New Covenant Connection
New Covenant Presbyterian Church

The Story Behind "Rock of Ages"

Dear friends,

As I was preparing worship for our May 31st worship service before I left on vacation, I came upon the suggestion of using the hymn, ***Rock of Ages,*** in this worship service. And so I took the time to learn more about the background and history of this hymn. And I believe that we can learn a lot of good about the Christian life from the hymns we sing.

Rock of Ages was written by Augustus Montague Toplady, and that is his real name! He was born in 1740 in England, he grew up in an Anglican home, but was converted at the age of 16 in a barn in Ireland. He even commented on this later in his life, saying how strange it was that he who grew up in such a distinguished church, would be converted or saved under the preaching of somebody who probably couldn't even spell his own name.

He ended up studying theology and was ordained as an Anglican priest at the age of 22. He had a long career as a priest and he was much loved and revered, known as a very serious and fiery man who was deeply committed to the ways of God.

He was born into the era of the Wesleys, when the Methodist movement was sweeping through England. Initially, Toplady was very excited by this movement. He really took to what the Wesleys were preaching and was very blessed by what they did. But then he changed his mind, because theologically he started to disagree with them.

The Wesleys spoke about free will, about how individuals would have to choose Jesus. Toplady, on the other hand, came to believe that God chooses us and we've got no power to choose him or not = Calvinist thinking. The Wesleys believed in perfection, Christian perfection, that you could live a truly holy life. Toplady, much like any Calvinist, believed you're stained by sin until you're glorified. *~continued~*

2026

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR 1

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A Note From Our Pastor (Cont'd)

Toplady and Wesley became enemies of a sort. Toplady wrote some very demeaning things about Wesley, calling him a devil and a worker of Satan, and Wesley responded by publishing material saying disparaging things about Toplady. And so the feud began.

It's actually quite ironic that Toplady's famous hymn, *Rock of Ages*, was probably a sort of plagiarized version of a Wesley hymn that was published 30 years before he wrote and published *Rock of Ages*. The preface to this hymn book said this:

"O Rock of Israel, Rock of Salvation, Rock struck for me, let those two streams of blood and water which once gushed out of thy side bring down pardon and holiness into my soul, and let me thirst after them now as if I stood upon the mountain whence sprang this water, and near the cleft of that rock, the wounds of my Lord, whence gushed the sacred blood."

It's very likely that Toplady based his hymn on those words. They're the only words of that sort of description that had been published up to that point. And yet, there is another story that is often associated with *Rock of Ages*. The story goes that Toplady was walking around one day when a huge storm blew in from nowhere. He was looking around for shelter because lightning and thunder was crashing about. He looked over and saw a big rock with a split in it, and so he ran and stood in the cleft of that rock. As he stood there, the words to this hymn came to mind: *Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in Thee*. The legend goes that he looked around and found a playing card lying about, picked it up and wrote that line on it, so that he would remember it.

It's a great story, but many say that it's not true. In fact, some sources point out that this story only began circulating 30 or 40 years after Toplady had died, so it was most probably just a legend. And yet, the song became an instant classic and was sung for many years in worship services. People were singing this hymn because it so beautifully summarizes the gospel message.

Unfortunately, Toplady sadly died from tuberculosis as a young man at the age of 38. He had health issues and died far too young. But just look at these final words of Toplady's, and you can get a sense of where his heart resided when he knew he was close to death. He said*: "My heart beats every day stronger and stronger for glory. Sickness is no affliction, pain no cause, death itself no dissolution. My prayers are now all converted to praise."*

Of course, he lives on in glory, but on Earth he lives on through the words of this great song. May each of you learn to listen and fully appreciate all the great Christian hymns with which we have been blessed.

Your partner in ministry,

Carol

JUNE 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 Lunch at Vietri 222 Bohemia Ave, Ches. City @ 12	4	5 Our Daily Bread	6
7 Communion & Offering for ODB	8	9	10	11	12	13 Garden Party at the Shields @ 4
14 Trustee Mtg @ 11:30 am	15	16 Food Truck 5-7 pm	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Session Mtg. 10 am	25	26	27
28	29	30				

EVERY SUNDAY—WORSHIP AT 10 AM FOLLOWED BY FELLOWSHIP;
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION ON A SUMMER BREAK
BELL CHOIR—CHECK WITH JENNY FOR DATES/TIMES

6/5 First Friday @ Our Daily Bread
6/6 Don & Judy Cooke's Anniversary
6/7 2nd Sunday after Pentecost; Communion; ODB Offering
6/8 Barbara Montazella's Birthday
6/9 Food Truck Event 5-7pm
6/10 Barbara Bookhart's Birthday
6/11 Deacons' Meeting @ 10 am
6/14 3rd Sunday after Pentecost
Trustees' Meeting @ 11:30 am
6/18 Joyce Artysiewicz' Birthday
6/21 4th Sunday after Pentecost
6/23 Bob & Alice Megonigal's Anniversary
6/24 Session Meeting Cancelled
6/28 5th Sunday after Pentecost
Scott & Dottie Burkley's Anniversary

Clerk's Report & Announcements

The Stated Meeting scheduled for May 20, 2026 was cancelled due to the absence of Pastor Carol Fisher and Jane Adams.
Next Stated Session meeting will be June 24, 2026.

Upcoming New Castle Presbytery Events:
May 16 (Sat) Hybrid – Barbara Montazella & Carol Fisher attending
Sept 19 (Sat) Hybrid – Barbara Bookhart & Carol Fisher
Dec 1 (Tues) Zoom – Jane Adams & Carol Fisher attending

Presbytery Meeting: May 16th, 2026

- Installed new Assoc. Presbyters: Rev. Casey Carbone and Rev. Sarah Craven.
- Officially dissolved the Presbyterian Church of the Covenant and approved a new non-profit, "The Covenant Community Services" who will steward the building and provide space for ongoing ministries including the church's pre-school.
- Approved a new Administrative Commission to work with the Session and Congregation of the West Nottingham Presbyterian Church.

Membership: 43

Emails: Pastor: pastornewcov@gmail.com
Clerk: clerk.ncpc24@gmail.com
Office Administrator: newcov.office2@gmail.com

Yours in Christ,

Pat Wright, Clerk

Update on Cleaning of the Church

There continues to be a need for people to assist in cleaning the church. Currently we have consolidated the two teams into one, Janet Glaser, Pat Wright, Barbara Montazella and Pam Leeson, and are cleaning every three weeks. We are dealing with our aches and pains (after all we are in our seventies and eighties) but persist in this mission. We would welcome some new people to join us! As is said….many hands make light work. *Pam, Pat, Janet and Barbara*

FOOD TRUCK EVENTS

Thanks to all who came out for our Food Truck Event , Tuesday May 19th. Once again *Out of the Ordinary* did not disappoint! They will be returning on August 18th. Our June Food Truck Event will be on the 3rd Tuesday, June 16th from 5-7pm. It will be Tramonto Woodfired Pizza Food Truck. Delicious pizza will abound. Lets have a good turnout and invite friends and neighbors as well.

Worship & Christian Ed.

Some important dates to remember during June:

June 21st - Father's Day

Remember to give thanks for and let all the fathers and father figures in your life.

June 22nd - P.C,U.S.A. General Assembly begins

The biennial (every 2 years) meeting of the P.C.U.S.A. will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin this year. Our Co-Moderators are: Rev. Cecilia Armstrong and Rev. Tony Larson.
The General Assembly includes the gathering of committees who recommend actions to plenary sessions, opportunities to break bread through shared meals, educational opportunities, mo ments of public witness, and more.

June 19th - Juneteenth

Commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S. On June 19, 1865, Major General Gordon Grainger ordered the final enforcement of the ***Emancipation Proclamation*** in Texas following the end of the Civil War.

Barbara Montazella
Worship Elder

Christian Education Classes

We are pausing for a summer break in regard to our Christian Education Classes. We have been meeting every Sunday morning at 8:30 am and Tuesdays at 10:30 am. Our study's focus has been on Adam Hamilton's book study - *Moses, A Reluctant* Prophet. The group really enjoyed the book as well as the videos which gave us a bird's eye view of the lands of our faith and of the Bible.

Don't forget to keep on reading/studying/learning over the summer when you have free time. We are blessed to have many resources to help us grow in our discipleship. So, get busy bees and enjoy the summer!

Jane Adams,
Christian Education Elder

Mission Report

Our Daily Bread: We served 182 meals on First Friday in May. We will continue to prepare and serve our First Friday meal each month. Our July First Friday again falls on the July 4th holiday weekend so we are again (like last year) going to serve a lunch (instead of dinner) of Hot Dogs, Potato Salad, coleslaw and cookies. If anyone is available on that Friday and would like to join our team, please contact me (Pat Wright) at church or at newcov.office2@gmail.com.

The Neighborhood House: We continue to collect non-perishable food items for the food pantry at Neighborhood House. They provide food items for people in the community who have urgent need. They need a wide range of non-perishable items such as pasta, particularly spaghetti, and pasta sauces. In addition, there is always a need for simple items like peanut butter and Jelly.

Special Offerings: Our next PCUSA Special Offering will be the World Communion Offering which will begin in early September and continue through to World Communion Sunday on October 4th . We will discuss this in more detail in later newsletters. Our Treasurer, Carol L. McBride, has been able to get our collections from 2025 and early 2026 submitted to PCUSA. I thought you would like to know what all of you have done last year and early this year. I continue to be amazed at how generous all of you are:

Christmas Joy Offering : $622.00 (2025)

One Great Hour of Sharing: $1152.00 (2025, 2026)

Pentecost/Peace and Global Witness (World Communion): $773.25 (2025)

Operation Christmas Child

We will again have a *"Christmas In July Event"* on July 26th after worship service during fellowship hour. **Begin shopping now!!** (stuffed animals, dolls, small toys, jump rope, ball, yoyos, harmonica ect. Toothbrush, wash cloth, comb/brush, hair accessories, T-shirt, Socks, sunglasses. School supplies (crayons, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, small tablets/notebooks, coloring books etc.) Let's see if we can top our number from last year! Children around the world will come to know Jesus through this amazing project!

Pat Wright,

Mission Elder

Trustee Report

The Trustee Meetings are open to all and is normally scheduled each month on the 2nd Sunday after Church Service. Our next Trustee Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, 14 Jun 2026.

We are still looking at what we may want to do to increase the security around our property with all the construction going on around us.

Still need some landscaping in the main electrical connection in the middle of the grass area around the church. The bricks have been installed and all is good as far as it goes, but we need some flowers, or something in the middle. This is scheduled for Spring of 2026.

Reference the Church sign to let people know how to get into our church for the South on Jamison Corner Road, going through the development is a work in progress since there are some issues with New Castle County. At the present time we are trying to make contact with Blenheim Builders to see if the recommendations from New Castle County Land Use Department can be taken care of. This is with the help of our New Castle County Representative, Councilman Dave Carter.

We received another request to use our Parking Lot for a "FARMERS MARKET" for several days a week. This is being looked at and we will take action to Approve or Disapprove after a couple of questions have been answered.

We also received a request for the use of our parking lot for another Food Truck: "Shay's Seafood & Soul". They want a TRAIL set up for a few hours after Sunday service so members and families can grab food, fellowship, and spend more time together without having to leave to find lunch. Our Korean Church family has also been informed of this venture and they do not have a problem with this happening. Contact has also been made, via e-mail, to a few of our church members who are the ones that take care of us during our Fellowship period, to let them know that they could receive "time off" from making sure we have something to eat and clean up after our Fellowship period, which is greatly appreciated by all of us. Looking at sometime during Spring so we can socialize outside. More to come on this issue.

If there are any questions or comments you would like to make, please let us know. You can use my e-mail address: al.grimminger@icloud.com

Your Friendly Trustees,

Al Grimminger, Bill Shields, and Bob Megonigal

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

Taken from *Parish Publishing*

Almost everyone is familiar with how jigsaw puzzles work. You form a picture by assembling pieces that are cut so that they only fit together in one way. However, there's another type of puzzle, one in which all the pieces are the same shape, usually square. These pieces can fit together in an almost unlimited number of ways. It's necessary to focus on what the entire picture is to finish the puzzle.

In a way, stewardship of treasure is like the second type of puzzle. There are many different places we can use our treasures. Money will "fit" anywhere. However, the right picture can only be formed if we put our resources where God wants them to be. What does this mean for Christians? For most of us, it means budgeting carefully (for example, thinking before making an impulsive purchase). Most of all, it means trying to improve the lives of others and our own by giving back to God more of what He so graciously provides for us.

Barbara Bookhart, Finance & Stewardship Elder

Fin. Summary YTD 2026		**January-May**
Operating Revenue		
Revenue		**$67,984.17**
Expenditures		
Building/Property	$6,864.26	
Personnel	$43,040.52	
Other Expenses	$3,126.82	
Net Expenditures		**$53,031.60**
Net Operating Revenue		**$14,952.57**
Other Revenue (aka Special Funds)		
Fund	$780.00	
Passthrough	$370.20	
Net Other Revenue		**$1,150,20**
Change to Net Assets (aka Profit/Loss)		**$16,102.77**
Note: Actuals include In-kind Donations & Expense; Net Other Revenue 538 is the change to Fund Balances this year - Total Fund Balance is $58,783		

Deacon Ministry & Fellowship

The deacons strive to care for our congregation through our Shepherding Ministry and by providing fellowship events for us to build our community of faith. We encourage one and all to get involved so that we might all benefit from the gifts that we all have to share. Please let us know if we can be of help to you!

In May, many of us enjoyed dinner and attending *Jesus Christ Superstar* at the Everett. Many of our own were either in the play or helped out with directing and lights. Kudos to all who help to provide such entertainment in our little town!

In June, on the 3rd, we gather at Vietri for Lunch. Call Cheryl for details.

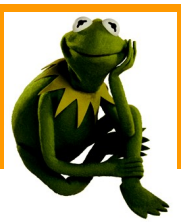
On the 13th - Garden Party at the Shields, beginning at 4 p.m. Come one and all!

Once again, Rich Goldberg will entertain us with his piano playing and singing. Come out and enjoy the oldies but goodies. All food is welcome. Consider giving Cheryl a call to see what might be needed.

Got any ideas for good Christian Fellowship? Let us know. There are a lot of new homes being built around the church. We need to do something to welcome and accommodate those moving in, both young and old. And remember, the deacons are here to serve YOU!

Skip Leeson and Cheryl Shields,
Your deacon leaders

Frog Corner



F.R.O.G. CORNER: *Forever Rely on God*

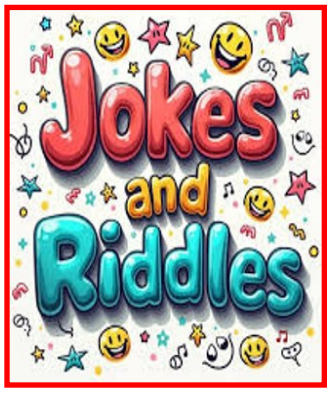
Don't forget the meaning behind the acronym **R I B B I T :**

Revere, ***I***nvite, ***B***less, ***I***nspire, and ***T***rust in the Lord.

Have you ever met a person you've been around who just keeps making you laugh? It's like they have a built-in joke machine in their brain and can make a quip at a moment's notice. Well what's really great about that is God is the one who placed it there. God intentionally made humorous people and, what's more, God intentionally made humor to be an ingrained part of life.

Just think about how many times a day a person laughs. Seriously, just try counting one day yourself. You'll notice there's not a single day that goes by that you don't laugh. As if it wasn't easy enough to fall in love with God. Just thinking about this often undeclared reality that God designed to be a part of daily life, makes you even more proud to be a believer.

You see, God takes joy seriously and sin takes that away from us, and if you have read the Bible, you can very easily see how seriously God takes sin. It's peace, love, and joy that God wants. That's simply WHO GOD IS! There's going to be constant smiling and laughter in Heaven, so why not begin celebrating NOW! We already have the gift of salvation, so why not ENJOY a part of life that God has made for us. God want us to be joyful so let's start today! Here are a few jokes for you:



Why did the Christian chicken go to the other side of the road? **To get a Cross.**

What do you call a priest who becomes a lawyer? **A father-in-law.**

Why wouldn't Pharoah let the Hebrews go? **He was in de-Nile.**

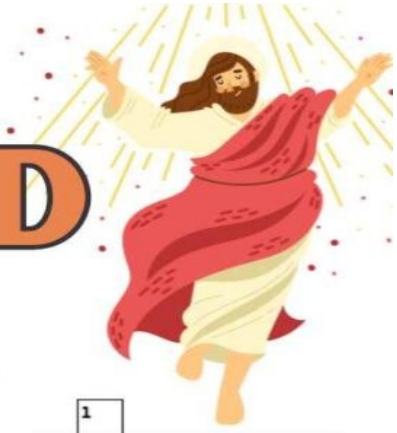
How many Christians does it take to change a light bulb? **We don't know. They are still standing in a circle praying for the light to come back on.**

I went to my pastor because I'm addicted to Facebook. My pastor said, "Sorry, I don't follow you."

Earlier in life, I was hunched over having problems with my posture. I didn't think prayer could help me, but now, I stand corrected.

Last year, my wife and I traveled to Europe for a Christian conference. At customs, an agent held out his hand and said, "Papers." I replied, "Scissors," and was glad I won that round.

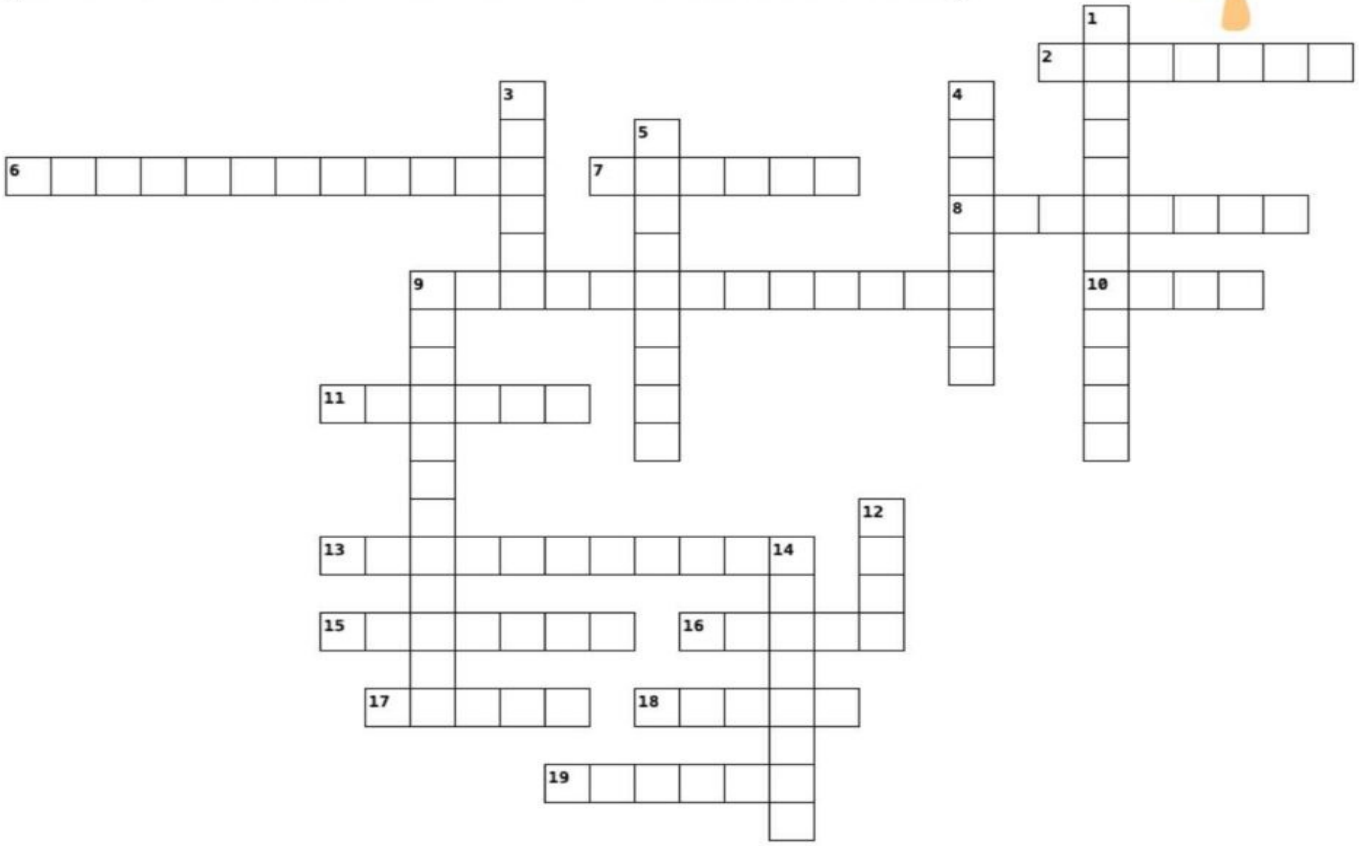
Puzzles



NAMES OF GOD

CROSSWORD

Explore the different names of God and their meanings.



ACROSS

2. A Latinized version of Yahweh
6. Means "The Lord will provide"
7. Hebrew name meaning "God" or "Creator"
8. Means "God with us"
9. Means "The Lord is peace"
10. Symbolizes God's strength and stability
11. Hebrew for "Lord" or "Master"
13. Shows God's sovereignty over all rulers
15. The promised Savior in the Bible
16. Represents "The End"
17. God is often described as the ____ of the world
18. Represents "The Beginning"
19. Jesus' role in bringing salvation

DOWN

1. Means "The Lord who heals"
3. The sacred name of God, meaning "I AM"
4. Jesus paid the price for our sins
5. Means "God Almighty"
9. Means "The Lord is my banner"
12. Aramaic for "Father," showing intimacy
14. Jesus is called the Good ____

(ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE)

Puzzles

CROSSWORD CLUES FOR THE NAMES OF GOD

YAHWEH	THE SACRED NAME OF GOD, MEANING “I AM.”
JEHOVAH	A LATINIZED VERSION OF YAHWEH
ELOHIM	HEBREW NAME MEANING “GOD” OR “CREATOR”
ADONAI	HEBREW FOR “LORD” OR “MASTER”
ABBA	ARAMAIC FOR “FATHER,” SHOWING INTIMACY
EL SHADDAI	MEANS “GOD ALMIGHTY”
JEHOVAH JIREH	MEANS “THE LORD WILL PROVIDE”
JEHOVAH RAPHA	MEANS “THE LORD WHO HEALS”
JEHOVAH NISSI	MEANS “THE LORD IS MY BANNER”
JEHOVAH SHALOM	MEANS “THE LORD IS PEACE”
ALPHA	REPRESENTS “THE BEGINNING”
OMEGA	REPRESENTS “THE END”
SHEPHERD	JESUS IS CALLED THE GOOD SHEPHERD
EMMANUEL	MEANS “GOD WITH US”
KING OF KINGS	SHOWS GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY
LIGHT	GOD IS OFTEN DESCRIBED AS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD
ROCK	SYMBOLIZED GOD’S STRENGTH AND STABILITY
REDEEMER	JESUS PAID THE PRICE FOR OUR SINS
MESSIAH	THE PROMISED SAVIOR IN THE BIBLE
SAVIOR	JESUS’ ROLE IN BRINGING SALVATION