Shawl Ministry



We are meeting in the cozy choir room every other week until the days get longer and the evenings are warmer.

Our meetings during the month of March will be on Thursdays, March 6<sup>th</sup> and March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm.

There will be refreshments and some “Fact or Crap” fun. If you cannot knit or crochet but would like to learn, we can teach you! Come join us.

## Presbytery of the Coastlands



<https://coastlandspresbytery.org>

## Discover Your PC(USA) Roots: A Look at Polity & Denominational Identity



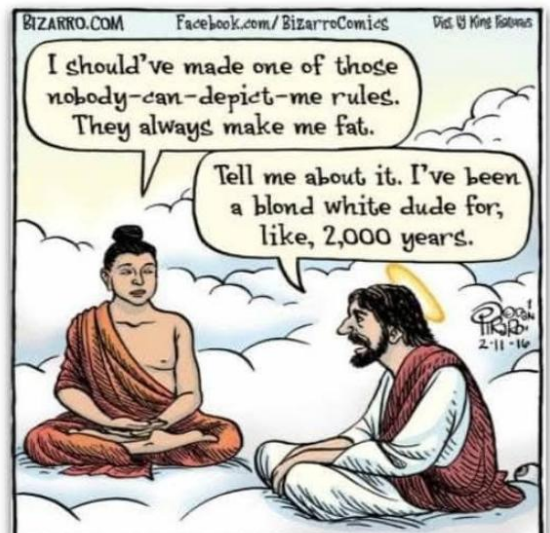
What does it mean to be Presbyterian? Beyond Sunday worship and church community, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is rooted in a rich history of governance, faith, and shared mission. The latest article from PC(USA), *Rooted: Foundations of Polity & Denominational Identity*, delves into these foundations, exploring how our polity shapes our church today.

Polity—the way the church is governed—ensures that decisions are made collectively, reflecting the values of shared leadership and discernment.

This structure has guided Presbyterians for generations, creating a denomination deeply committed to justice, service, and faithfulness. Understanding these roots can help Presbyterians, both new and lifelong, strengthen their connection to the church and its mission.

The full article offers valuable insights into how our identity as Presbyterians is woven into our governance, theology, and daily church life. Readers are encouraged to reflect on how these principles shape their faith and engagement within the church community.

To read articles, go to the [pcusa.org](http://pcusa.org) website



## March Wind

March wind is a jolly fellow;  
He likes to joke and play.  
He turns umbrellas inside out  
And blows our hats away.

He calls the pussy willows  
And whispers in each ear,  
"Wake up you lazy little seeds,  
Don't you know that spring is here?"

Spring begins March 20<sup>th</sup>

## Chinese Chews

**Cream:** 1 cup sugar and 1 stick margarine or butter

**Add:** 2 beaten eggs, 1 tsp. vanilla, 1/2 tsp. salt, 1 cup flour, 1 pkg. chipped pitted dates, 1/2 cup chopped walnuts.

Mix well.

**Spoon into** a greased 9 1/2 "square or oblong pan.

**Bake** at 350 deg. For 35 minutes. While still warm, cut and roll in powdered sugar.

**Store** in airtight container or freeze.

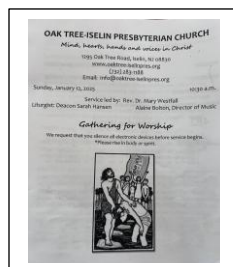
## OakTree-Iselin Presbyterian Church: Two Congregations Becoming One Community of Faith



These are times that invite us to find new, creative and bold ways of being God's people, the church. More than a year ago two congregations, in close proximity, determined they would be stronger together. Through a process of discernment and support by leadership, these two neighboring congregations decided to become one worshipping community, a united, merged, blended community of faith. Pictured is the church facility that houses worship, fellowship, Bible study, offices. The other facility, has become an income generator, housing a variety of community organizations and programs that rent space. On a recent Sunday they hosted Relational Co-Leader Rev. Dr. Mary Westfall, who led worship and met with the congregation to explore their future, answer questions, and discuss their current pastoral search.

Having gone through immense change, this faithful remnant is exploring how they can have a future in which they continue being a church family, worshipping, studying, spending time in fellowship, but also how they can better interact with and serve their community.

Be watching for how this small but faithful community evolves to meet changing needs while being grounded in ancient truths.



This article was reprinted from the  
February 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the  
Presbytery of the Coastlands Newsletter

