

December 17, 2017

Third Sunday of Advent

Led by the Holy Spirit, LaGrave's members seek to worship and serve God in all of life, transforming His world and being transformed to reflect the character of Christ.

Welcome to worship at LaGrave. Because our worship proceeds without announcements, please carefully follow the order of worship printed below, noting that we use *two* different red hymnals. The *Worship & Rejoice* hymnal will be indicated by bold, italic type. An asterisk (*) denotes standing for those who are able. We are glad that you are here. Let us worship God together.

MORNING WORSHIP 8:40 & 11:00 AM

Please prepare your heart and mind for worship with a time of prayer and meditation.

God Calls Us to Worship

The Prelude:

"Fantasia on *Veni Emmanuel*"

Alec Rowley

"O Jesus, So Gentle, Jesus So Sweet"

Feike Asma

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Larry Visser

The Chiming of the Hour

The Introit:

"Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light" harm. J. S. Bach

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning; ye shepherds, shrink not with affright, but hear the angel's warning. This child, now weak in infancy our confidence and joy shall be, the power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

*The Processional Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 70

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

(The congregation is asked to rise on the last line of the hymn introduction.)

*The Greeting

*The People's Response: **Amen.**

The Welcome

We Humbly Approach God

The Advent Litany:

In the season of advent, our hearts are open and our souls are hungry.

We wait for the coming of the Lord.

In the season of advent, we peer through the darkness toward the light.

Jesus is our light and our hope.

We light this candle for our Everlasting Father. He will gather all his children in his arms and hold them close. He will sooth their hurts and dry their tears. He will bind their wounds and calm their fears.

Come quickly Everlasting Father. Our world waits for you.

(Light candle in silence)

The Prayer of Confession:

In this world, where everything wears out,

We watch for you, Everlasting Father.

In this world, where prizing what is temporary leaves us disillusioned, we set apart Christ as Lord.

In this world, where promises are made and broken,

We cling to your faithfulness, Everlasting God.

In this world, where hearts and flesh fail,

We hope in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--our

strength, today and forever. Amen.

Prayer concluded by singing:

Lift Up Your Hearts: 480 "Wait for the Lord"

The Assurance of Forgiveness: Isaiah 9:2,6 (pg. 1073)

*The Hymn of Commitment: Lift Up Your Hearts 478:1,3,4,5

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"

We Respond with Thanksgiving

The Children's Message:

Leader: What is our prayer for these children?

Congregation: The Lord be with you.

Children: And also with you.

(Children, 4-2nd grade, may leave for Children's Worship)

The Pastoral Prayer

The Anthem:

"For Unto Us a Child Is Born" from *Messiah* G. F. Handel
For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

God Speaks to Us

The Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7; (pg. 1073)

Matthew 11:27-30 (pg. 1517)

The Sermon: **"TO US A CHILD IS BORN:
EVERLASTING FATHER"**

The Prayer for a Blessing on the Word

We Go in His Peace

*The Hymn of Response: Lift Up Your Hearts 78:1,2,4,5
Of the Father's Love Begotten"

The Offertory:

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

Michael Burkhardt, Paul Manz

The Offering

Today's offering is for Camp Tall Turf and the LaGrave General Fund.

Please use an envelope from the pew to designate your gift. All undesignated monies will go to the General Fund.

(Please sign and pass the Welcome Register.)

After the offering plate has passed, members of the congregation and visitors are invited to come forward and join the Chancel Choir for the traditional singing of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."

*The Anthem: "Hallelujah Chorus" from *Messiah* G. F. Handel

Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever. King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hallelujah!

*The Benediction

*The People's Response: **Amen.**

*The Final Hallelujah

*The Silent Prayer and Carillon Bells

*The Postlude:

“Angels from the Realms of Glory (For Unto Us a Child
Is Born)”

Edwin C. Johnson

Rev. Peter Jonker – minister

Rev. Kristy Manion – liturgist

Dr. Larry Visser – organist

Chancel Choir Merle Mustert – director

Reed & Kirsten Bowden – candle lighter (8:40)

Aaron & Jana Eding – candle lighter (11:00)

Joanne Arnoys and Lynn Setsma – Cross & Bible Bearers (8:40)

Dan and Julie Molenbeek – Cross & Bible Bearers (11:00)

Music at LaGrave: Had G. F. Handel’s father had his way, the *Hallelujah Chorus* from his son’s well-known oratorio *Messiah* may never have been written. Determined to send his son to law school, Handel’s father refused his son music lessons for years. But Handel’s talent won out and his music has endured for centuries. In 1741 at age 56, Handel was discouraged and deeply in debt. A wealthy friend, Charles Jennings, gave Handel a libretto based on the life of Christ, taken entirely from the Bible. Handel soon set the text to music, barely stopping to eat meals. In 24 days, all 260 pages of music were composed. *Messiah* was first performed April 13, 1742 as a charitable event, raising 400 pounds and freeing 142 men from debtor’s prison.

The flowers on the chancel are given by **Marianne Stehouwer** in loving memory of her husband, **Charlie**. Blessed are those who die in the Lord.

The December special offering is for Camp Tall Turf. Camp Tall Turf is specifically designed to teach campers about the value of diversity. Campers who attend Tall Turf develop critical cross-cultural skills in a fun, safe and engaging environment. Students who attend come from all walks of life but are united by the shared belief that we are all made in the image of God.

This evening is our annual Christmas Carol service featuring the LaGrave Orchestra.

Advent is the first season in the liturgical year. The word Advent means *coming*. The focus is on the birth of Jesus Christ which is his first coming, but it also includes the anticipation of the second coming of Jesus Christ, the King. Advent also celebrates the revelation of God in Christ by which all creation will be reconciled to God. The primary color for Advent is purple. Purple is the color of royalty. It symbolizes the royal coming of Jesus Christ, the King. The gold color, only partially

seen, represents what is precious and valuable. It symbolizes the joy and celebration of Jesus’ birth. The **parament** on the communion table depicts a sunrise, or the coming of Christ into the world. He comes as our Lord and Savior.

The Advent wreath tells the Christmas story. The circle of the wreath reminds us of God, his eternity and endless mercy. The green of the wreath symbolizes the hope we have in God, the hope of newness, renewal, and eternal life. The candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of his son. The four outer candles represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent. The one pink candle symbolizes the joy of the imminent Advent of the Christ. The center candle is white. It’s called the Christ candle. This candle reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the season. The incarnation brings light and reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world. He comes into the darkness of our lives and brings newness, life and hope.

Livestreaming worship is available at lagrave.org.