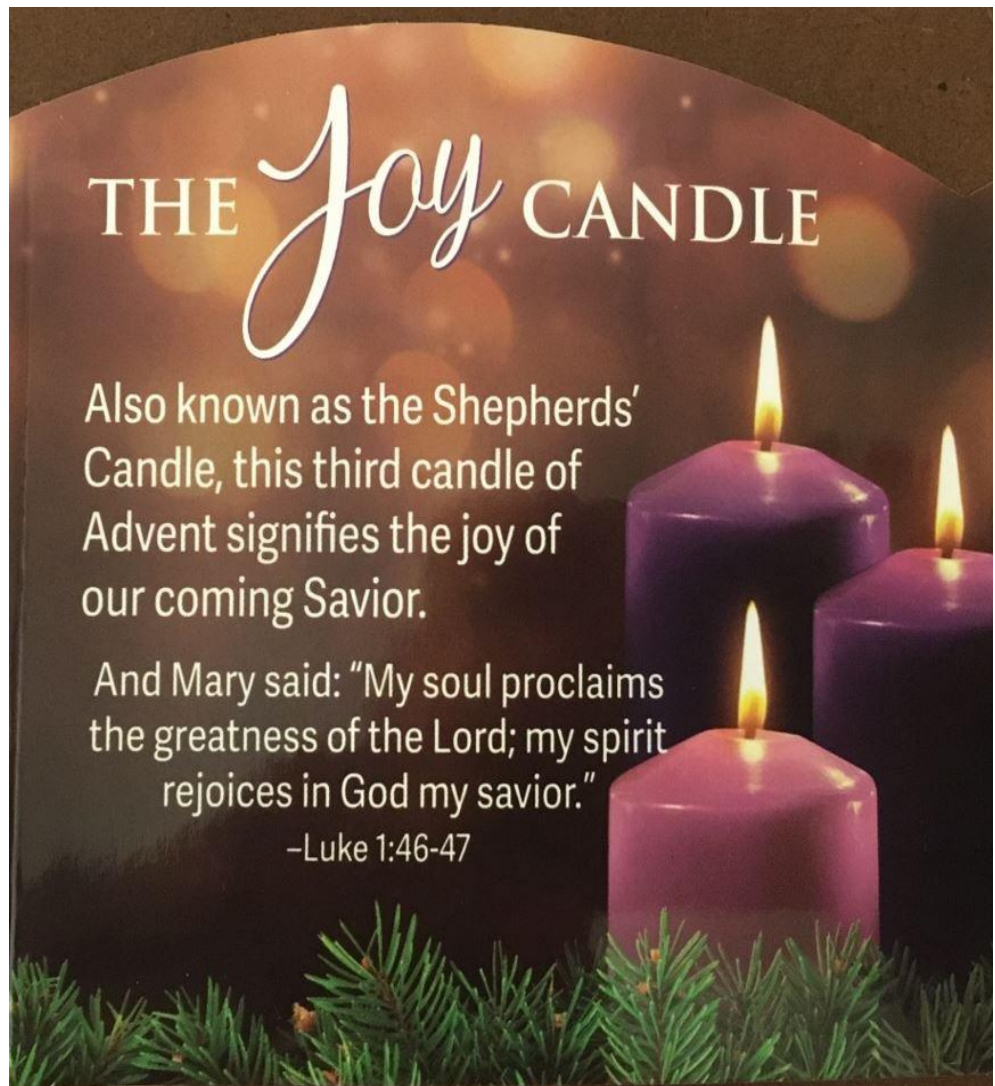


Rock Lake Presbyterian Church
Celebrating 76 years of "Shining Christ's Light"

December 14, 2025
Email: rocklakepreschurch@gmail.com
website: www.rlpc.org



Welcome to Rock Lake Presbyterian Church

Here are a few tips to help you participate:

"*" Invites all who are able to stand.

Bold type invites reading or singing by the congregation.

Italic type invites silent reading by the congregation.

Large print hymnals are available from the usher.

Please return hymnals after the service.

THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

Third Sunday in Advent

December 14, 2025

Gathering

THE CHIMES CALL US TO WORSHIP

PRELUDE

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People"
Chorale and Variation

Arr. Robert Lau

...For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, calling us to true repentance, since the reign of God is here.

O, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way. Let the valleys rise in meeting and the hills bow down in greeting...

THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Ron Rogillio

INTROIT

Come Lord Jesus...O come quickly.

Matthew How

*CALL TO WORSHIP

A voice cries in the wilderness,

"Prepare the way of the Lord; make God's way clear."

Jesus came to us once and promised to come again.

So we wait with joy, keeping alert for the day of his returning.

Singing: #137 **He came down that we may have joy,
He came down that we may have joy,
He came down that we may have joy,
Hallelujah forevermore.**

We light this candle in joy. We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

*OPENING HYMN #106

"Prepare the Way"

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

...reign of peace through your just and gracious rule. **Amen.**

OPENING OURSELVES TO GOD #466

"Come and Fill Our Hearts"

**Come and fill our hearts with your peace. You alone, O Lord, are holy.
Come and fill our hearts with your peace. Alleluia!**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of hope, God of arrival, the days are coming, and your promise is arriving,
yet we struggle to wait.
The world is at war and our cities are full of violence.
Turn us back to your peace.
We sing “Gloria in excelsis Deo,” but our hearts are burdened by grief and despair.
Turn us back to your joy.
We heed the summons of John and bring our fractured world to you for healing.
Forgive us, Lord.**

*Silence for personal confession. God’s people say **Amen.***

ASSURANCE OF FORIVENESS

Receive now these words of assurance: The God who formed us and keeps us in love is always drawing near in Christ, bringing life and salvation to all. Rest in this promise: Christ has come, Christ is coming, and Christ will come again. Let us rest in his forgiving grace. **Amen.**

SUNG RESPONSE #87 “Comfort, Comfort Now My People” Stanza one

**“Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!” So says our God.
“Comfort those who sit in darkness mourning under sorrow’s load.
To my people now proclaim that my pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their sins I cover, and their warfare now is over.”**

ANTHEM

“O Come, Divine Messiah”

Arr Stephen DeCesare

O come, divine Messiah; the world in silence waits the day when hope shall sing its triumph and sadness flee away. Dear Savior, haste! Come, come to earth, dispel the night and show your face, and bid us hail the dawn of grace. O come..

O Christ, whom nations sigh for, whom priest and prophet long foretold, come, break the captive’s fetters, redeem the long-lost fold. Dear Savior, haste!...

You come in peace and meekness and lowly will your cradle be; all clothed in human weakness shall we your God-head see. Dear Savior, haste!...

Listening to the Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Mighty God, send your Holy Spirit to speak peace, that the good news of this age may be proclaimed through your word, which stands forever. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Mark 1:1-8

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. **2** As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, **3** the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,’ ” **4** so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. **5** And

the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Goat Walking to Bethlehem"

The Rev. Dr. Patricia Jarvis

Responding to God

*HYMN #163

"Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice"

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made...

...He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

Excerpt from the Nicene Creed

JOYS & CONCERNS

If you would like to share a joy or concern, we would like to hear it. In order to hear it, please raise your hand and a microphone will be brought to you.

PASTORAL PRAYER and LORD'S PRAYER

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.

Going Forth to Serve

*HYMN #384

"Soon and Very Soon"

*BENEDICTION

The day of the Lord is coming; therefore strive to live in hope and peace and joy. May the blessing of God, Eternal Majesty, Living Word, and Holy Comforter, be with you now and always. **Amen.**

*DEPARTING SONG

"Gloria in excelsis Deo!"

Greet one another in peace as you depart

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Church Notes

WORSHIP LEADERS:

Liturgist: Jackie Thompson
Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Patricia Jarvis
Music Director: Marilyn Padon
Organist: Pam Ferrell

ASSORTED ADVENT DEVOTIONALS are available on the Narthex table outside the main doors.



THE ADVENT BELL you receive each Sunday in Advent is for your prayers. If you want to hang the bell, you may use the clothespins on the line.

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE – Thursday, December 18 at noon – for many people, the approaching Christmas holiday does not bring with it the joy and happiness that is advertised on television or in greeting cards, you may be facing a holiday after the death of a loved one or after a divorce. Perhaps you have been unable to have a child or have suffered through an emotional trauma or illness or perhaps you feel pressured and overwhelmed by holiday preparations. This service is for you. Please join us.

PLEASE REMEMBER the Shepherd's Run cookie preparation next Sunday, December 21 following worship. Bring your dozen cookies to the parlor, where we will package the cookies for delivery on Christmas Eve to first responders, caregivers, local hospitals. Thank you for your generosity!

Oakwood Terrace Christmas Project Update - Final delivery to apartments will be on Sunday, December 21 starting at 2:00 pm. However, Rock Lake's responsibility starts at 3:00 pm since we have the second shift. We will be in an apartment on Leslie Road where Santa Claus will hand out the gift bags and talk to the children. Residents will be scheduled to the apartment so that there is an even flow of residents for about an hour. We will need about 4 elves to assist in moving the gift bags from vehicles to Santa and moving gift bags into storage for residents who are unable to stop by. Volunteers are needed.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE join us for 'Lessons & Carols' at 7pm. Bring your family and friends!



Women's Circle – especially Merrily, Taylor, and Ed Bailey for their work on Pastor Patricia's Luncheon.

Christmas Joy Offering

JOYFUL SHARING

Did you know? The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

Envelopes are in the pews for you to make an offering.

This special offering concludes on Sunday, December 21.

IMPORTANT NOTICE!

Donors must deliver checks on or by midnight December 31, 2025 in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2025. Checks that are in the offering during the first worship service in 2026 will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2025, even if the check was actually written in 2025. However, under the so-called "mailbox exception," checks that are mailed and postmarked in 2025 will be deductible in 2025 though they are not received by the church until 2026. You may give checks or cash directly to the treasurer, place it in the treasurer's box in the office or place in the church's mailbox (Village Drive side of the church). All boxes will be checked after midnight, December 31.

If you are over 75, please consider making a direct transfer for a portion of your Required Minimum Distribution for the year to Rock Lake. This has great tax implications for you. Giving securities (stocks, mutual funds, etc.) that have appreciated in value can be very helpful from a tax standpoint. If you give appreciated securities directly to Rock Lake, you will not have to pay capital gains taxes on them and you will still be able to take a charitable deduction on your income tax return. These are a wonderful way of channeling some of your resources into a work in which you believe. Please contact your financial advisor and church treasurer for further information regarding this form of giving.

2026 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

As of this writing (December 9, 2025), with 19 families responding,
the 2026 total commitment is \$108,680.

Of these families, 13 have increased their commitments from 2025!

Thank you to all members and friends who have returned
commitments for 2026!

If you have not yet responded, won't you please take a few moments to
prayerfully consider how you can help Rock Lake Church *Shine Christ's Light*
by supporting our ministries!

Returning your commitment card will reduce the number of follow-up
contacts which the Stewardship Task Force must make.

We need to hear from all our members and friends so we can plan for 2026.
If you need a commitment card, please call Ken Schmidt (304-768-8565
or 304-881-2408).

We invite you to join us in worship each Sunday in the Sanctuary.
If you cannot attend in person, subscribe to Rock Lake Presbyterian Church
on YouTube. Worship each Sunday is at 10:00 am ET. If you need a printed
bulletin, call the church office at 304-768-4141 between 9:30 and
11:30 am ET, Monday through Friday.

And may God bless you this Advent season!

Ken Schmidt, chair, Stewardship Task Force

Prayer List

*To add/remove/correct names on the prayer list,
please call the church office (768-4141) or email rocklakepreschurch@gmail.com*

Prayers of Joy

Prayers for Concerns – Our friends and neighbors and their families

Larry Graham
Mary Graham
Emily Holton
Ravi Isaiah
Cheryl Laws

Hollie McCraw
Rick McGuire
Don Shroder
Bill Wagner
Mike Whitten

Family and friends of Greg
Bishop on the occasion of his
death. Greg was the son of
Gene and Day Bishop.

We pray for peace in the world. We pray for our world leaders to do what is right and just. We pray for all the people in the world who are affected by war: The children, the common person, the armies, the leaders. Grant us courage and grace during the coming weeks.

- Praying for peace in the Ukraine/Russia conflict and the Israel/Hamas conflict and all conflict around the globe. Grant us peace!
- Climate change as evidenced by more severe and deadly storms, fires, floods, and prolonged heat waves locally, nationally, and globally. These events are causing large numbers of injuries and deaths of people, disruptions of food supplies, and many animal & plant species to greatly diminish and even go extinct

Prayers for our Military

Brett Baker
Jeff Barker
Brent Bishop

Evan Chaney
Nigel Jeffries

All who are serving, who have been injured and the families who have lost someone in combat; those who live and serve on the Korean Peninsula and other nations in that region of the world; our troops facing terrorist attacks.

Prayers for those in Senior Residential Centers - Betty Berry, Edgewood Summit; Jackie Pauley, Valley Center

Prayers for those at Home –Joel Callison, Bonnie Cheely, Anita Wehrmann

Prayer List for Churches: First Presbyterian Church, Whitesville; Highlawn Presbyterian Church, St. Albans; Philip Nganatha Memorial Church (GAHN'ah-thah); Wandumbi Parish (Wah-DOH'bee)