



# the Spire



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



## Good News!!!

The PNC has met a prospective candidate in a neutral pulpit on February 15<sup>th</sup> and will meet her again for a second interview soon! There are still some questions to be asked and decisions to be agreed upon.

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

**MARCH 2026**

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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*".

## From the Book of Common Worship

Palm /Passion Sunday is, by design, a day of drama and paradox, of triumph and tragedy. As the service begins, a crowd gathers, waving branches and shouting "Hosanna" (Hebrew for save us), and wanting to crown Jesus as king. But as the story of Christ's passion unfolds, the shouts of praise turn into demands for his death. Jesus is handed over to be mocked, tortured, and killed; the crown he receives is one of thorns. For a number of reasons, it is important to preserve the paradox of Palm/Passion Sunday, celebrating this liturgy in its fullness. First, the service is established on the theological principle that Jesus' death and resurrection cannot be separated. It insists that we not avoid the cross - God's way of glory leads through the grave. Indeed, there is a clear path through this service, connecting Jesus' journey to Jerusalem with his triumphal journey into the new Jerusalem, where the white-robed multitudes will again take up their palms, shouting, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb" (Rev.7:9-10). Second, since many people are unable to attend the midweek worship services, the Palm/Passion liturgy ensures that they will hear the whole story of Jesus' dying and rising - not skipping from "Hosanna" to "Hallelujah". Third, this pattern of worship at the beginning of Holy Week has ancient origins, dating to at least the fourth century and reflecting on the theological, pastoral, and liturgical wisdom of the early church.



*Happy  
First Day of Spring!*

*March 20th*



# Welcome

to  
Oak Tree- Iselin  
Presbyterian Church



Children's Sunday School begins in the sanctuary at 10:30 and is excused to their classroom after the Time with the Children

Join us  
for Sunday morning  
worship  
at 10:30 am  
in the Sanctuary, and for  
Fellowship following the  
service.

We can also be found on  
Facebook Live.

**PER CAPITA  
APPORTIONMENT  
FOR 2026  
HAS BEEN RAISED TO  
\$42 PER MEMBER**

YOUR FAIR SHARE IS DIVIDED  
PROPORTIONATELY BETWEEN  
THE PRESBYTERY OF THE  
COASTLANDS, THE  
NORTHEAST SYNOD, AND  
PC(USA)

## Session actions of February 2, 2026

Motion to hire Jeffrey Reeves to act as property manager at \$400 /wk from March 1<sup>st</sup> until the end of the year.

### Mission focus



**SOUPER  
BOWL  
SUNDAY**

**Thank You...**

**To those who provided soup and to those who donated to our Souper Bowl Sunday mission project. We received \$185 to help our neighbors in need.**

## Easter Morning Breakfast

*Hosted by the Worship and Music Committee*

*9:00 am in Fellowship Hall*

*All are Welcome!*

*Come join our church family for Easter morning breakfast at 9:00am and worship at 10:30.*

*(There will be no fellowship Hour after worship.)*

## Liturgy for March

March 1<sup>st</sup>

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 12: 1-4a  
Psalm 121  
Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17  
John 3: 1-17 or  
Atthew 17: 1-9

March 8<sup>th</sup>

Third Sunday in Lent

Exodus 17: 1-7  
Psalm 95  
Romans 5: 1-11  
John 4: 5-42

March 15<sup>th</sup>

Fourth Sunday in Lent

1 Samuel 16: 1-13  
Psalm 23  
Ephesians 5: 8-14  
John 9: 1-41

March 22

5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent

Ezekiel 37: 1-14  
Psalm 130  
Romans 8: 6-11  
John 11:1-45

Holy Week Begins  
March 29<sup>th</sup>



Palms:  
Matthew 21: 1-11  
Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

Passion:  
Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 31: 9-16  
Philamon 2: 5-11  
Matthew 26:14-27:66 or  
Matthew 27: 11-54

## Johnsonburg Camp & Retreat Center

*“Judge not, and you will not be judges; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven.”*  
Luke 6:37

## Spring Women's



## Retreat

April 24-26, 2026

Theme  
The Establishment Clause:  
Forgiveness: Exploring One of  
Christ's Most Pivotal  
Challenges.

Registration open now!  
[www.campjburg.org](http://www.campjburg.org)

Come for a day (Saturday) or the  
weekend (Friday Night through  
Sunday lunch)

## Happy March Birthday



Chris Alonso 3-01  
Kay Pintak 3-29

The Daffodil is the birth month  
flower for March



SUNDAY, MARCH 8TH



**Kay is back home!**

She welcomes  
visitors at:

12 John Street  
Edison NJ 08837

732/549-4755



## 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.

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

## 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, soups and broth. Mac'n'Cheese, Cereal, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Pasta, Rice**

**Also accepted: feminine products and personal hygiene products.**



February distribution is on Monday, March 9th



## Prayer Shawl Ministry

Thursday Nights  
at 7:00 PM  
In the  
Choir Room

Come and learn to knit or crochet (we'll supply yarn and needles) or just come for the conversation!

## Coastlandspresbytery.org



# HOLY WEEK SERVICES

SUNDAY, MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup>  
PALM SUNDAY

SERVICE AT 10:30 AM  
REV. LINDA GOEDDEL, PREACHING

THURSDAY, MARCH 26<sup>TH</sup>

MAUNDY THURSDAY  
AT WOODBRIDGE PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
RAHWAY AVE. WOODBRIDGE, NJ  
SERVICE AT 7:30PM

FRIDAY, MARCH 27<sup>TH</sup>  
GOOD FRIDAY

SERVICE AT 3:00 PM  
REV. JEREMY CAMPBELL, PREACHING

SUNDAY, APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup>  
RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD/ EASTER  
SUNDAY

EASTER BREAKFAST AT 9:00 AM  
SERVICE BEGINS AT 10:30 AM  
REV. DONALD PITCHES, PREACHING



Dear Oak Tree- Iselin Presbyterian Church,

My heart and I thank you for your many expressions of caring – the cards, visits, calls, texts, offers to help, and prayers.

It's easy to show gratitude in a crisis, but I thank God every day for by family and church family.

Your sister in Christ,  
Betsy

## **What is the difference between a Shamrock and a 4-leafed clover?**



Shamrock vs. clover: what's the difference?

All shamrocks are clovers, but not all clovers are shamrocks. How can that be, you ask? Clover is the common name for plants of the genus *Trifolium* (from the Latin (Tres 'three' + folium 'leaf'), which is comprised of about 300 species. As you might guess from the name, clovers typically have three leaves. Occasionally, though, clovers will grow four leaves.

So, the shamrock symbol is a typical clover with three leaves. St. Patrick's Day shamrocks are usually green, but clovers can also be purple, green, or white.

Shamrocks have been the unofficial national flower of Ireland for centuries, according to TIME. The patron saint of Ireland, Saint Patrick, used the shamrock as a symbol to explain the Holy Trinity when he was converting the Irish to Christianity. Or so the legend goes. Either way, three-leaf clovers are plentiful in the emerald isle, and it eventually became common practice to wear them for the holiday.