



# Red Clay Creek

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

500 McKennans Church Road  
Wilmington DE 19808  
(302) 998-0434 / rccpc.org

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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT / SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2025 / 10 AM

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## *Rooted in Love, Lighting the Way*

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

*We're glad you're here. If needed, a family area with CCTV is in the narthex near the front doors, and our nursery is open for young children. Restrooms are available by exiting out the side door near the pulpit and turning left. After worship, join us for Coffee Hour in Founders Hall by the main parking lot. Please silence your cell phone as we enter into worship.*

## GATHER

### CHIMING OF THE HOUR

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

### MINUTE FOR MISSION

Linda Neel

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: Today we light the candle of hope, remembering the star that rose in the East and stirred wise travelers to set out on a journey. Even before they knew where the road would lead, they saw the light - and they followed.

Many: **May this light awaken our spirits and guide our steps as we learn to follow the star of God's love.**

*(continued)*

One: From ancient hills to quiet fields, from the watchful shepherd to the wandering Magi, your people have looked to the skies, O God, searching for signs of your nearness.

Many: **Lead us again, Holy One. Shine in our darkness. Set our eyes toward the Light that has come into the world.**

*(SUNG) There's a star in the east on Christmas morn.*

*Rise up, shepherd, and follow.*

*It will lead to the place where the Christ was born.*

*Rise up, shepherd, and follow.*

*Follow, follow; rise up, shepherd, and follow.*

*Follow the star of Bethlehem. Rise up, shepherd, and follow.*

One: Let us pray. God of light and promise, as this candle burns, may its glow remind us that hope begins with a single spark—a star rising in the dark. Give us courage to follow where you lead, trusting that your love illuminates every step of the journey.

Many: **Amen.**

\*HYMN 83

**Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: God of signs and stars, we confess that we do not always follow your light. We become distracted by our own paths, drawn toward comfort, familiarity, or fear.

Many: **We lose sight of your leading. We forget to look up. We hesitate to take the next faithful step.**

One: You invite us to trust the light you place before us—but we cling to what we know.

Many: **Forgive us, O God. Lift our eyes again. Set our feet on the path of hope, and teach us to follow the star of Christ.**

\*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear the good news: The same God who set a star in the sky also sets grace in our lives. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Many: **Thanks be to God!**

\*SUNG RESPONSE

Love Has Come

***Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.  
Love is God now asleep in the hay.  
See the glow in the eyes of his mother;  
What is the name her heart is saying?  
Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers.  
Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.***

\*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, we look forward to welcoming all children through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to the nursery or their Sunday school classes, as the congregation prepares to hear the sermon.*

SUNG RESPONSE

Now the Heavens Start to Whisper

***Heavy clouds that block the moonlight now begin to drift away.  
Diamond brilliance through the darkness shines the hope of coming day.  
Christ, the morning star of splendor, gleams within a world grown dim.  
Heaven’s ember fans to fullness; hearts grow warm to welcome him.***

## PRAYER

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 Roots & Rays Fund, which goes to creative outreach projects in the community.*



MUSICAL OFFERING

Zion's Walls

Copland

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE      As with Gladness Men of Old

*As they offered gifts most rare at thy manger, rude and bare,  
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee, our heavenly king.*

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN 97                      **Watchman, Tell Us of the Night**                      (to be sung antiphonally)

*This dialogue hymn alternates between the voice of a traveler and that of a watchman,  
setting up an exchange that creates parallels between the coming of dawn and the birth of Christ.  
The tune is named for a Welsh town whose name means "mouth of the bending river".*

## LISTEN

SCRIPTURE LESSON                      Genesis 15:1–6

SERMON                      Follow the Star: Columbia House                      Rev. Dr. Phillips

## SEND

\*HYMN 152                      **What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright**

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION      Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



Thanks to today's worship participants:

Grant Youngblood, *Music Ministry*  
Mark Cozine, *Usher Captain*; Karen Beare, *Greeter*  
Madelyn Haggerty, *Liturgist*

The flowers today are given in loving memory of Lisa Febre  
from Lorraine and Richard Gilmore.

Join us for coffee & fellowship in Founders Hall following the postlude!

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](http://www.rccpc.org).



## *Service of Light and Hope*

Sunday, December 7, 2025 at 3:00 p.m.



As holidays approach, loss and grief often shadow occasions that were once joyous. Grief is felt in many ways—due to death of a loved one/ pet, a troubling health diagnosis, the overwhelming task of caring for a loved one, loss of a job/ divorce, isolation due to a move, or many

other unexpected life events. During this service, we will light candles in remembrance and hope. We will take time to place prayers on a prayer tree. If you have not personally experienced a loss, join us to support and care for others who are struggling.

GRACE AND PEACE,

Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church Stephen Ministers



**STEPHEN**  
MINISTRY

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

**CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE — December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

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

**ROOTS AND RAYS SERVICE CHALLENGE — Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>–Mar. 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**

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

**HOLY WEEK 2026**

- ♦ Maundy Thursday — April 2<sup>nd</sup>; Good Friday — April 3<sup>rd</sup>
- ♦ Resurrection Remembrance Service — April 5<sup>th</sup> | 9:30AM Worship
- ♦ Easter Sunday — April 5<sup>th</sup> | 10AM Worship

**KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN — April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026 | 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 7<sup>th</sup>, 2026 | 10AM**

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

**SUMMER ARTS CAMPS — July 2026 | 9AM-12PM**

Kids will have music, drama, visual arts, snacks, and FUN, culminating with BINGO and performance night, as well as Youth Sunday.

**HOMECOMING SUNDAY — September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026 | 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 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 | 10AM**

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

**ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY — November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 | 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 Karen Vordemberge at [kvordemberge@gmail.com](mailto:kvordemberge@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](http://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 - Kindergarteners will adjourn to Room 303, Grades 1-3 will adjourn to Room 206, and Grades 4-8 will adjourn to Room 202/204.

## UPCOMING EVENT SPOTLIGHT

### **Red Clay Art Show: Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> After Worship!**

Red Clay Artists are invited to share a piece of their art after worship on December 7<sup>th</sup> in Founders Hall on the themes of Christmas/ Winter/ Holiday/ Sacred. If you would like your work displayed, please register using our online form or by contacting Peggy Germain ([peggykger@gmail.com](mailto:peggykger@gmail.com)).

**All art lovers and art enthusiasts (i.e., that's YOU, congregation!) are invited to enjoy this gallery show after Sunday's worship.**

## RED CLAY CREEK PRESBYTERIAN — MINISTERS, STAFF & CHAIRS

Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips, *Senior Pastor/Head of Staff*  
Rev. Emily Schwenker ❖ Rev. Dr. Philip Jones

Jeffrey Miller, *Director of Music*  
Deena Andrews, *Director of Children's Choir*  
Lisa Nichols, *Bell Choir Director*

Rachele Gilmore, *Director of Community Life* ❖ Ben Andrews, *Director of Christian Formation*  
Barbara Vanderkraats, *Pastoral Care Coordinator*  
Jamie Russell, *Director of Children's Ministries*  
Judy Lozier, *Nursery Director* ❖ Sofia Martin, *Nursery Support*  
Delaney Christel, Josephine DeCaire, Quiara Smith, *Sunday School Teachers*

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*

Nancy James, *Clerk of Session* ❖ Kathy Ciabattoni, *Deacon Moderator*  
Bill Ciabattoni, *Belong Chair* ❖ Darlyn Green-Kocher, *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*

\* For a complete list of all Session Ruling Elders and Board of Deacons members, please refer to <https://www.rccpc.org>.\*

### 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.

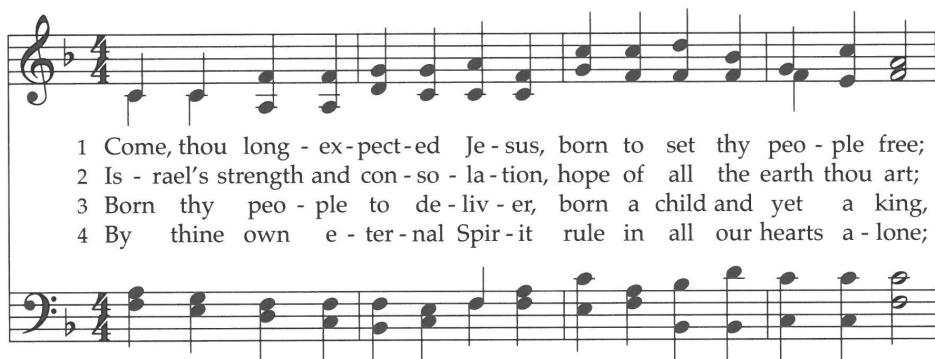
That is where the "**rays**" come in. We hope to extend our love, and the love we know from the graciousness of God, in many ways today. This means engaging in friendships with those that Jesus would have made friends with - those that feel isolated for any number of reasons. We know we will never be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

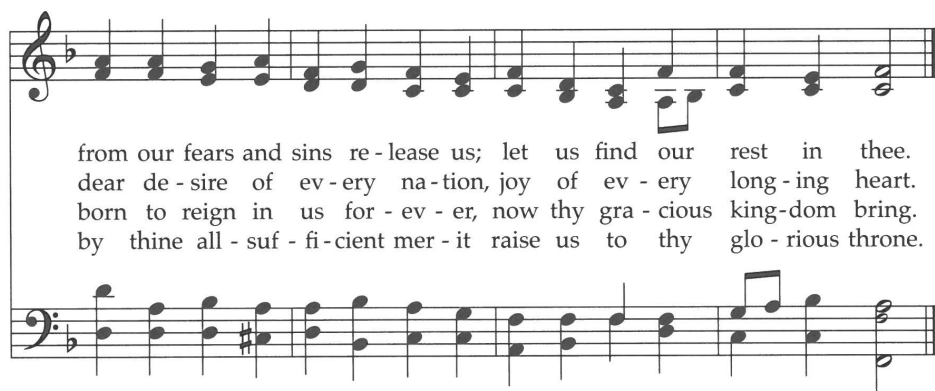




## 83 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



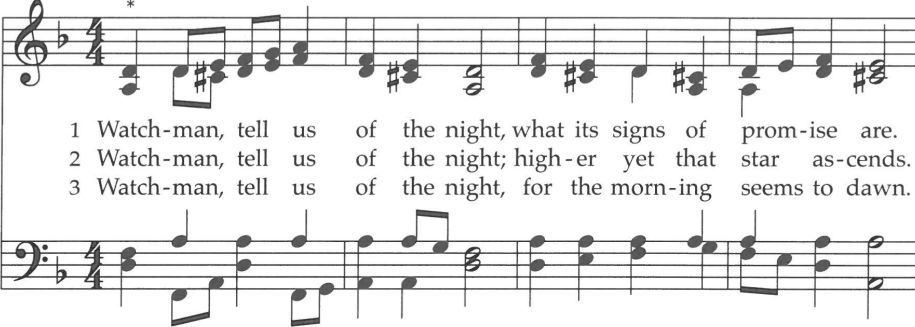
1 Come, thou long - ex-pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,  
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

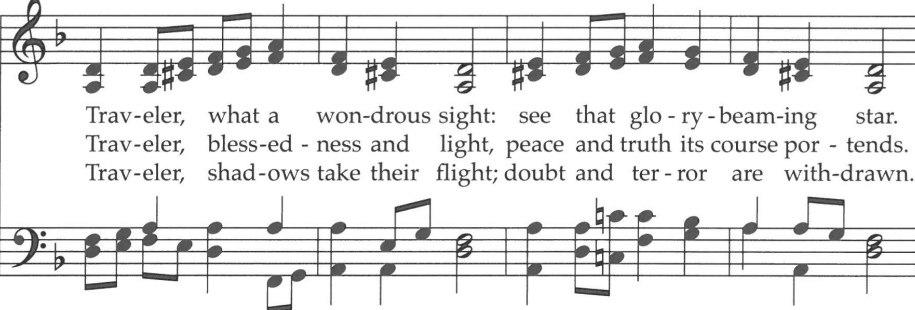



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

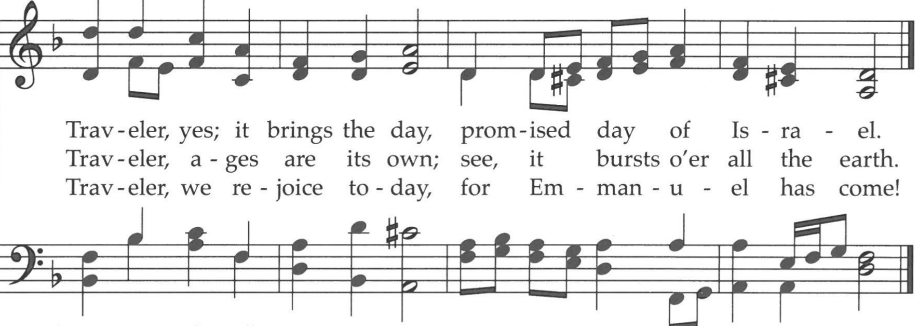
With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin *adventus* = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

# Watchman, Tell Us of the Night 97

\*  
  
 1 Watch-man, tell us of the night, what its signs of prom-ise are.  
 2 Watch-man, tell us of the night; high-er yet that star as-cends.  
 3 Watch-man, tell us of the night, for the morn-ing seems to dawn.

  
 Trav-eler, what a won-drous sight: see that glo-ry-beam-ing star.  
 Trav-eler, bless-ed - ness and light, peace and truth its course por - tends.  
 Trav-eler, shad-ows take their flight; doubt and ter - ror are with-drawn.

  
 Watch-man, does its beau-teous ray news of joy or hope fore - tell?  
 Watch-man, will its beams a - lone gild the spot that gave them birth?  
 Watch-man, you may go your way; has-ten to your qui - et home.

  
 Trav-eler, yes; it brings the day, prom-ised day of Is - ra - el.  
 Trav-eler, a - ges are its own; see, it bursts o'er all the earth.  
 Trav-eler, we re - joice to - day, for Em - man - u - el has come!

*\*May be sung antiphonally.*

This unusual dialogue hymn alternates between the voice of a traveler and that of a watchman, setting up an exchange that creates parallels between the coming of dawn and the birth of Christ. The tune is named for a Welsh town whose name means "mouth of the bending river."

# What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright 152

Capo 2: (C) (Am) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G) (C) (F)  
D Bm A D G D A D G



1 What star is this, with beams so bright, more  
2 'Tis now ful - filled what God de - creed, "From  
3 While out - ward signs the star dis - plays, an  
4 O Je - sus, while the star of grace im -

(C) (G) (C) (F) (C) (G)  
D A D G D A



love - ly than the noon - day light? 'Tis  
Ja - cob shall a star pro - ceed"; and  
in - ward light the Lord con - veys and  
pels us on to seek your face, let

(Am) (D7) (G) (C) (F) (C) (Dm)  
Bm E7 A D G D Em



sent to an - nounce a new - born king, glad  
lo! the east - ern sa - ges stand to  
urg - es them, with ten - der might, to  
not our sloth - ful hearts re - fuse the

(G) (C) (G) (C) (F) (G) (C)  
A D A D G A D



ti - dings of our God to bring.  
read in heaven the Lord's com - mand.  
seek the giv - er of the light.  
guid - ance of your light to use.

This 18th-century Latin text calls attention to three kinds of light: the light of the star leading the Magi to the Christ-child, the inward light inspiring their journey, and Christ who is the Light of the world. The simple unison melody unites everything in a gentle arc.