



# Red Clay Creek

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT / SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 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.**

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

One: Today we light the candle of peace, remembering the star that guided travelers through unfamiliar lands. Even when the road was long and the night was quiet, that light reassured them: Do not be afraid. Keep going.

**Many: May this light calm our anxious hearts and steady our steps with your peace.**

One: In every generation, your people have lifted their eyes, seeking signs of your promise. You come to us again, O God - not with fear, but with peace that passes understanding.

*(continued)*

**Many:** Shine upon us, Holy One. Show us the way of peace as we follow the star of Christ.

*(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 peace, as this candle burns, may its soft glow remind us that true peace comes from you alone. Quiet our spirits, calm our worries, and help us walk in the way of your peace.

**Many:** Amen.

\*HYMN 113

**Angels We Have Heard on High**

\*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

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 1:39-56

SERMON

Follow the Star: More Than Neighbors

Kim Eppehimer

HYMN 129

**Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming**

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      Et exultavit (from "Magnificat")

J. S. Bach

*Et exultavit spiritus meus in Deo salutari meo*  
And my spirit has rejoiced in God my savior

\*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

SEND

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

GRACIOUS INVITATION TO THE TABLE

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

One:      The Lord be with you.

**Many:    And also with you.**

One:      Lift up your hearts.

**Many:    We lift them up to the Lord.**

One:      Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Many:    It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

One:      In the beginning, O God... Therefore, with all who have followed  
Your light in every age and place, we join our voices and say:

**Many:    Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and love, Heaven and earth  
are full of Your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One  
who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

*All are welcome to the table! This morning the congregation is served in procession. Those seated  
in the pews at the front of the sanctuary begin the procession when directed by ushers.  
For those unable to process forward, stay seated and a server will bring the sacrament to you.*

*All bread is gluten-free; please take a piece from the offered tray. Empty glasses are placed in the bowls provided near the communion servers.*

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Many: Holy God, You have fed us with grace and met us on the road.  
As we rise from this table, keep our eyes lifted toward Your  
promise, toward Your star, toward Your coming Light. Amen.**

\*HYMN 105

**People, Look East**

## BENEDICTION

## CHORAL BENEDICTION



We welcome Red Clay's very own Kim Eppheimer to the pulpit this morning! Kim serves as the CEO of Friendship House and Limen Recovery + Wellness. Friendship House is a Delaware nonprofit uniting people facing homelessness with loving, supportive communities they can call home. Kim cherishes the love, acceptance and compassion Friendship House staff shares with every person with whom they interact with every day. She is moved to action by the incredible injustice, stereotype and stigma experienced by those who are experiencing homelessness, suffering from poverty, or from being unhoused. She is committed to helping to make change in the social service system as well as how people perceive "homelessness." When she's not at Friendship House or with her family, Kim finds joy in running, listening to podcasts and reading.



Thanks to today's worship participants:

Chancel Choir, *Music Ministry*  
Hannah Hieronimus, *Soprano Soloist*; Deena Andrews, *Violinist*  
Bob Emmons, *Usher Captain*; Mary Norris, *Greeter*

The flowers today are given in honor of the birthdays of Jim Jeffers and Ed Norris,  
from Mary Norris and the Jeffers Family.

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



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. All are welcome, for Jesus gathers us together even as we divide ourselves by politics, denomination, or whatever labels the world puts on us. 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.rcpc.org](http://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 - 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 SPOTLIGHTS

### **(1) THIS AFTERNOON at 3 PM: Service of Light & Hope!**

A time of reflection and healing for those carrying burdens this season.  
Join us in the sanctuary at 3 pm for this special service.



### **(2) TONIGHT at 7 PM: Unplugged Coffeehouse: Folk Christmas**

Join us in Fellowship Hall at 7 pm as our coffeehouse series continues with guest artist Sharon Sable. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

## 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.





# 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.



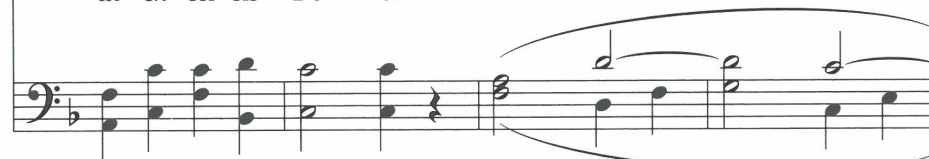
*Refrain*



Glo - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo -



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.)

