We Humbly Approach Our God

The Reading: Isaiah 9:2

The Lighting of the Advent Candle:
Those before us in life and faith watched and prayed. And God answered: He did not hide his face or hand his people over to the power of sin, but drew them back to his way. We light this candle to proclaim the coming of the kingdom of God into the world. Our minds are ready for truth, Lord. Our minds are ready for truth.

The Prayer of Confession:
Lord, we come to you as a people hungry for good news. We confess that we are often so preoccupied with pleasures that we overlook the joy you offer us. We are so concerned with making a living that we miss the life you set among us. Forgive us, gracious God. Open our eyes and hearts to receive your gift, our lips and hands to share it with all humanity, and set our hearts toward anticipating your return. In the name of Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

The Sung Response: “My Soul in Stillness Waits”

The Assurance of Forgiveness: 1 John 1:9-12

*The Hymn of Commitment: Worship & Rejoice 153
“Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

We Respond with Thanksgiving

The Children’s Message
The Postlude:
“Toccata and Alla breve from Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”

James Biery

Dr. John Rottman – guest minister
Erin Alley – liturgist
Dr. Larry Visser – organist
Chancel Choir, Dr. James Borst – director (8:40)
Perrin Rynders – conga drums
Bells Jubilate, Dr. James Borst – director (11:00)
The Horton Family (8:40) The Plantinga Family (11:00) – candle lighters
Dee DeKryger and Joyce Jeltema – Cross and Bible Bearers (8:40)
Dan and Natalie Molenbeek – Cross and Bible Bearers (11:00)

Music at LaGrave: (11:00)
Keep Your Lamps originated as a slave song improvised following the hearing of a sermon based on Matthew 25. Through repetition, the music and text remind us to always be ready for Christ’s coming. Jesus was a deliverer and hope for slaves. Through the singing of this song, the slaves undoubtedly experienced deliverance from bondage. Andre Thomas (b. 1952) is a preeminent American conductor, clinician and arranger of spirituals. This arrangement would not be complete without the rhythmic conga drum accompaniment.

The banners and parament reflect the message from Isaiah 9:6, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.” In Advent we celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus breaks through the world’s darkness with his glory, bringing us the light of salvation.

This Sunday morning our guest minister is Dr. John Rottman. John is a LaGrave member and the recently retired professor of preaching at Calvin Seminary.

The flowers on the chancel today are in loving memory of Sandra Ann Duyst and Mary Ellen Spring, precious daughters, sisters, and aunts of Larry Sr. & Dolores Bos and the families of Larry Jr. & Dawn Bos and Laura and Larry VanPopering. Dolores was called home August 2, 2018. Thanks be to God for the love and joy she brought into each of our lives as a family, wife and mother. “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of 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 is the Children’s Christmas Program at 4:00 p.m. There will be no 6:00 p.m. service. The King’s Choraliers Christmas Concert will be presented at 7:30 p.m.

Livestreaming worship is available at lagrave.org/live