

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 8, 2024 at 10 AM



Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church
500 McKennans Church Road, Wilmington DE
(302) 998-0434; www.rccpc.org

Rooted in Love, Lighting the Way

Welcome to worship, welcome to Red Clay, welcome home!

Please visit the welcome cart in the narthex to learn more about our community.

Please silence your cell phones.

GATHER

LIGHTING OF THE PEACE CANDLE

(a silent prayer)

God of grace and mercy, as we await the Prince of Peace, we come to you with hearts yearning for the day when your peace reigns in the world. May your light dispel the darkness of discord, and may nations unite in the pursuit of harmony and justice. Inspire our leaders with wisdom and compassion that they may work for the well-being of all. Amen.

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

One: Let Heaven and Nature Sing!
A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
Many: **from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.**

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Barb Vanderkraats

*CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: Today, we light the candle of peace, remembering that all creation is bound together in the peace of Christ. Mountains, rivers, trees, and skies all reflect God's deep, abiding peace.

(continued)

Many: May the light of peace shine in our world, bringing harmony to all of heaven and nature.

*Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

One: Lord, as we light this candle, may its flame symbolize the peace that fills our hearts in this season of waiting. Guide us to be instruments of Your peace in all we do.

*HYMN 113 **Angels We Have Heard on High**

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: God of the heavens and earth, you came in vulnerability and grace, yet we confess we have often chosen paths of fear and power.

Many: **We fail to listen to the earth and to one another, forgetting that we are part of your living, breathing creation. We close our ears to the songs of hope and justice that echo through your world. Forgive us, O God, and open our hearts to the song of life, to the whisper of the Spirit, and to your Word made flesh.**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear the good news: God's love reaches to the heavens, and God's faithfulness to the skies. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's love for those who seek to follow in God's way.

Many: **Thanks be to God. In Christ, we are forgiven, loved, and made whole. Amen.**

*SUNG RESPONSE Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

*Now the heavens start to whisper, as the veil is growing thin.
Earth from slumber wakes to listen to the stirring, faint within:
Seed of promise, deeply planted, child to spring from Jesse's stem!
Like the soil beneath the frostline, hearts grow soft to welcome him.*

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Please greet those around you, wishing them “peace” or “the peace of Christ.”

CHILDREN’S MOMENT & THE LORD’S PRAYER

At the conclusion, Pre-K through 8th grade children who wish to attend Sunday school may proceed to their classes.

LISTEN

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION While We Are Waiting, Come

***While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.***

SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 11:1-4a

MUSICAL OFFERING Jesus, What A Wonderful Child

GOSPEL LESSON Luke 2:7

SERMON Heaven and Nature Sing: An Advent Parable
Rev. Edee Chase Fenimore

HYMN 129 **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**

RESPOND

CALL TO PRAYER

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

One: May the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts.

Many: Christ is our peace, our light, and our hope.

One: Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

CALL TO THE OFFERING

We invite you to make an online donation or by placing a check or cash in the collection plate. Envelopes are available in the pews for specified giving. The gray envelopes are for our new Roots & Rays Fund, which goes to creative outreach projects in the community.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Advent Medley

*SUNG RESPONSE O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

***O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.***

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN 105 **People, Look East**

*BENEDICTION



Today's 11:30 AM Service of Light and Hope

Everyone is invited to return to the Sanctuary at 11:30 a.m. for our Service of Light and Hope. This will be a time of quiet prayer and reflection for those seeking peace, hope and comfort this holiday season.

Read a few words from those who have attended previous services of Light and Hope: Joyce writes, *“On August 15, 2021, I lost my husband. A few months later, the Service of Light & Hope was held. I attended and found some of the peace and calmness that I so needed. I have attended every year since and will attend today.”*

And, from Bob: *“The last Service of Hope and Light left me with a sense of comfort and peace. Pastor Nate's words gave me a feeling of a loving and caring family.”*

From Suzanne: *“Sometime during the months of November or December, I find myself in a mood. It takes me awhile to acknowledge the feelings. And then realization sets in and I am able to give it a name. It is the grief which first arrived on December 20, 1966, when we lost my Daddy. Attending the Service of Light and Hope each year is where I have found a sense of peace, comfort, hope, and love. It has become one of my most cherished and needed Christmas traditions.”*

In the midst of these unsettled and challenging times, please join us as together we wait with hope for the Light that shines in the darkness.



We are grateful to have The Rev. Edee Chase Fenimore preaching today! Edee is delighted to be back at Red Clay, having served several years as a Parish Associate here. She describes herself as a widow, mother, grandmother, great grandmother and storyteller.

Thanks to today’s worship participants:

Barbara Vanderkraats, *Soloist*
Lauda, *Music Ministry*
Chip Gruber, *Usher Captain*
Linda Neel, *Greeter*

Join us for refreshments & fellowship in Founders Hall following the postlude.

The flowers today are given in loving memory of Ed Norris and Jim Jeffers on their birthdays, from Mary Norris and the Jeffers family.

Through a series of in-person messages, devotionals, and worship opportunities, we hope to keep you connected to—and nurtured by—the Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church community. Make sure you’re signed up for our Thursday eNews, Facebook, and Instagram accounts. Visit www.rccpc.org.



Red Clay Creek Presbyterian invites you
to its *Signature Services* during the coming year.

CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE — December 24th, 2024

- ◆ Family Service with Impromptu Pageant | 4PM
- ◆ Holy Night Service with Candlelight | 8PM
- ◆ Candlelight & Communion | 11PM

ROOTS AND RAYS SERVICE CHALLENGE 2025

A month-long service effort beginning in January of each year, that directs our intention to the needs of our community.

HOLY WEEK 2025

- ◆ Maundy Thursday — April 17th | 7PM
- ◆ Good Friday — April 18th | 12PM
- ◆ Easter Sunday — April 20th | 10AM

KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN — May 18th, 2025 | 10AM

Kirk is the Scottish word for church, so a church celebration and blessing of the tartans in our Presbyterian church honors both local and church heritage since it was the Scots who brought the Presbyterian Church to America.

OUTDOOR SERVICE & PICNIC — June 1st, 2025 | 10AM

Join us in the back meadow for worship and our annual picnic.

SUMMER ARTS CAMP — JULY 14th-18th, 2025 | 9AM-12PM

Kids K-5 will have music, drama, visual arts, snacks, and FUN, culminating with bingo and performance night July 18th, as well as Youth Sunday on July 20th.

HOMECOMING SUNDAY — September 7th, 2025 | 10AM

We mark our return to regular church programming with the start of our fall sermon series and Sunday School kick off.

FALL CELEBRATION SUNDAY — October 26th, 2025 | 10AM

A joyous worship service where we give Bibles to our 3rd graders and dedicate our pledges, followed by outdoor trunk-or-treat and a flag football game.

ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY — November 16th, 2025 | 10AM

We give thanks for God's many blessings and our rich history of over 300 years.

WELCOME TO RED CLAY

For LARGE print bulletins or children's bulletins, please ask an Usher.
Restrooms are available. Just ask!

Welcome to worship, welcome to Red Clay, welcome home! Rooted in God's abiding love for all, our church is lighting the way for friendship, compassion, and service. Please join us for coffee hour in Founder's Hall after service, and stop by the welcome cart by the front entrance to learn more about our community. We hope you will worship with us again soon! If you are interested in deepening your participation, or if you just love Red Clay, it's time to think about membership! Contact Elder Nancy James at njames19966@gmail.com.

Here at Red Clay, we have numerous groups that are open and that welcome newcomers, including, e.g., Quilters, Crafters, "Friends and Fellowship" free luncheon for seniors, Bible study, ROMEOs ("Retired Old Men Eating Out"), Centering Prayer, "The Arcaders" social group for GenX and Millennials, Breakfast Theology 101 with Pastor Nate, and Pickleball. Details can be found at www.rcpc.org!

Children: Nursery care is available from 9:45AM through the conclusion of worship in Room 305 (just down the hallway from the sanctuary). After the Children's Moment, Pre-K - 2nd grade will adjourn to Room 303 and Grades 3-8 will adjourn to Room 202/204.

UPCOMING EVENT SPOTLIGHT

December 15th: Crèches & Cards

Next Sunday, we'll have a one-day Crèche/Nativity display in Founders Hall, featuring (hopefully) 40 crèches. If you are willing to bring your crèche, please contact Barb Vanderkraats (vopera65@gmail.com) ASAP. Crèche set-up will be between 9-10 am; removal will be at noon when the display ends.

RED CLAY CREEK PRESBYTERIAN — MINISTERS, STAFF & CHAIRS

Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips, *Senior Pastor/Head of Staff*

Rev. Emily Schwenker, *Parish Associate*

Rev. Dr. Philip Jones, *Parish Associate*

Jeffrey Miller, *Director of Music*

Deena Andrews, *Assistant Director of Instrumental Music and Children's Choir Director*

Lisa Nichols, *Bell Choir Director*

Rachele Gilmore, *Director of Community Life*

Ben Andrews, *Director of Christian Formation*

Jamie Russell, *Director of Children's Ministries*

Barbara Vanderkraats, *Pastoral Care Coordinator*

Judy Lozier, *Nursery Director* ❖ Shelby Beattie, *Sunday School Teacher* ❖ Sofia Martin, *Nursery Support*

Julie Reeder, *Office Coordinator* ❖ Dinyar Vania, *Facilities Manager*

Kelley Norton, *Administrative Assistant* ❖ Anthony M. Condoluci-Smith, *Financial Associate*

Charlie Hannagan, *Technology Support*

A. Leonhard, S. Armstrong, K. Barton, A. Bloom, D. Howarth, J. Schubel, P. Worrell, *Livestream Production*

Sandy Sarjeant, *Clerk of Session* ❖ Sue Gleason, *Deacon Moderator*

Geoff and Pam Meyer, *Belong Chairs* ❖ Nancy James, *Nurture Chair*

Linda Reisor, *Reach Chair* ❖ Lois Galinat, *Rejoice Chair*

Brandon Wallace, *Finance Chair* ❖ John Gast, *Personnel Chair*

Mark Cozine, *Home Chair* ❖ Scott McHenry, *Administration Chair*

Andrew Bloom, *Community Partners* ❖ Marcia Kelly, *Memory Garden Chair*

A NOTE ON THE LOGO

Our church has "roots" in the community that date back to 1722. We have been a good neighbor when we were surrounded by farmland up until now when we are surrounded by the suburbs. Our history helps us remember a time when people helped one another out because that was the right thing to do. We hope to be a sign that this kind of community can still exist. We also believe that, in order for that community to exist, we need to stay "rooted" in the Good News that God has chosen to love us - not because of who we are, but because of who God is. We call that grace.

That is where the "rays" come in. We hope to extend our love, and the love we know from the graciousness of God, in many ways today. This means engaging in friendships with those that Jesus would have made friends with - those that feel isolated for any number of reasons. We know we will never be perfect at that, but we will try! We are especially aware that churches have long held back from friendship with others based on age, economics, sexuality, race, disability, and the list goes on. We seek to be something different than that. There are so many stories about how Jesus entered into life-affirming friendships with those that others wouldn't. We seek to be like Jesus.

Right there, in the center of it all, is the **cross**. For us, the cross is a "Tree of Life." It represents how God broke into this world to establish a new way of being alive. It symbolizes how God calls us to love with freedom, with recklessness even, if it means connecting the world to the wonder of God's transformative presence.



113 Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro-long?
3 Come to Beth-le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be which in-spire your heaven-ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.



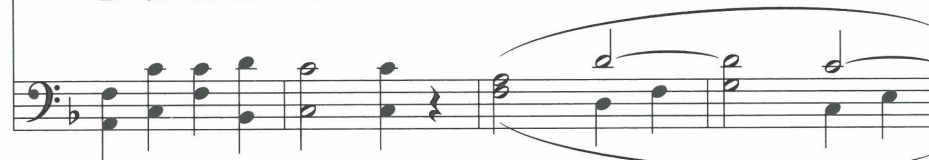
Refrain



Glo - - - ri - a



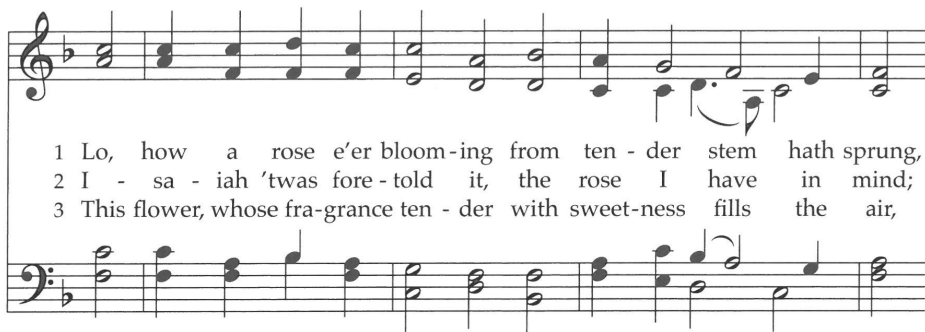
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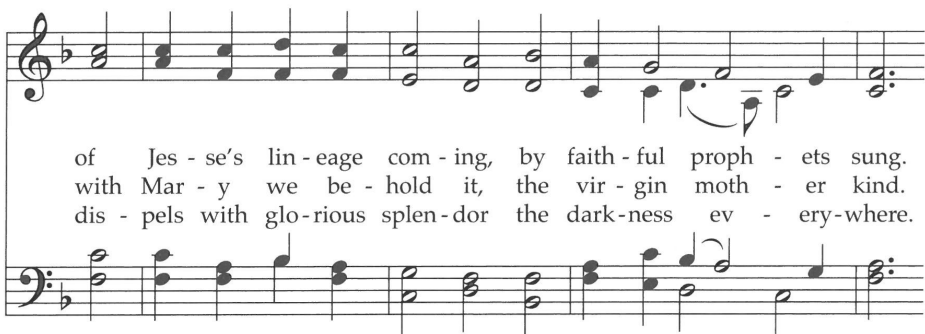
This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 129



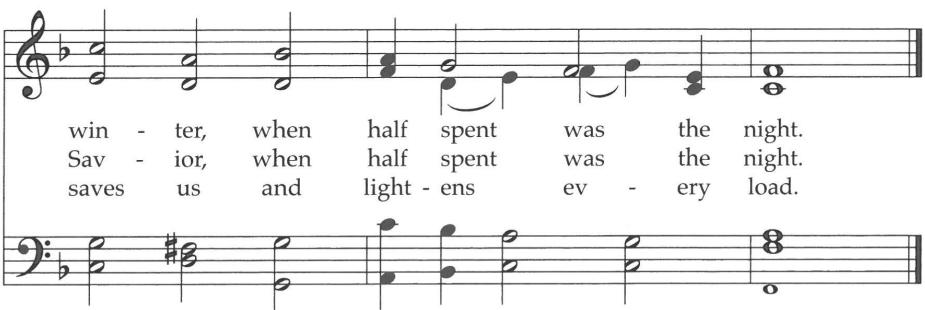
1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung,
2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I have in mind;
3 This flower, whose fra-grance ten - der with sweet-ness fills the air,



of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, by faith - ful proph - ets sung.
with Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind.
dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - ery - where.



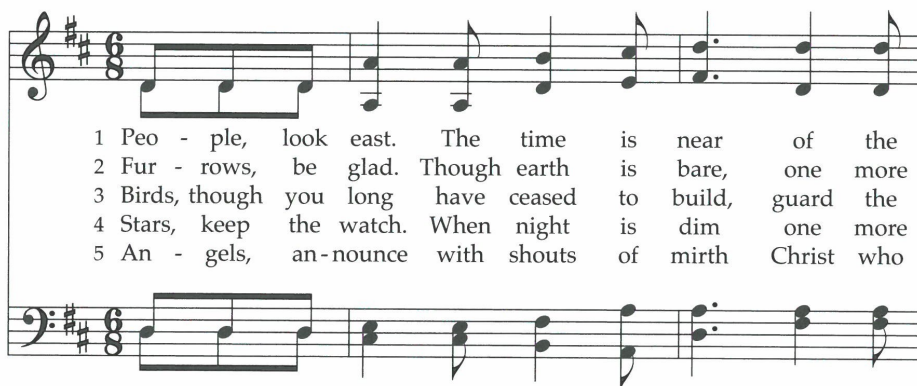
It came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
To show God's love a - right she bore for us a
En - fleshed, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he



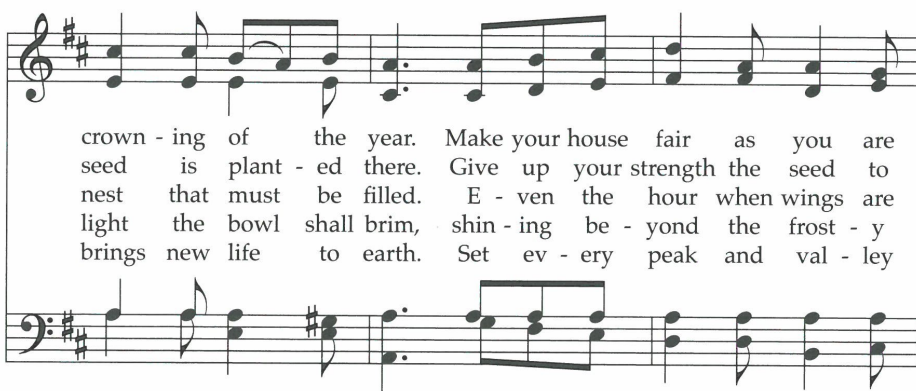
win - ter, when half spent was the night.
Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.
saves us and light - ens ev - ery load.

Although the early copies of this 15th-century German text include many more stanzas than are printed here, this simpler, shorter form has much to commend it. This early 17th-century harmonization of the traditional chorale melody invites and rewards singing in parts.

People, Look East

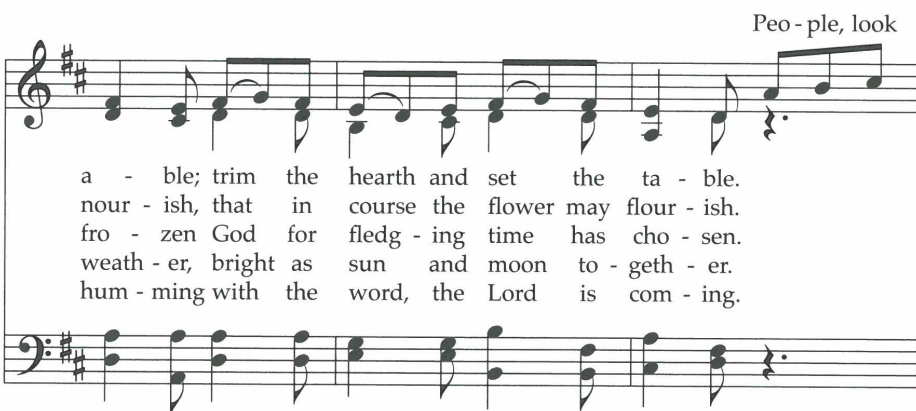


1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more
 3 Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the
 4 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more
 5 An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth Christ who



crown - ing of the year. Make your house fair as you are
 seed is plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to
 nest that must be filled. E - ven the hour when wings are
 light the bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y
 brings new life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley

Peo - ple, look



a - ble; trim the hearth and set the ta - ble.
 nour - ish, that in course the flower may flour - ish.
 fro - zen God for fledg - ing time has cho - sen.
 weath - er, bright as sun and moon to - geth - er.
 hum - ming with the word, the Lord is com - ing.

east and sing to - day:



Peo-ple, look east:

Love, the Guest, is on the way.
Love, the Rose, is on the way.
Love, the Bird, is on the way.
Love, the Star, is on the way.
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Peo-ple, look east:

(Love is on the way.)

