CELEBRATE LABOR DAY

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH

the Spire

Minds, hearts, hands, and voices in Christ.

Newsletter of the Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church

September 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 or leave written articles in the mail box marked "***the Spire***".

A message from Our Pastor

I am so happy to be among all of you! I started at Oak Tree Iselin Presbyterian Church in July—right in the middle of summer! As an islander, I truly enjoy the warm weather. Summer is one of my favorite seasons, followed closely by spring!

During these beautiful summer days, we enjoy the sunshine early in the morning and watch as the sun stays with us until late in the evening. There is something about summer that fills us with energy and reminds us not to waste a single moment of this beautiful season. It invites us to enjoy the warmth, the light, and the gift of being together.

Before summer comes to an end, I encourage you to enjoy as many outdoor activities as possible. Go to the park, take a walk—even around your own neighborhood—and take time to notice what is new or different in the area. Open a window and feel the fresh breeze, step outside, and allow the warm rays of the sun to touch your face. These simple moments can make us feel renewed and help us reconnect with nature and with the beauty of God's creation.

When God created the heavens and the earth, everything was without form and void. It was there, but it had no shape or order. There was no light; everything was covered in darkness. Then God created light, bringing beauty, order, and life into creation.

When we look at God's creation each day, we often take it for granted. We become so accustomed to its beauty that we sometimes forget what a magnificent and glorious gift it is. God's creation is beautifully interconnected, with every part connected to the whole while also having its own unique place and purpose.

As soon as we hear the words, *"When God began to create the heavens and the earth—the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God's wind swept over the waters,"* we know that we are hearing from Genesis 1, the first book of the Bible and the opening verses of its first chapter. These words mark one of our first connections with the Word of God. From the very beginning, we are invited into a story of creation, relationship, and connection. Through God's Word, we are blessed with the opportunity to build relationships—with God, with one another, and with all of creation.

There is so much we can imagine when we recognize that God offers each one of us a gift. God cherishes and appreciates each one of us, and I want you to know that I appreciate each one of you as well. We are all interconnected with one another, and that is part of the beauty of God's creation!

God, the Creator of heaven and earth, has given us a world filled with things we can see and things we cannot see. Through God's creation, we are given new eyes and a renewed vision—an invitation to imagine, to re-create, and to dream about what we once thought was impossible.

With Love, Jen

"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will succeed."

Proverbs 16:3

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

July

Motion to accept Laura's resignation as Clerk effective July 31st and appoint Heather Meyers to be Clerk. Motion was second and approved.

Motion was made to approve Rev. Jeniffer's vacation request from July 31st to August 8th. Motion was second and approved.

Motion to approve the continued education request from October 12th – 20th. Motion was second and approved.

Motion was made to apply for the Presbytery technology grant. Motion was second and approved.

Motion to reimburse Rev. Jeniffer for the full amount of $2,617 for moving expenses. Motion was second and approved.

Motion was made to hold communion on August 9th instead of August 2nd. Motion was second and approved.

August

Approval of the installation of Rev. Jeniffer Rodríguez on Sunday September 27, 2026, at 4 PM as the pastor of the Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church.

Motion to approve Chris Alonso, Anita John and Heather Meyers as Sunday School teachers, Betsy Christensen as a substitute teacher, and Cecelia Bolton, Christopher Bolton, and Sara Schweitzer as helpers. Motion was approved.

Motion to approve the lessons for the year. Motion was approved.

Motion: For Jeff to create a draft lease proposal for Hinder Them Not Montessori School (20 Middlesex Ave) with rent proposed at $3500 a month, to be negotiated with preschool owner, Sally McGeehan. Motion is seconded and approved.

"Choose a job that you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life " -Confucius

SEPTEMBER LITURGY

SEPTEMBER 6TH
Ezekiel 33:7-11
Psalm 119:33-40
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

SEPTEMBER 13TH
Genesis 15:15-21
Psalm 103:1-7) 8-13
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

SEPTEMBER 20TH
Jonah 3:10-4:11
Psalm145:1-8
Philemon 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

SEPTEMBER 27TH
Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32
Psalm 25:1-9
Philemon 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAY

Whitney Gilzean	9-3
Nandai Sookhoo	9-5
Lilliam Colon-Gilzean	9-19
Nancy Abel	9-24
Linda Sahayaraj	9-24

For Each, a Book of Their Own

A box has been placed in the front hall to receive donations of children's and young adult's books to be distributed among the kids of women seeking shelter and help getting back on their feet. Many families are uprooted from their homes and brought to the shelter with no personal belongings.

A gift of a book for each child that comes into the system gives them something to call their own and is a way to share God's love through caring.

win
WOMEN IN NEED

WIN provides safe housing and critical services to help homeless women and their children rebuild their lives and break the cycle of homelessness.

Johnsonburg
Camp & Retreat Center

Fall Women's Retreat

Soul Feast: Spiritual Practices for a Practical People!

October 23-25, 2026

Led by
Rev. Mary Beth Mardis-LeCroy,
Pastor at
Old Greenwich Presbyterian Church,
Stewartsville NJ

This retreat is an open invitation for women to step away from the rush, and gather for a time of refreshment, learning, song and rest.
Based on Marjorie Thompson's classic book, *Soul Feast*, we will move beyond the idea of abstract theology to focus on the tangible, everyday spiritual disciplines that sustain us.

Registration is open now!
https://www.campjburg.org/events/womens-fall-retreat/.

Or call: 908/852-2349

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity." Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ronald McDonald House

We are again collecting aluminum soda can (and many cat food can) tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Mission effort of the Avenel Presbyterian Church VBS. The money is used to provide free lodging for families of seriously ill children while they are being treated in a hospital, often a long journey from home. If the tabs are not attracted by a magnet, they are acceptable for collection. Heather Meyers will collect your donations in July to deliver to Avenel. Together, let's make a difference!

Shop-Rite Gift Cards

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.

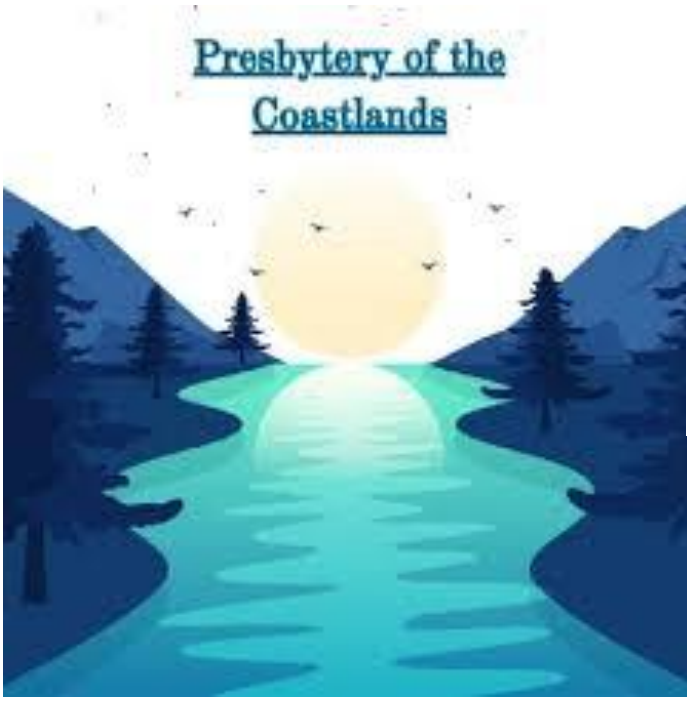
Ministry of Compassion

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.

Distribution is on Monday, September 8th



Presbyteryofthecoastlands.org

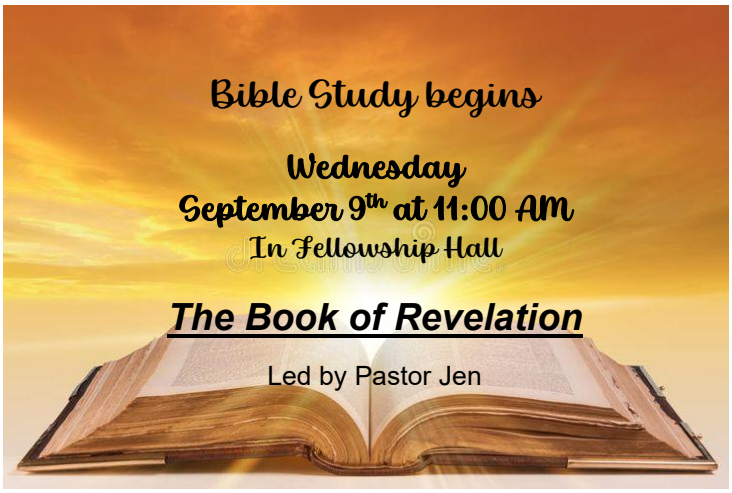
Men's Breakfast
& *CLEF*

will begin the Fall season on
Saturday, September 12th
at 9:00 am In Fellowship Hall

Come join us for a good meal and to share ideas for the new season ahead.

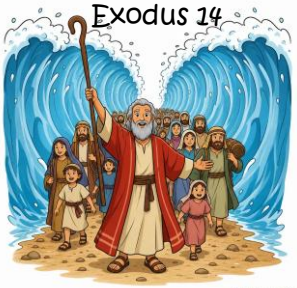
All are welcome!

"The big secret in life is that there is no secret. Whatever your goal, you can get there if you're willing to work."
Oprah Winfrey



Sunday School
Starts on September 13th

"The Parting of the Red Sea"
Exodus 14



All kids welcome to join the journey!

"Whatever you want to do, if you want to be great at it, you have to live it and be willing to sacrifice for it."
- Maya Angelou

You are cordially invited
To be present at the
Installation of

Rev. Jeniffer Rodriguez

To the Oak Tree-Iselin Presbyterian Church
on Sunday, September 27, 2026
At 4:00 pm.

A celebration meal will follow in Fellowship Hall
Please RSVP on sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall or by contacting
Sue Ramirez at (732) 306-7607

"Nothing ever comes to one that is worth having except as a result of hard work."
- Booker T. Washington