

December 15, 2019

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. 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:

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

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Charles Ore

“Of the Father's Love Begotten”

John R. Watkinson

The Chiming of the Hour

The Introit: “Low, How a Rose E'er Blooming” Michael Praetorius
*Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung;
of Jesse's lineage coming, as saints of old have sung. It
came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter when half
spent was the night.*

*The Processional Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 60

“Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes”

(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 Call to Confession:

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 look through the darkness to the everlasting light.

Jesus is our light and our hope.

We light this candle against our fear. We don't know what the future holds; we don't know what dangers, toils, and

snare 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.

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Unison Prayer of Confession:

We confess, Lord, that there are times when we are afraid of the future. We become anxious when it is not clear what decision we should make. We are scared that the ache in our body might mean something is seriously wrong. We get stressed out thinking that we will not have enough money to pay our bills. Forgive us, Father, when we do not rest in your peace. Remind us that you are Immanuel, God with us, and walk with us every day of our lives. Give us your strength to face anything that comes our way. Amen. *(concluded by a time of silence, and followed by singing)*

“When God First Brought Us Back”

Once more, O Lord, restore your people; come with your saving help again, as to the brook-beds in the desert you bring the sweet, reviving rain. Let those who sow with tears and sighing sing as they reap and joy proclaim; may those who weep when seed is scattered gather their sheaves and praise your name.

LUYH 55:2

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The Assurance of Forgiveness: Psalm 32:2-5

*The Hymn of Response: Lift Up Your Hearts 364:1,3,4

“Tell Out, My Soul”

The Children's Message

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

The Pastoral Prayer

The Anthem: “The Yearning” (8:40)

Craig Courtney

There is a yearning in hearts weighed down by ancient grief and centuries of sorrow. There is a yearning in hearts that in the darkness hide and in the shades of death abide, a yearning for tomorrow.

There is a yearning, a yearning for the promised One, the Firstborn of creation. There is a yearning for the Lord who visited his own, and by his death for sin atoned, to bring to us salvation.

Refrain: Emmanuel, Emmanuel, within our hearts, the yearning.

There is a yearning that fills the hearts of those who wait the day of his appearing. There is a yearning when all our sorrows are erased and we shall see the One who placed within our hearts the yearning. (Refrain)

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The Anthem: “Think About This” (11:00) Jean Warren Nichols

Think about this: a country far, a journey long, a gentle maid, a baby. Think about this: a lonely field, a glowing star in Bethlehem, a baby. Think about this: a night so cold, a shelter bare, a bed of hay, a baby. Think about the world awaiting the Savior.

Think about this: a country far, a journey long, a gentle maid. Think of how the shepherds felt at the news about the baby. Think about this: a lonely field, a glowing star in Bethlehem. Think about the humble place of his coming. Think about this: a night so cold, a shelter bare, a bed of hay. Think about the baby born in a manger.

Think about this: an angel sings a message sweet of hope and love, a baby. Think about the world awaiting the Savior. Think about this: an angel sings a message sweet, of hope and love. Think about this and merry be: the Savior comes, we celebrate a baby. Think about a baby born in a manger.

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The Offertory: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (8:40)

“... the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.” David Lasky

The Offertory Anthem: “Advent Carol” (11:00) Dale Wood

“Drop down dew, O gracious heaven! Let the clouds rain down the Just! Let the earth bud forth the Savior! In thy promise, Lord, we trust.” Thus the patriarchs were crying, when the earth in bondage sighing sought in vain for heaven's gate, closed by sin and Satan's hate.

God the Father in his mercy planned to save our fallen race, whilst the burden of our sinning God the Son deigned to embrace. God the Spirit gave his token through the virgin who had spoken: “Lo, thy handmaid, Lord, has heard, work in me thy wondrous word.”

Then the Son took man's frail nature, was made flesh and dwelled on earth. Life and Light with grace abundant he bestowed of priceless worth. Earth, rejoice exult with gladness, a new Sun dispels our sadness. Let us then our voices raise, let us sing our Savior's praise.

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.)*

*The Doxology:

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

God Speaks to Us

The Scripture: Ruth 3 (pg. 411)

The Sermon: **“HUNGRY IN THE HOUSE OF BREAD:
REDEEMING LOVE”**

The Prayer for a Blessing on the Word

*The Closing Hymn: “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

- 1. O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, your lamp within my breast, to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.**
- 2. Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me; your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty. O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace in love, all love excelling, our lost and fallen race.**
- 3. You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill, to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still. In patient expectation, we live for that great day when a renewed creation your glory shall display.**

*The Benediction

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

*The Amen

*The Silent Prayer and Carillon Bells

*The Postlude: “Hark, the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes”

B. Wayne Bisbee, David Cherwien

Rev. Ruth Boven – minister
Pastor Bob Grussing – liturgist
Dr. Larry Visser – organist, pianist
Kathryn Becksvoort – vocalist (8:40)
Chancel Choir, Merle Mustert – director (11:00)
Brooke & Isabelle Elenbaas – Candle Lighters (8:40)

Stellita & Mariel Terpstra – Candle Lighters (11:00)

Ken and Mary Afman – Cross & Bible Bearers (8:40)

Joanne Arnoys and Lynn Setsma – Cross & Bible Bearers (11:00)

Music at LaGrave (11:00):

Jean Warren Nichols' anthem *Think About This* invites us, during the season of Advent, to ponder each detail of the story of Christ's birth. The line of text “Think about the world awaiting the Savior” is embedded periodically throughout the anthem, often while another text is being sung. The music has a galloping lilt, perhaps to mimic the Holy Family's rough-strewn journey to Bethlehem.

The flowers on the chancel are given by **Marianne Stehouwer** in loving memory of her husband, **Charles J. Stehouwer**, who entered his heavenly home on December 4, 2012. "Blessed are those who die in the Lord."

The December special offering is for Camp Tall Turf a 40-year-old Christian camp offering leadership training and mentoring for inner city and greater Grand Rapids youth.

This afternoon at 4:00 pm we will have our annual **Children's Christmas Program**. *There will not be a 6pm service.* At 7:30pm, the **King's Choraliers** will present their Christmas Concert entitled “O Come, Let Us Adore Him.”

Livestreaming worship is available at lagrave.org.