

Board of Publications: Sunday School Rally Day

In 1839, the General Assembly established the Board of Publications to “publish such works, permanent and periodical, as are adapted to promote sound learning and true religion.” As part of the burgeoning Sunday School movement, the board began publishing and distributing educational literature in the mid-1850s. To indicate its expanding interests, in 1887 the board reorganized as the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work.

Along with its publishing efforts, the board developed programs such as Rally Day. Held in the fall, Rally Day helped bring students and teachers together after the summer break and operated as a systematic canvass for new students. Using Rally Day invitation postcards, teachers visited children in their neighborhood and invited them to attend Sunday school.

In addition to the postcards, the board created Rally Day programs such as the one pictured here. According to the 1916 program, “More and more the Sunday School societies are appreciating the value of a vigorous start in the fall, and this is made possible by the observation of Rally Day. ‘Our society made a splendid start’ is a general comment.”

These programs included songs such as “We rally today to honor our King” along with other musical selections. Rally Day provided not only an outreach opportunity, but also an occasion for celebration.

Cover Image: “The Light of Life: Rally Day Program 1916,” Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work, 1916.

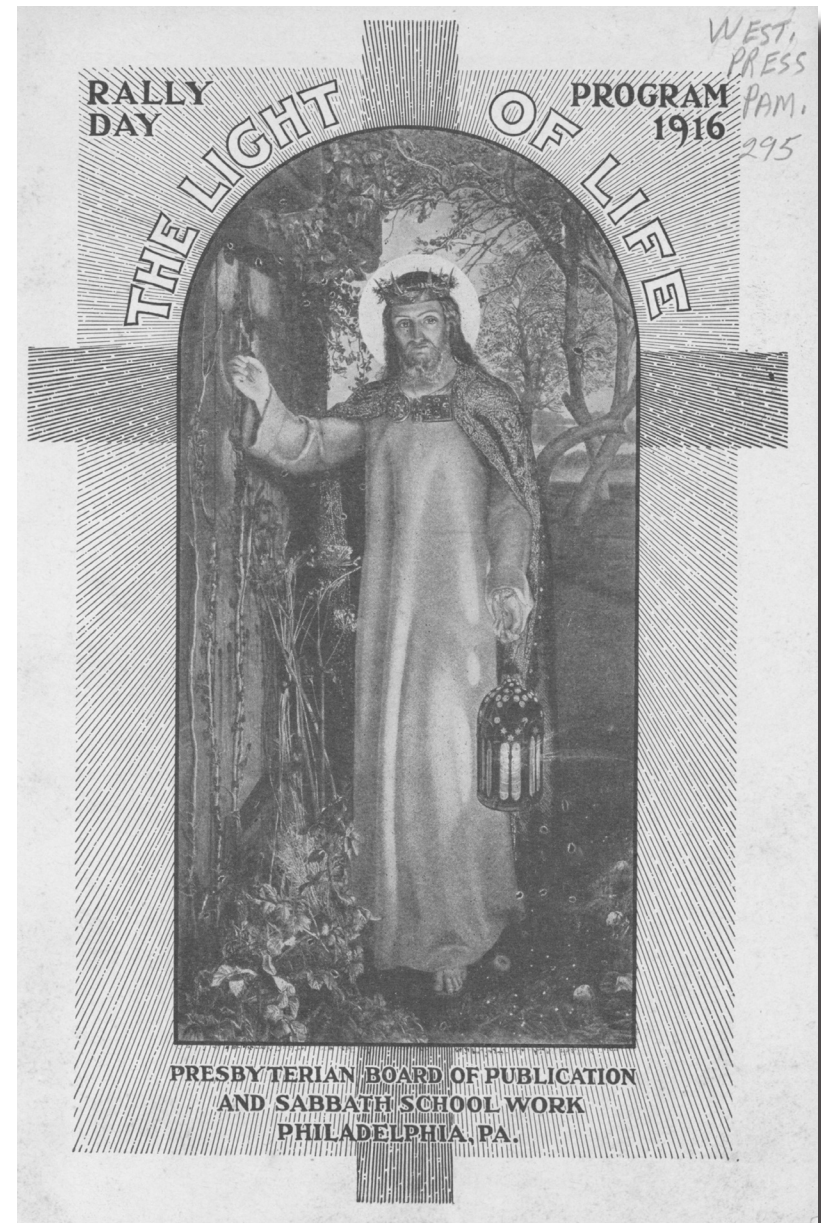
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Presbyterian Heritage Sunday



“For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20, NRSV