



Red Clay Creek

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY / SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 2026 / 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

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: The Lord be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP

(from Isaiah 60)

One: Arise, God's people, and shine like the sun; the glory of the Lord is shining on you!

Many: Other people will be covered by the darkness, but on God's people the light of the Lord will shine;

One: The brightness of his presence will be with you.

Many: Nations will be drawn to the light upon God's people, and even kings will be drawn to the dawning of our new day.

One: Let God's people begin a new year worshipping Him who is the Light and Life of our salvation!

Many: Let us worship the Lord!

*HYMN 104

O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Timeless God, who can make all things new, we humbly bring before you the record of our lives in the year just ending.

Many: Where life has been good to us, do not let us take more of the credit than we deserve.

Where we have been good to others, help us to forget thoughts of honor and reward.

Where we have fallen short, forgive us, and free us from brooding over what is past.

Cleanse us by your mercy, guide us by your truth, fill us with your love, lead us forward in your all-conquering hope. Through the grace of Jesus, your son, our Savior. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Hear this Good News from the Apostle Paul: our old lives are gone; new lives emerge! All this comes from the God who settled the relationship between us and him, and then called us to settle our relationships with each other. God put the world square with himself through Jesus Christ, giving the world a fresh start by offering forgiveness of sins. Friends, Jesus gives us a new start today in our New Year, for in Him, our sins are forgiven.

*SUNG RESPONSE We Three Kings of Orient Are

***We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!***

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

CHILDREN’S MOMENT & THE LORD’S PRAYER

The Magi followed a star—not knowing the whole journey, only trusting the next step. Today you’ll receive a star with a word on it. This Star Word may be a word you need, a word to grow into, or a word God is offering as light for your path in the year ahead.

At the conclusion, we look forward to welcoming all children through 8th grade to the nursery or their Sunday school classes, as the congregation prepares to hear the sermon.

MUSICAL OFFERING

PRAYER

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



*SUNG 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 545

Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace

LISTEN

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:25-34

SERMON

Theme Song

Rev. Dr. Phillips

SEND

*HYMN 152

What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright

*BENEDICTION



Thanks to today's worship participants:

Deena Andrews, *Music Ministry*

Lois Galinat, *Usher Captain*

Karen Beare, *Greeter*

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

The flowers today are given Mother, Patricia and Grandmother, Sophie,
on their birthday, with love from Joe Sarjeant.

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 & Events* during the coming year.

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.

CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE — December 24th, 2026

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

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

REACH RETREAT!

Friday, Jan. 9 (7-9 PM) & Saturday, Jan. 10 (9 AM-12 PM)

We're excited to invite you to a special Reach Retreat on Jan. 9 & 10, led by Edwin Estévez. After more than 3 years of faithful, creative leadership in our outreach ministry, it's the right moment to take a thoughtful, fresh look at how Red Clay engages our community. This retreat will give us dedicated time to reflect, dream, and reimagine our mission so we can take our outreach to the next level. **All are welcome** as we discern together where God is calling us next. It is our hope that you will be able to attend both sessions but encourage you to sign up even if you can only attend one.

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 Lord, How Shall I Meet You 104




1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel-come you a - right?
2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me;
3 You come, O Lord, with glad - ness, in mer - cy and good-will,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro-cured my lib - er - ty.
to bring an end to sad - ness and bid our fears be still.



O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, a lamp with - in my breast,
O love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
In pa - tient ex - pec - ta - tion we live for that great day



to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
in love, all loves ex - cel - ling, our lost and fal - len race.
when your re - newed cre - a - tion your glo - ry shall dis - play.

Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, this more contemplative text considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ's coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.

Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace 545

Song of Simeon

1 Lord, bid your ser - vant go in peace; your
2 This is the Sav - ior of the world, the

The first system of musical notation is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a treble and bass staff. The melody in the treble staff is a simple, stepwise line. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

word is now ful - filled. These eyes have seen sal -
Gen - tiles' prom - ised light, God's glo - ry dwell - ing

The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are split across two lines. The musical notation remains consistent with the first system, using a treble and bass staff.

va - tion's dawn, this child so long fore - told.
in our midst, the joy of Is - ra - el.

The third system concludes the piece. The melody in the treble staff ends with a final cadence. The bass staff also concludes with a final chord. The lyrics are split across two lines.

This unrhymed 20th-century paraphrase by a Scottish Jesuit gives fresh immediacy to the Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32) and recaptures something of that aged priest's sense of wonder in beholding the infant Christ. The shape note tune enhances the text's down-to-earth quality.

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.