

# Ocean Heights

Presbyterian Church



## GOD'S GREAT GIFT OF CREATION



A More Light Presbyterian Congregation joyfully welcoming people from all walks of life, acknowledging the differences of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disabilities. We celebrate all people as children of God.

You are invited to rise in body and/or spirit whenever you read an \* symbol.

Third Sunday of Easter  
April 19, 2026

### GOD CALLS US TO GATHER

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Redemption

by Bethany K. Smith

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP(\*)

Liturgist: Like Job in the whirlwind, or Jonah in the storm at sea,

**People: we come before you in awe of your power, God.**

Liturgist: We recognize that today's storms and whirlwinds are not your judgement on your people,

**People: but the distortion of the natural system through our own sin and hubris.**

Liturgist: As the storms and whirlwinds of the climate crisis accelerate around us,

**People: may our sanctuary be a place of refuge and resilience,**

**All: where all of God's creation might be protected and sustained, and from which we, People of God, might be sent forth to bring healing and justice.**

HYMN 14(\*)

For the Beauty of the Earth

by Follitt Sandford Pierpoint

### JOURNEY OF RECONCILIATION AND HEALING

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (UNISON)

**Creator, forgive us for our sins against you and your Creation. In your name, may we turn from our sins and work towards a new creation, one in which all creatures are freed from the bondage of greed and accumulation and are able to flourish as you created them. May this church be a site of redemption, resilience, and hospitality; an extension of your love to all who are affected by the climate crisis. In this land, this structure, this community, this worship, may we love you more fully by seeking justice for our neighbors.**

**Call to Worship:** As we gather in worship, we stand to mark the moment and to greet one another in this simple act of unification through body and spirit. Today's call to worship is adapted from the Presbyterians for Earth Care's Earth Day worship packet made for 2022.

**Hymn 14:** In the course of many revisions, the original eucharistic emphasis of this text has shifted to a hymn of thanksgiving for a wide range of human experience, with a Christological summation. It is set here to the tune that is customary in North America, though not elsewhere.

**Prayer of Confession:** In the time of confession, we humbly approach God with honesty and growing self-awareness for the ways we've missed the mark. Today's unison prayer is from the Presbyterians for Earth Care's Earth Day worship packet for 2022.

## MOMENT OF SILENCE

SUNG RESPONSE HYMN 774(Verses 1&2)

There Is Now a New Creation

**There is now a new creation through the grace of Jesus Christ,  
peace and reconciliation with the God of endless life.**

**Call the lost and found together; tell the news to everyone:  
now the past is gone forever and a new life has begun.**

*Hymn 249: This New Zealand author's text contains no familiar images of springtime to bolster its message, because Easter in the Southern Hemisphere comes in autumn. This hymn resulted both from her dissatisfaction with existing hymns and from her love of this exuberant Dutch tune.*

### WORDS OF RECONCILIATION

**Pastor:** As we celebrate the renewal of life made possible by God's great love and the witness we receive in Christ, we can be assured of our forgiveness and of the fresh slate we receive each day. Friends, know that in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**People: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST(\*)

HYMN 249(\*)

Because You Live, O Christ

by Shirley Erena Murray

## GOD'S WRITTEN AND SPOKEN WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

#### READING OF SCRIPTURE

Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd: "Therefore, let the whole House of Israel know beyond any doubt that God made this Jesus—whom you crucified—both Messiah and Sovereign."

When they heard this, they were deeply shaken. They asked Peter and the other disciples, "What are we to do?" Peter replied, "You must repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah, that your sins may be forgiven; then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was to you and your children that the promise was made, and to all those still far off whom our God calls." In support of his testimony, Peter used many other arguments and kept saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation!" They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptized. That very day about three thousand were added to the number of those converted.

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### SMALL TALK

#### READING OF SCRIPTURE

Luke 24: 13-35

That same day, two of the disciples were making their way to a village called Emmaus—which was about seven miles from Jerusalem—discussing all that had happened as they went. While they were discussing these things, Jesus approached and began to walk along with them, though they were kept from recognizing Jesus, who asked them, "What are you two discussing as you go your way?" They stopped and looked sad. One of them, Cleopas by name, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened these past few days?" Jesus said to them, "What things?" They said, "About Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet powerful in word and deed in the eyes of God and all the people—how our chief priests and leaders delivered him up to be condemned to death and crucified him. We were hoping that he was the One who would set Israel free. Besides all this, today—the third day since these things happened—some women of our group have just brought us some astonishing news. They were at the tomb before dawn and didn't find the body; they returned and informed us that they had seen a vision of angels, who declared that Jesus was alive. Some of our number went to the tomb and found it to be just as the women said, but they didn't find Jesus."

Then Jesus said to them, "What little sense you have! How slow you are to believe all that the prophets have announced! Didn't the Messiah have to undergo all this to enter into glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, Jesus interpreted for them every passage of scripture which referred to the Messiah. By now they were near the village they were going to, and Jesus

*Acts: Peter finishes his declaration of new life in Christ and the crowd responds enthusiastically.*

*Luke: The Risen Christ meets two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus and walks alongside them as they travel along.*

appeared to be going further. But they said eagerly, "Stay with us. It's nearly evening—the day is practically over." So the Savior went in and stayed with them. After sitting down with them to eat, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, then broke the bread and began to distribute it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus, who immediately vanished from their sight. They said to one another, "Weren't our hearts burning inside us as this one talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?" They got up immediately and returned to Jerusalem, where they found the Eleven and the rest of the company assembled. They were greeted with, "Christ has risen! It's true! Jesus has appeared to Simon!" Then the travelers recounted what had happened on the road, and how they had come to know Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

The Word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON                      The Difference a Walk Makes                      Rev. Katherine Scott-Kirschner

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SPEAKING OUR COMMITMENTS— Mission Statement

Liturgist:        By the grace of God, the people of Ocean Heights Presbyterian Church, a member congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), gather for worship and ministry in the name of Christ.

**All:                We joyfully welcome people from all walks of life, acknowledging the differences of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and disabilities. We celebrate all people as children of God.**

Liturgist:        We strive to be the body of Christ in the world, working for peace and justice for all persons. We join with people of good faith to address the threats of climate change and the degradation of God's good creation. As a progressive Christian congregation,

**All:                We endeavor to understand and practice the faith we have from scripture, informed by the wisdom of science and the theological and cultural diversity of the world's people.**

Liturgist:        We give thanks to God for the community we share in worship and ministry for the sake of a world where love is more possible.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER OF JESUS

**Loving God, in whom is heaven, may Your name be honored everywhere.  
May Your kingdom come.  
May the desire of Your heart for the world be done, in us, by us and through us.  
Give us the bread we need for each day.  
Forgive us.  
Enable us to forgive others.  
Keep us from all anxiety and fear.  
For You reign in the power that comes from love which is Your glory forever and ever. Amen.**

CALL TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY                      Now I Walk In Beauty                      by Gregg Smith

DOXOLOGY(\*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow!  
Praise God all creatures here below! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

PRAYER OF DEDICATION(\*)

HYMN 257(\*)                      This Risen Christ                      by Nigel Weaver

BENEDICTION(\*)

AMEN 600(\*)

**Speaking Our Commitments:** *This mission statement was created to articulate what this congregation believes. It was revised on October 27, 2021.*

**Prayer of Jesus:** *This paraphrase of Christ's prayer is anonymous.*

**Offertory:** *A Navajo prayer.*

**Hymn 257:** *This perceptive hymn centers on Christ's post-Resurrection appearances described in John 20:19–29 and Luke 24:13–48. The first three stanzas are shaped by the wounded body parts: feet, side, hand; the fourth prays for such woundedness in the witness of Christ's body, the Church.*



The art on display is called, Our Earth; A Precious Gift of God. This display celebrates God's miraculous creation in celebration of Earth Day.

Many thanks to those who shared in worship leadership:

- Liturgist - Bob Helsabeck**
- Greeter - DonnaLynn Warren**
- Coffee Hour - Sally Montufar**
- Counters - Sue Castellano & Lorene Gilman**

### MONTH AT A GLANCE

- 4/19 **Worship 10am**  
**Adult Education**
- 4/21 **Finance Committee 6pm**
- 4/22 **Preparing the Way 10am**
- 4/23 **Worship Committee 5:30**  
**Choir 7pm**
- 4/25 **Presbytery Session Minutes Review 10am**
- 4/26 **Worship 10am**  
**Adult Education**
- 4/28 **Heart & Soul 10am**  
**Mission & Social Justice 7pm**
- 4/29 **Preparing the Way- Weekly Bible Study 10am**



This week's flowers are dedicated by Lorene Gilman, in memory of Mike Schor.

JOIN US FOR A  
**CLEANUP DAY & PLANT SALE**



Start at  
**9 AM**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Let's come together!

# SIDE DOOR Suppers

**5:30 PM**

Ocean Heights Presbyterian Church

3rd Wednesdays  
May - Sept.  
May 20, June 17, July 15,  
Aug 19, Sept 16



\$10 a person,  
\$5 for children

Full dinner and dessert included

[ohchurch.org](http://ohchurch.org)



#### Session

#### Class of 2026

Brenda Brown  
Lorene Gilman  
David Prescott

#### Class of 2027

Diane Falk  
Jim Laymon  
Carol Petters

#### Class of 2028

Sue Castellano  
Walter East  
Mika McNair

**Pastor** – Rev. Katherine Scott-Kirschner

**Clerk of Session** – Lorene Gilman

**President of the Board of Trustees** – Diane Falk

**Director of Music** – Bob Helsabeck

**Pianist** – Heera Ghorashi

**Office Coordinator** – Kay DeAngelo

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**Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234**

**Office Hours:**

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