

December 3, 2023

First 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* different 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

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

God Calls Us to Worship

The Prelude:

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

J.S. Bach, ed. Anne Williams and Paul S. Jones

“What Feast of Love”

Peter Hilliard

“Lord, You Were Rich Beyond All Splendor”

Kurt Kaiser

The Chiming of the Hour

The Introit:

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (8:40)

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

“What Can I Give Him” (11:00)

Gustav Holst

What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what I can I give him—give him my heart.

*The Processional Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 74:1-4,7

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

*The Greeting

*The People’s Response: **Amen.**

The Welcome

We Approach God with Penitence

The Reading

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world; the one who follows me will not walk in darkness but have the light of life.”

We light this candle as a sign of the coming light of Christ.

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Reading: Isaiah 9:2

The Sung Response

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Worship & Rejoice 178 words: Bob McGee ©1976 C.A. Music.

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The Prayer of Confession

The Words of Forgiveness: based on 1 John 1:5-7

God is light; in him is no darkness at all.

If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

*The Hymn of Celebration: Lift Up Your Hearts 64:1,3

“O Shepherd, Hear and Lead Your Flock”

We Respond with Thanksgiving

The Children’s Message

The Pastoral Prayer

The Pastoral Prayer will include this response based on Psalm 89:8

Leader: You, Lord, are mighty

People: and your faithfulness surrounds you.

The Anthem:

“Jesus Christ the Apple Tree” (8:40)

Mark Patterson

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green: the trees of nature fruitless be compared with Christ, the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive: which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ, the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know but ne’er can tell, the glory which I now can see ‘tis found in Christ, the apple tree.

For happiness I love have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought: I missed of all; but now I see ‘tis found in Christ, the apple tree, in Jesus Christ, the apple tree.

“Christ the Apple Tree” (11:00)

Stanford E. Scriven

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green; the trees of nature fruitless be, compared with Christ the apple tree.

This beauty doth all things excel, by faith I know but ne’er can tell the glory which I now can see, in Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I love have sought, and pleasure dearly I have bought: I missed of all, but now I see ‘tis found in Christ, the apple tree.

This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive; which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ, the apple tree.

I’m wearied with my former toil, here I will sit and rest a while; under the shadow I will be, of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

God Speaks to Us

The Scripture: Genesis 3:12-20

The Sermon: **“JESUS IN GENESIS: THE SEED OF THE WOMAN”**

The Prayer for Blessing on the Word

*The Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 78:1-2

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

The Liturgy for the Lord’s Supper – see insert

During the distribution of the bread, we sing:

The Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 96

“What Feast of Love”

During the distribution of the wine, the cellist plays:

“Let all Mortal Flesh keep Silence”

Wilbur Held

“In Sweet Communion, Lord, with You”

Larry Visser

The Closing Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 78:3-5

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

(The offering will be received during the song. Please rise on verse 5.)

*The Benediction

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

*The Organ Amen (8:40)

*The Choral Amen (11:00)

*The Silent Prayer and Carillon Bells

*The Postlude:

“Of the Father's Love Begotten”

David Cherwien

Rev. Kristy Manion – minister

Chad Boorsma – liturgist

Dr. Larry Visser – organist, pianist

Calin Muresan – cellist

7-12 Choir, Dr. Rob Hobgood – director (8:40)

4 Years-2nd Grade Choir, Jess Hollenbach – director (11:00)

Julia Fletcher – accompanist (11:00)

Chancel Choir, Dr. Rob Hobgood – director (11:00)

The Christian Family (8:40) & The Hakes Family (11:00) – candle lighters

Avery Walcott & Nolan Walcott – Cross and Bible Bearers (8:40)

Becca Vande Griend & Ellie Vande Griend – Cross and Bible Bearers (11:00)

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

The Advent Wreath is a circle which reminds of God who is eternal with no beginning and no end. The four ring candles represent the light of God coming into the world. They also represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent. The 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 Christmas season. Jesus, the light of the world, cones into the darkness of our lives and brings new life and hope.

Music at LaGrave

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree was penned by New Hampshire lay minister Joshua Smith and first appeared in a late 18th-century hymnbook. The text is loosely based on Song of Songs 2:3 and also in early American folk verse. Christ is metaphorically depicted as an unwavering apple tree, a symbol of strength and abundant life. Other references

include the Tree of Life found in Genesis and Revelation. Apple trees were commonly grown in England where there is a tradition of wishing apple trees good health on Christmas Eve. Thus, this text was associated with and became a Christmas carol. We hear two versions of this carol this morning, one in each service.

The flowers that grace the chancel today are in memory of daughter and mother, **Rhonda D. Ingersoll**, remembered with love by **Bill, Della, Derek Landheer and children.**

The December special offering is for **Oakdale Neighbors**, a neighborhood development organization providing youth mentoring and advocacy, tax preparation, financial classes and neighborhood business development assistance.

This evening we will enjoy Calvin University's **Lessons and Carols** service held at 3:00pm and 6:00pm. The Capella, Campus Choir, and Women's Chorale will lead us in worship.

Livestreaming worship is available at lagrave.org/live