

JOB DESCRIPTION

LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church
Position: Part-time Handbell Choir (adult) 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 Handbell Choir director with an anticipated start date of summer, 2020. The director will lead a 13-member all volunteer adult handbell choir to enrich worship and bring praise and glory to God through the gift of handbell playing. 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 handbell director. 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 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 of God, and go out to serve him 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 statement 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 **worshiping 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 Handbell Choir director position is a nine-and-a-half-month position (September through mid-May) with minimal duties during the summer months. The director is responsible for providing spiritual leadership within the Handbell Choir as well as teaching and preparing music for monthly worship services. The position requires a person with proven musical skills from experience in handbell conducting and leadership, educational achievement, creative ideas, 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 Handbell Choir director is directly accountable to the Minister of Music, but is ultimately responsible to and evaluated by the Worship Committee.

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

Skills and Experience

1. A thorough knowledge of the handbell repertoire and the ability to choose appropriate music (mainly, but not limited to hymn-based repertoire) that supports the theme of the sermon, Scripture passage, and/or liturgical season in line with the Reformed faith, doctrine and beliefs
2. A thorough knowledge of handbell ringing and all handbell and handchime techniques
3. The ability to rehearse with and work effectively with people of varying ages and skill levels
4. The ability to communicate well and effectively
5. A minimum of a bachelor's degree in music or equivalent experience

Essential Duties and Responsibilities

1. Prepare for and lead regularly scheduled Tuesday evening (6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.) rehearsals (late September through mid-May)
2. Prepare for and lead the handbell choir in all music for worship services approximately once per month (including 8:40 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 6:00 p.m. services)
3. Prepare for and lead the handbell choir in special worship services (Christmas Eve 11:00 p.m. service)
4. Purchase new handbell music within the annual budgeted allowance

5. Place players in positions that best fit their skill level and needs
6. Develop positive rapport with all colleagues and members of the entire music ministry and the congregation in a spirit of mutual support
7. The ability to recruit new members as needed, first and foremost from the LaGrave congregation

Administrative Duties

1. Plan all handbell music for the adult handbell choir
2. Become familiar with the existing handbell choir music library
3. Communicate with members regarding all instructions, dates of worship participation, and cancellations of rehearsals in advance
4. Distribute the music to members
5. File all music in the handbell library following use in worship
6. Submit to the Minister of Music one week in advance the titles and composers of the handbell music the choir will play in worship in order to forward this information to the bulletin secretary
7. Order handbell supplies and equipment as needed
8. Maintain and ensure proper care of all handbell equipment
9. Oversee the set-up and tear-down of handbell equipment as needed
10. Purchase new handbell music within the annual budgeted allowance
11. Attend music staff meetings (typically 1-2 per church year)
12. Schedule with the handbell choir members a year-end celebrative dinner at an area restaurant (paid for by the church within the handbell budget)
13. Communicate regularly with the Minister of Music all aspects of the handbell choir
14. Attend a review/evaluation with the Worship Committee chairperson and Minister of Music every 2-3 years

Professional Duties

1. The handbell director will represent LaGrave Church in all professional organizations, events, meetings, workshops, and conventions
2. The handbell director is encouraged to maintain memberships within appropriate handbell organizations
3. The handbell director should seek opportunities for professional growth through continuing education (classes, conferences, conventions, etc.)

Application Process

All interested candidates should send a resume including references and a cover letter stating their interest in the position either electronically to handbellposition@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.