

JOB DESCRIPTION

LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church

Position: Part-time Children's and Youth Ensembles Director

Summary

LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church, a growing and active 1900-member church established in 1887 and located in downtown, Grand Rapids, Michigan, seeks a part-time Children's and Youth Ensembles Director with an anticipated start date of summer, 2020. The director will lead choirs within the ages of kindergarten through 12th grade to instill in children and youth an appreciation for and love of sacred music, to have fun while making music, to enrich worship, and to bring praise and glory to God through the gift of singing. We are seeking a director with energy, experience, and wisdom in developing a new, graded choral program (for example, K-grade 2, grades 3-5, grades 6-8, grades 9-12). The director will work as part of a team of professional full and part-time staff, and will advance the vision and goals of the church through their work and skills as an accomplished choral director with children and youth. LaGrave's music ministry, overseen by Minister of Music and Organist, Dr. Larry Visser, currently includes three vocal choirs, two handbell choirs, three assistant organists, several instrumentalists of all ages, with over 150 participants. The church's 1996 five-manual, 108-rank Austin/Allen organ is among the finest in the region. The church also has an 8-foot Schimmel grand piano in the neo-Gothic 1960 sanctuary, which seats approximately 850. Additional information regarding LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church may be gleaned from the church's website: www.lagrave.org.

Worship at LaGrave

LaGrave Church is a Protestant church that is part of the Christian Reformed Church. Our theological roots are based in Calvinism. We believe that all things are under the sovereignty of Christ, and there is not one square inch of our world that is not being renewed and transformed under the Lordship and mind of Christ. Our worship follows a Reformed pattern in that we gather for worship, confess our sin, receive God's assurance of pardon, respond by giving our gifts, receive the Word from God, and go out to serve in our world. Our worship is both traditional and liturgical. It is led by a minister, a pastoral staff liturgist, professional musicians, and occasionally lay leaders. The various elements of worship proceed unannounced. The organ is the primary instrument used to lead worship. The piano is also used, as well as several instrumentalists from the congregation.

Our mission statements states, "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." Our mission has five components:

As the grace of God blesses our prayer, planning, and combined efforts, LaGrave CRC strives to be a **confessing community**, whose members understand and embrace LaGrave's mission of transformation. We declare and share that mission by our daily words and actions in the places we live, worship, work, learn, and play.

LaGrave CRC strives to be a **worshipping community** committed to maintaining a tradition of formal worship which integrates articulate and intelligent preaching of God's Word with music that glorifies God so worshipers may be inspired to transform all of life in worship.

LaGrave CRC strives to be a **caring community** committed to transforming lives for Jesus Christ by caring for the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of its members and actively enfolded members, visitors, and neighbors into a community of love and care.

LaGrave CRC strives to be a **discipling community** committed to following Jesus Christ and to helping others do the same through growing congregational participation in educational programs and discipling ministries.

LaGrave CRC strives to be a **servicing community** committed to holistic outreach to the poor and the powerful, nearby and far away, through growing member involvement in evangelism, missions, and Christian compassion and social justice.

Position Requirements and Compensation

The part-time Children's and Youth Ensembles Director position is a nine-month position (late September through mid-May) with minimal duties during the summer months. The director is responsible for providing spiritual leadership for three children's choirs and one youth choir as well as teaching and preparing anthems for each choir in worship (approximately once every 4-5 weeks). The position requires a person who has proven musical skills from experience in working with children's and youth choirs, choir conducting and leadership, educational achievement, creative ideas, energy in working with young children and youth, and effective interpersonal skills. The person holding this position will represent LaGrave Church, will further its mission, vision, and goals, and will be part of a team of professional staff members.

The Children's and Youth Ensembles Director is directly accountable to the Minister of Music, but is ultimately responsible to and evaluated by the Worship Committee every 2-3 years.

The successful candidate will be highly encouraged to become a member of LaGrave Church.

A competitive salary is offered commensurate with a candidate's qualifications and level of experience as a choral director. A benefit includes a continuing education allowance.

Skills and Experience

Candidates for this position should demonstrate the following:

1. A thorough knowledge of the sacred choral repertoire for children and youth choirs and, to the best of their ability, choose appropriate music for each choir that supports the theme of the sermon and/or liturgical season in line with the Reformed faith, doctrine and beliefs.
2. The ability to choose and lead anthems of varying styles, music that is both enjoyable and educational to children and youth, and the ability to choose texts that are appropriate to the ages of each choir
3. The ability to use proper vocal pedagogy appropriate to the ages of each choir
4. The ability to work constructively with children and youth of differing musical abilities and skills

5. The ability to recruit new members in each choir
6. Strong, effective communications skills with the Minister of Music, the choir members, choir parents (in the case of children), fellow staff members, and members of the congregation
7. A genuine care for children and youth and developing their musical appreciation, learning, and musical skills
8. Minimum of a bachelor's degree in music and 5-10 years of experience in leading children's and youth choirs

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

Choral / Musical

1. Prepare for and lead regularly scheduled weekly rehearsals (currently Sunday late afternoon) for the three Children's Choirs
2. Prepare for and lead rehearsals for the Youth Choir (currently Sunday mornings) a few weeks prior to their participation in worship
3. Prepare for and lead the three Children's Choirs in all music for Sunday worship services, either morning or evening, about every 4-5 weeks
4. Prepare for and lead the Youth Choir in all music for worship services (primarily morning services) 4-5 times per church season (late September through mid-May)
5. Prepare for and lead the three Children's Choirs in occasional special worship services (Children's Christmas Service in mid-December, possibly a Christmas Eve 4:00 p.m. service)
6. Work with other music staff members in a respectful manner
7. The director must assist the choirs with assigning robes
8. The director may purchase new music for the four choirs within the annual budgeted allowance and oversee the filing of all music in the choral library
9. The director must lead a special rehearsal on the Saturday morning prior to the Children's Christmas Service in mid-December

Administrative Duties

1. Secure an accompanist, in collaboration with the Minister of Music, for all four choirs
2. Contact all eligible children and youth during the late summer to invite them to participate
3. The director must submit to the Minister of Music the music each choir will sing one week prior to the worship service at which they participate in order to forward it to the bulletin secretary
4. The director must communicate clearly with members and parents (in the case of children) regarding rehearsals and any canceled rehearsals
5. The director must attend all music staff meetings (typically 1-2 per year) with the Minister of Music and all other music staff members to schedule the choirs and to be informed of other matters related to the music ministry
6. The director must report to the Minister of Music monthly rehearsal times for themselves and their accompanist for payment purposes (only if we pay hourly or by the rehearsal)
7. The director may wish to secure instrumentalists to participate with the choirs
8. The ability to recruit new members in each choir

Professional Duties

1. Represent LaGrave Church, its vision, and goals, at all professional organizations, events, meetings, workshops, and conventions
2. Maintain memberships within appropriate choral professional organizations (Choristers Guild, ACDA)
3. Seek opportunities to improve skills and broaden experiences through continuing education which can be integrated within the church's choral program

Application Process

All interested candidates should send a resume including references and a cover letter stating their interest in the position either electronically to choralposition@lagrave.org or by mail to the attention of Dr. Larry Visser, Minister of Music, LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church, 107 LaGrave Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503. Submissions will be accepted through Saturday, February 29, 2020.