



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 15, 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!
You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace;
Many: **the mountains and hills will burst into song before you.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: Today, we light the candle of joy, celebrating the gladness that comes when God draws near. The fields, rivers, and hills echo the joy of heaven, as God's promises blossom in our midst.
Many: **May the light of joy be a song in our hearts, joining heaven and nature in rejoicing.**

(continued)

*No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.*

*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: Gracious God, as we light this candle, may it represent the joy that fills our hearts as we anticipate the birth of Your Son. May our lives reflect this joy in our words and actions.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN 133 **O Come, All Ye Faithful**

*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.”

MUSICAL OFFERING

Carol of the Bells

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 55:8-12

MUSICAL OFFERING

And the Glory of the Lord

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 1:39-45

SERMON

Heaven & Nature Sing: Let it Fly

Rev. Dr. Phillips

HYMN 100

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

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 & THE LORD’S PRAYER

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 What Is This Perfume, So Appealing

*SUNG RESPONSE Go Tell it on the Mountain (Hymn 126)

***Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!***

***Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.***

***Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!***

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*HYMN 119 **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Psalm XIX

Marcello



We invite everyone to come to Founders Hall after worship today to view the display of 40 crèches and to sign 40 cards that go to our “Keeping in Touch” members and 6 Friendship Houses. Thank you to Kelley Norton, Ellen Hinrichs and Marion Howarth—who designed and completed the giant beautiful cards—and all who shared their precious crèches!



Thanks to today's worship participants:

Zimo Liu, *Trumpeter*
Festival Choir, Children's Choir, Orff Ensemble, *Music Ministry*
Bob Kissell, *Usher Captain*
Hank Smithies, *Greeter*

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

Today's soloist and choir section leaders are brought to you through
gifts from the Naylor and Music Memorial funds.

The flowers today are given in honor of Brandon Wallace on his 75th birthday,
with love from his wife, Diane.

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, Theology 101 with Pastor Nate, and Pickleball. Details can be found at www.rccpc.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 21st: CELTIC CHRISTMAS CONCERT with CHARLIE ZAHM

Join us for this free Celtic Christmas Concert featuring Charlie Zahm performing the songs of the season with an exquisite Celtic flair, joined by Tad Marks on fiddle. All are welcome!

Doors open at 6:30 pm; concert begins at 7:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Light refreshments will be provided during intermission.

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.

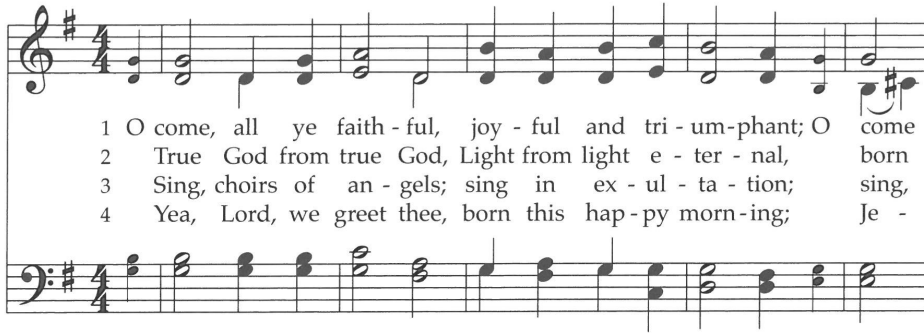
That is where the "**rays**" come in. We hope to extend our love, and the love we know from the graciousness of God, in many ways today. This means engaging in friendships with those that Jesus would have made friends with - those that feel isolated for any number of reasons. We know we will never be 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.

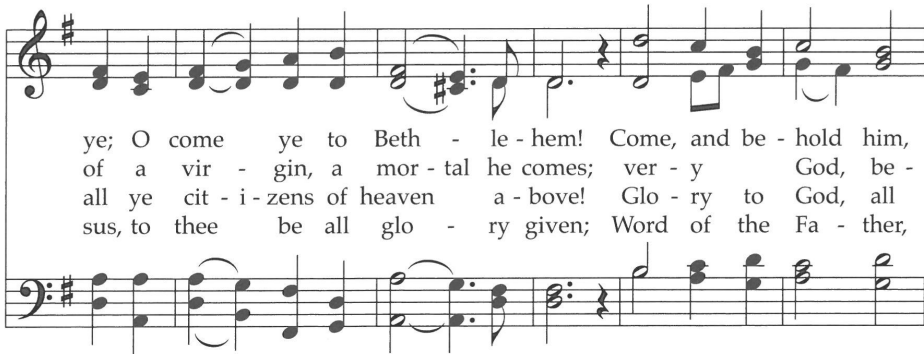


O Come, All Ye Faithful

133



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -



ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,

Refrain



born the King of an - gels!
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed!
 glo - ry in the high - est! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!



us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!

From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be


By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.


Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the
 fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the
 dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.


119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing




1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car-nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king!"

This musical score is for a hymn. It features a treble and bass staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics are: "Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, 'Glo - ry to the new-born king!'". The score ends with a double bar line.