



CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2023 at 3 PM

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.

GATHER

PRELUDE

Away in a Manger
Gentle Mary Laid Her Child
God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlefolk
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
O Come, Christmas Joy
Over the Hills

*CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.**

**Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.**

*CALL TO WORSHIP & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

One: Hope is:
Many: Trusting that there is light, even in the dark.
One: Peace is:
Many: The wolf lying down with the lamb.
One: Joy is:
Many: Contagious sounds of Alleluia.
One: Love is:
Many: Unquenchable, never-ending, born in a manger, here today.
One: Christmas is:
Many: A love song to the world; the light that shines in the darkness.
One: Let us make a joyful noise! Let us worship God.

*CAROL

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.

One: Let us pray. We welcome your presence now with the lighting of this candle whose flame brings warmth to winter and fills this place with the glow of hope.

Many: Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING

What Child is This?

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST TOLD

We give thanks for everyone participating in our pageant this evening! If your child would like to participate and has not received a costume, please have them come to the back of the sanctuary. Cues in the bulletin will show when they should come to the manger. You will have an opportunity to take photos of your children at the conclusion of the pageant.

PART I: MARY AND JOSEPH

(Joseph, Mary and baby Jesus come to the manger as the congregation sings.)

CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary and, gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.

PART II: ANIMALS

(Sheep, cows and other animals come to the manger as the congregation sings.)

CAROL

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging, angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you.

PART III: ANGELS

(Angels come to the manger as the congregation sings.)

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

PART IV: SHEPHERDS

(Shepherds come to the manger as the congregation sings.)

CAROL

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!
While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.
Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

PART V: WISE PERSONS AND STAR

(Wise persons and the Star come to the manger as the congregation sings.)

CAROL

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!**

**Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!**

PART VI: CONCLUSION

CAROL

Away in a Manger

**Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.**

*(At this time, parents are welcome to take photographs of your children in the pageant
before participants return to their seats.)*

PASSING OF THE PEACE

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

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 2:1-14

HOMILY

Let Us Ring Bells

Phillips

RESPOND

CALL TO THE OFFERING

This Christmas Eve, all cash offerings put in the plate will go directly to the Roots & Rays Fund, which will support our January 7th Rise Against Hunger meal packing event. RAH sends out millions of meals every year to children in food insecure countries around the world. We hope you will give generously tonight and consider joining us for the event after worship on January 7.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Christmas Lullaby

LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS & THE LORD'S PRAYER

- One: All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Alleluia!
- Many: Shout to the Lord, all the earth. Alleluia!**
- One: O Christ, splendor of God's eternal glory, the mighty Word, sustaining the universe: Renew our lives by your presence.
- Many: Lord, have mercy.**
- One: O Christ, born into the world in the fullness of time for the liberation of all creation: Release all into your promised freedom.
- Many: Lord, have mercy.**
- One: O Christ, begotten of the Father before all time, born in a stable at Bethlehem: May your church be a sign of hope and joy.
- Many: Lord, have mercy.**
- One: O Christ, truly God and truly human, born to a people in fulfillment of their expectations: Fulfill our desires in you.
- Many: Lord, have mercy.**
- One: O Christ, born of the Virgin Mary, child of wonder and splendor, mighty God of all ages, Prince of Peace: may the whole world live in peace and justice.
- Many: Lord, have mercy.**
- [*Moment for silent prayer*]*
- One: All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Teach us to proclaim the birth of your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, and who taught us to pray, saying,

Many: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

*CAROL

Joy to the World

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.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

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.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

*BENEDICTION

*POSTLUDE

Angel Tidings



Thanks to this evening's worship participants:
Bell Choir, *Music Ministry*

Rick Marsey, *Usher Captain*

Madelyn Haggerty, Brooke Kennedy, Cole Kennedy,
& Lily Phillips, *Pageant Liturgists*

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.

To learn more, check out the church website at www.rccpc.org for a calendar of events and for more on the history and other information about our church!



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

CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE — December 24th, 2023

- ◆ Family Service with Impromptu Pageant | 3PM
- ◆ Holy Night Service with Candlelight | 8PM
- ◆ Candlelight & Communion | 11PM

JANUARY SERVICE CHALLENGE 2024

A month-long service effort that directs our intention to the needs of our community at the beginning of every year.

HOLY WEEK 2024

- ◆ Palm Sunday — March 24th | 10AM
- ◆ Maundy Thursday — March 28th | 7PM
- ◆ Good Friday — March 29th | 12PM
- ◆ Easter Sunday — March 31st | 10AM

KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN — April 21st, 2024 | 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 2nd, 2024 | 10AM

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

HOMEcoming SUNDAY — September 8th, 2024 | 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 27th, 2024 | 10AM

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

ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY — November 17th, 2024 | 10AM

We give thanks for God's many blessings and the rich history of over 300 years.

WELCOME TO RED CLAY

For LARGE print 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. . We hope you will worship with us again soon at one of our Sunday morning 10 AM services! 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.

Children: Nursery care is available on Sunday mornings from 9:45 am 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 for Sunday School.

LEARN MORE

Check out the church website at www.rccpc.org for a calendar of events and for more on the history and other information about our church!

UPCOMING EVENT SPOTLIGHT

Celebrate the last day of 2023 with worship and be thankful for all of the blessings of this past year, while looking with hope to 2024. Join us in the sanctuary on Sunday morning, December 31, at 10 AM!

RED CLAY CREEK PRESBYTERIAN — MINISTERS, STAFF & CHAIRS

Rev. Dr. Nathaniel D. Phillips, *Senior Pastor/Head of Staff*

Rev. Emily Schwenker, *Parish Associate*

Jeffrey Miller, *Director of Music*

Barbara Vanderkaats, *Assistant Director of Choral 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*

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* ♦ Marcia Kelly, *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*

Anne Ceres, *Community Partners*

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.





The 2024 *Roots & Rays* Service Challenge begins January 2. Take the challenge!

The Roots & Rays Service Challenge is a yearly month-long initiative, that was born in January of 2023 for the purposes of engaging our congregation and greater community in meaningful and creative service to those in need in our area and beyond. Rooted in our devotion to putting the words of Matthew 25: 34-36 into action, we look to feed, clothe, care for, and visit those who could use a loving hand. We believe that our annual Service Challenge is an incredible tool for bringing our congregation together in service, and also for connecting us in friendship to other local churches and to the outside community.

We hope that you will join us and serve in anyway you can, no matter how big or small. Throughout the month, we will be hosting a Baby Supply Giveaway, a Rise Against Hunger meal packing event after worship, a Blood Bank of Delmarva blood drive, an MLK Youth Service Day, volunteer sessions at the Food Bank of Delaware and Friendship House Clothing Bank, and much more!

**For details on all service events and how
to sign up visit:**

www.rccpc.org/serve

