

December 23, 2018

Fourth 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* 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

God Calls Us to Worship

The Prelude:

“Noel of the Shepherds”

Carsten Klomp

“Rejoice, Rejoice Believers”

Robert J. Powell

“Away in a Manger”

Keith Chapman

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 pow'r of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

*The Processional Hymn: ***Worship & Rejoice 176***

“Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates”

(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

Litany of Preparation:

In the season of Advent, our hearts are longing for Jesus.

We wait for the coming of the Lord.

In the season of Advent, we stand in the darkness, but we look for the light.

Jesus is our light and our hope.

We light this candle against fear. We don't know what the future holds; we don't know what dangers, toils and snares lie ahead. Jesus comes to calm our fears. He says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. “I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:20)

Come quickly, Lord Jesus. Our longing hearts wait for you. *(Lighting of Advent Candle)*

The Prayer of Confession:

Promise-making, promise-keeping God, You knew that in this world we would have trouble. Trouble is scary, and our fears are loud—clamoring for attention, clutching at our hearts, competing for our allegiance. They blind us to your all-encompassing love. So when we begin to fear, fill our hearts with faith. Remind us that your perfect love drives out fear. Show us yet again that you are entirely trustworthy, and the Baby in the manger is also the Lord of the universe. In his name, amen.

concluded with:

Lift Up Your Hearts 56:1-2

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

The Assurance of Forgiveness: Luke 1:68-69, 74-75

*The Hymn: **Lift Up Your Hearts 74:1,4,5,6,7**

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

The Children's Message

(Children, 4-1st grade, may leave for Children's Worship)

The Pastoral Prayer

Sermon Notes are also prayer request cards that can be dropped into the box at the Welcome Center.

The Anthem:

“You Who Were Rich”

French Carol; arr. John Worst

You who were rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake became poor; thrones for a manger did surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor. You who were rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake, became poor.

You who are God beyond all praising, all for love's sake became a man; stooping so low, but sinners raising heavenward by your eternal plan. You who are God beyond all praising, all for love's sake, became a man.

You who are love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship you. Emmanuel, within us dwelling make us what you would have us be. You who are love, beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship you.

You who were rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake became poor; thrones for a manger did surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor. You who were rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake, became poor.

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God Speaks to Us

The Scripture: Jonah 1 (pg. 1441)

The Sermon: **“AWAITING A MANGER: JONAH”**

The Prayer for a Blessing on the Word

We Go in His Peace

*The Hymn of Response: **Lift Up Your Hearts 92**

“Joy to the World”

The Offertory:

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Raymond H. Haan

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray,

Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.

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:

“Noel: When Jesus Was Born at Christmas”

Claude Balbastre

Rev. Peter Jonker – minister
Rev. Kristy Manion – liturgist
Dr. Larry Visser – organist
Ruth Bylsma – flutist
Chancel Choir, Merle Mustert – director
Andrew and Ethan Schimmel – Candle Lighter (8:40)
Andy and Hannah VandeGriend – Candle Lighter (11:00)
Grace and Ella Walcott – Cross & Bible Bearers (8:40)
Lynn Setsma and Joanne Arnoys – Cross & Bible Bearers (11:00)

Music at LaGrave:

The words of Paul in II Corinthians 8:9 inspired poet Frank Houghton's text *You Who Were Rich*. His rich text is paired with a French Christmas carol in John Worst's choral anthem. John is a LaGrave member and retired Calvin College music professor of music history and composition. Calvin Institute of Christian Worship director John Witvliet writes of this anthem, "The simplicity of the tune and this arrangement might be interpreted as depicting the simplicity of the stable floor, rather than the grandeur of heaven . . . this carol announces the Christmas gospel with quiet, unadorned joy."

The flowers are given by **Jon and Pat Burgess** in memory of Jon's father, **Carl Burgess**, who passed away unexpectedly 15 years ago on December 23, and a dear late aunt, **Betty Hoeksema**, whose birthday was celebrated for 90 years on December 23.

The December special offering is for Camp Tall Turf. Camp Tall Turf reaches youth and families through camp experiences. CTT instills the biblical message of reconciliation to campers through sessions that are specifically designed to teach children about the value of diversity by creating cross cultural experiences and relationships.

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. It also includes the anticipation of the second coming of Jesus Christ, the King. Advent celebrates the revelation of God in Christ by which all creation will be reconciled to God. The primary color for Advent is purple, 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 symbolizing the coming of Christ, God's son, 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. It is 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 eminent coming of the Christ. The white center candle is the Christ candle. It 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.