



Red Clay Creek

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT / SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025 / 10 AM

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 joy, remembering the star that drew wanderers from far-off places and filled them with delight. When they saw it shine, Scripture tells us, "they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy."

Many: May this light kindle joy within us—deep, steady, lasting joy that comes from you, O God.

One: Joy does not ignore the struggles of the world; it rises in the midst of them. It is the gift you give, shining like a star, calling us to lift our heads and remember your goodness.

(continued)

Many: Shine in our hearts, Holy One. Fill us with the joy of your presence 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 joy, as this candle burns, let its brightness remind us that joy is your gift to your people. Renew our spirits, lift our hearts, and let your joy be our strength.

Many: Amen.

*HYMN 133

O Come, All Ye Faithful

*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.”

MUSICAL OFFERING Carol of the Bells

At the conclusion, we look forward to welcoming all PreK-Kindergarten children to the nursery or their Sunday school classroom. Grade school children are invited to remain in the sanctuary.

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.*



*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

LISTEN

INTRODUCTION

Stations of the Crèche

Rev. Dr. Phillips

PRELUDE

Ceremony of Carols

Benjamin Britten

I. THE ANNUNCIATION

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:26-28

MUSICAL OFFERING

Mary, Did You Know?

REFLECTION

From an older neighbor of Mary

II. JOSEPH'S DREAM

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 1:18-21

MUSICAL OFFERING

The Cherry Tree Carol

REFLECTION

A lifelong friend and fellow carpenter

III. THE VISITATION

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:39-42

HYMN 100, vss. 1,2

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

REFLECTION

Elizabeth, older and wiser

IV. THE JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:1-5

MUSICAL OFFERING

Breath of Heaven

REFLECTION

A child who saw Mary and Joseph on the road

V. THE BIRTH OF JESUS

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:6-7

MUSICAL OFFERING

Jesus, What a Wonderful Child

REFLECTION

The stable hand who made space for the travelers

VI. THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:8-12

MUSICAL OFFERING

Sanctus

Fauré

*Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest.*

REFLECTION

One of the shepherds

VII. THE VISIT OF THE MAGI

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:7-12

HYMN 151, vs. 1

We Three Kings of Orient Are

REFLECTION

One of the Magi

SEND

*HYMN 134

Joy to the World

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



Thanks to today's worship participants:

Children's Choir, Orff Ensemble & Women's Ensemble, *Music Ministry*

Anne Sullivan, *Harpist*; Deena Andrews, *Violinist*

Rachele Gilmore, Charlie Hannagan, Barb Vanderkraats, *Soloists*

Ava Vordemberge, *Youth Liturgist*

Rick Marsey, *Usher Captain*; Susan Kissell, *Greeter*

The flowers today are given in loving memory of Darden & Lynn Rodden,
from Karen, Tim and Jean.

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 24th, 2025

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

ROOTS AND RAYS SERVICE CHALLENGE — Feb. 22nd–Mar. 22nd, 2026

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

HOLY WEEK 2026

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

KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN — April 26th, 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 7th, 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 6th, 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 25th, 2026 | 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 15th, 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.

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 and "The Arcaders" social group for GenX and Millennials. 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 - 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

Next Sunday, December 21— A Red Clay Family Christmas at 7:00 PM!

All are invited to join us in the sanctuary on December 21 at 7 pm for this holiday songfest. Following the event, we will have food (including a chocolate fountain!) and fellowship in Founders Hall.

All are welcome!

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.

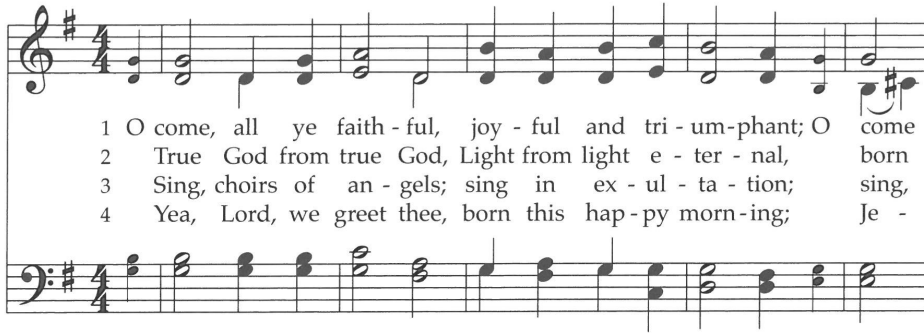
That is where the "**rays**" come in. We hope to extend our love, and the love we know from the graciousness of God, in many ways today. This means engaging in friendships with those that Jesus would have made friends with - those that feel isolated for any number of reasons. We know we will never be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

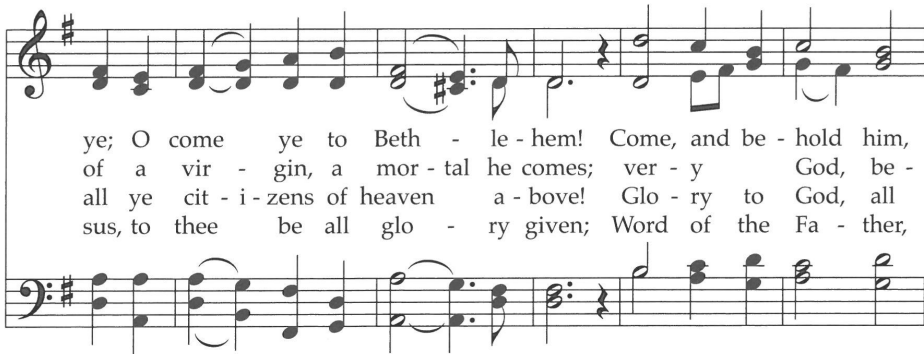


O Come, All Ye Faithful

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.

Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their songs
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na -

her king; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heaven and na - ture sing,

and
 sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,

While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.