



Morning Worship

November 30, 2025 | 8:40 & 11:00 a.m.



www.lagrave.org

Order of Worship

Morning Worship | 8:40 & 11:00 AM

Please prepare your hearts and minds for worship with a
time of prayer and meditation

Welcome to worship at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church.

Please follow this order of worship carefully as worship proceeds without announcement. There are **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 you are here.

God Calls Us to Worship

The Prelude:

Variations on "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"
"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

Michael Burkhardt
arr. Albert Travis

The Chiming of the Hour

The Introit:

"In the Bleak Midwinter" (8:40)

arr. Karen Buckwalter

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron,
water like a stone; snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow, in the
bleak midwinter, long ago.

"While We Are Waiting, Come" (11:00)

Don Cason

*While we are waiting, come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,, while we are
waiting, come.*

*Come, Savior, quickly come. Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are
waiting, come.*

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*The Processional Hymn: Left Up Your Hearts 70

"On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

*The Greeting

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

The Welcome

We Humbly Approach God

The Call to Confession:

As we approach our Holy God, let us open our hearts before him. Let us admit our failures, confess our sins, and acknowledge our need.

The Hymn: “Wild and Lone, the Prophet’s Voice”

Wild and lone, the prophet’s voice echoes through the desert still, calling us to make a choice, bidding us to do God’s will: “Turn from sin and be baptized; cleanse your heart and mind and soul. Quitting all the sins you’ve prized, yield your life to God’s control.”

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., © 1989, Hope Publishing Company,
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The Prayer of Confession:

Sovereign God, you hold our past, present, and future. Spirit, you search our hearts.

So hear us as we agree with you and admit what is true about us. Sometimes our faith is small; our hope burns low; and our love fails.

When our preference for predictability shuts the door on your surprises, or we don’t recognize assurances you’ve already given, **forgive us. Remind us that with you, a promise is as good as done.**

We see your promise fulfilled in the surprise of your Son’s birth. And we rejoice in walking by his light.

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 candle

A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together.” (Isaiah 40: 3-5)

The Assurance of Forgiveness: (based on 1 John 1: 5-7)

God is light; in him there 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 Commitment: Lift Up Your Hearts 61: 1,2,4,6
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

We Respond with Thanksgiving

The Children's Moment, *concluded with:*

Congregation: **The Lord be with you.**

Children: And also with you.

The Pastoral Prayer

The Anthem:

Fantasia on "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" (8:40)

Carol Lynn Mizell

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art:
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

"Comfort, Comfort" (11:00)

arr. John Ferguson

"Comfort, comfort now my people; tell of peace!", so says our God. Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning under sorrow's load. To God's people now proclaim that God's pardon waits for them! Tell them that their war is over; God will reign in peace forever!

For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near, calling us to true repentance, since the kingdom now is here. Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way! Let the valleys rise to meet him, and the hills bow down to greet him!

Straight shall be what long was crooked, and the rougher places plain! Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits his holy reign! For the glory of the Lord now on earth is shed abroad, and all flesh shall see the token that God's word is never broken.

The Offering

**Please sign and pass the Welcome Register found on
the pew in the middle aisle*

The Offertory:

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

Molly Ijames

*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: Luke 1: 5–25, 57–66 (p. 1590) *concluded with:*

Minister: This is the Word of the Lord.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**

The Sermon: **“Preparing the Way of the Lord: Birth”**

The Prayer for a Blessing on the Word

*The Closing Hymn: Lift Up Your Hearts 67

“Blessed Be the God of Israel”

*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:

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

J.G. Walther, J.S. Bach

Rev. Peter Jonker..... minister
Rev. Kristy Manion liturgist
Dr. Larry Visserorganist, pianist
Bells Jubilate, Dr. Rob Hobgood director (8:40)
Chancel Choir, Dr. Rob Hobgood director (11:00)
Ruth Bylsmapiccolo (11:00)
Sarah Hortonclarinet (11:00)
Andrea Oosterhouse..... oboe (11:00)
Perrin Rynders.....tambourine (11:00)
The VandenAkker Family candle lighters (8:40)
Yudelis Rodriguez & Briana Alonsocandle lighters (11:00)
Amber & Audrey Schaap..... Cross and Bible bearers (8:40)
Carmen Day & Dan Molenbeek..... Cross and Bible bearers (11:00)

The Advent Banners and Paraments 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 us that God is eternal with no beginning and no end. The four candles represent the light of God coming into the world. They also represent the four Sundays of waiting during Advent. The pink candle symbolizes the joy of the eminent coming of the Christ. The white, center candle is the Christ candle. This candle reminds us that the incarnation is the heart of the Christmas season. Jesus, the light of the world, comes into the darkness of our lives and brings new life and hope.

Music at LaGrave:(8:40): .Carol Lynn Mizell composed *Fantasia on Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* for a 2022 Lessons and Carols service at First United Methodist Church in Denton, Texas. The piece was originally written for handbells, hand-chimes, four trombones or keyboard, and solo instrument. The arrangement uses the Welsh hymn tune Hyfrydol, to which the text *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* is commonly sung in other denominations. In our tradition, Hyfrydol is used for the hymn text *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*.

The flowers on the chancel today are given by **Larry and Jane Kerkstra** to celebrate their 65th wedding anniversary.

The November special offering is for World Renew, who works in 30 countries responding to both natural disasters and civil unrest. They provide for displaced families and invest in local economies to help rebuild communities and renew hope, bringing long-term stability for future storms.

This evening, We will not hold a worship service in the sanctuary, but will have Vespers in the chapel – a service where we gather as a community around the Word, song, and prayer.

Livestreaming worship is available at lagrave.org/live

Next Week’s Worship

Next Sunday Morning is the second Sunday of Advent. Advent is a season when we prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. Pastor Manion will continue our sermon series on John the Baptist. She will preach on Matthew 3:1-12.

Next Sunday Night Calvin University presents the annual service of Lessons and Carols at 3:00 and 6:00pm.



The
Ten O'Clock Hour
Growing in Fellowship and Faith Formation

**Below are the 10 O'Clock Hour happenings today
between the morning services:**

- **Nursery** (ages 0-3) - 2s/3s Room
- **No Church School today**
- **Coffee, Fellowship** Join us in the MPR. There will also be games and puzzles.
- **While We Wait: Living the Questions of Advent:** A 5-session reflection on the voices of biblical figures we meet in the birth story of Jesus. We are led by Rev. Laurie TenHave-Chapman and will meet in Room 200. Bring your Bible!
- **Advent Service Discussion:** Rev. John Steigenga leads a 4 week Advent sermon discussion series, based on the sermons we hear during our church services.

Today

Because of Thanksgiving break, there will be no Children's Worship for 4 year olds - 2nd graders today. There is Nursery and 2s/3s.

CREW (9th-12th Grade): Does not meet tonight. Our next gathering is next Sunday, December 7. We are having a combined Christmas party with MSYG from 5:30 - 7:15pm in the Vault.

MSYG (grades 6-8) will not meet tonight. We have our Christmas party next Sunday, December 7, at the Vault!

Upcoming Events



Scan the QR code to for more information or to sign-up

Wednesday Night Programming

Wednesday, December 3 from 5:45pm-8:30pm

Grab 'n go is from 5:45pm - 6:30pm. Pulled pork is on the menu. GEMS and Youth Outdoors meet from 6:30pm - 8pm. There will be childcare for 0-4 year olds in 2s/3s Room from 6:15pm - 8:30pm.

Equipping for Heartside Service

Thursday, December 3 from 1:00-2:30pm and

Wednesday, December 11 from 12:00-1:30pm

Would you like to be better equipped to work with unhoused neighbors? Come for a 1.5 hour training at either of the following times listed above. We will reserve the last 15 minutes of the time to walk to Westminster to tour this winter's Heartside Community Center, although this training is for anyone looking to be better equipped for meaningful interactions with unhoused people. Please see the Tuesday News and Opportunities for a sign-up or email Kristin Batts at kbatts@lagrave.org.

Sourdough Cinnamon Roll Class

Saturday, December 6 at 10:00am

All are welcome to attend a Sourdough Cinnamon Roll class in the MPR at church! Whether you are new to the art of sourdough or have made wonderful bread in the past, join others from LaGrave to learn how to make delicious rolls in time for Christmas. Cost to attend is \$25 which includes a starter and guide to take home. Signups are available online. Questions? Contact Cindy at cbusscher@lagrave.org.

College/Career

Sunday, Dec. 7 at 6:00 PM

Dinner and Fellowship at the Glover house, (1933 Pinnacle Dr SW). Want to worship before dinner? Then attend the Lessons & Carols at 3 PM by Calvin University students. Reach out to Heidi (616-437-6830) if you have questions. All are welcome!

Calvin Men's Basketball Game

Friday, December 12 at 7:00pm

LaGrave is returning to the hospitality suite at Calvin University to watch the Men's Basketball Game on Friday, December 12. The suite opens at 7pm; game starts at 8pm. Cost to attend is \$5 per person. Popcorn, treats and drinks will be provided. Space is limited so sign up today! Questions? Contact Cindy at cbusscher@lagrave.org.

Volunteer Opportunity

Wednesday, December 17 from 6:30–9:30pm

LaGrave Church has partnered with Covenant House of Grand Rapids to host a Holiday Bowling Event. We are looking for the following: Food organizers, Bowlers, and Church Van Drivers (must be 21 to drive). If you are interested or have questions, email kbatts@lagrave.org, or hglover@lagrave.org.

River City Improv

Saturday, February 7 at 7:33pm

Save the Date! LaGrave is heading to River City Improv at Wealthy Theatre. Deadline to signup will be in early January so watch the bulletin for more details.

Upcoming Special Services at LaGrave

Sunday, December 7 at 3:00 & 6:00pm—Calvin Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 14

4:00pm—Annual Children’s Christmas Service

7:30pm—King’s Choraliers Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 21

8:40 & 11:00am— Annual Singing of Hallelujah Chorus

6:00pm—Annual Instrumental Carol Sing

Wednesday, December 24

4:00pm— Annual Christmas Eve Family Service

11:00pm—Annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 31 at 6:00pm— Annual NYE Candlelight Service

Announcements

Stewardship: Thank You to those who have turned in their commitment for the 2026 General Fund budget. We are on our way to our goal of having 75% of the budget committed, as 51% is committed to date. If you have not made your commitment yet, please either fill out the form that is available at the Welcome Center and place it in the box provided, click on the commitment form that was in the Tuesday email blast, or email Amy Hermen, ahermen@lagrave.org.

Children's Christmas Program: If your child is in 2nd-8th grade and would like a speaking and/or acting part in the Christmas program on Sunday, December 14 at 4pm, please contact Rachel Thorne today (rthorne@lagrave.org).

If you or a loved one experiences sensory sensitivity, there is a calming space for you at church. Room 200 (upstairs near the balcony) is equipped as a comfortable space for those who experience sensory overload to regroup and use sensory tools while at church. In that room you'll find a TV with livestream worship, weighted blankets, noise reducing headphones, fidget toys, art supplies, and focusing tools. We hope this will be a space for people to engage in the worship service by livestream, or find respite until they are ready to reengage with the service in the Sanctuary.

Fish Bowl: The Fish Bowl, which has returned to the library, continues to accept names of people who don't know Jesus as Savior, who are wandering in their faith, or who have left the Christian faith. Prayer servants are faithfully praying for these people.

GEMS Christmas Card Bags and Card sales: 36 decorated Christmas Card bags for our home-bound members are on a table in front of the church office. The list of members who will get the bags is located on the table as well, and it is in the weekly News & Opportunities. Please help us fill the bags over the next 3 weeks. They will be delivered starting 12/18. Boxes of Christmas cards are available on the self-serve, honor table by the rear entrance to the church office .

Instrumentalists: The deadline to sign up to participate in the all-church orchestra for the Dec. 21 Instrumental Carol Sing is tomorrow, Monday, Dec. 1. If you are interested in participating, please sign up using the link in the Tuesday News & Opportunities email or fill out the green card in your church mailbox and return it to Dr. Larry Visser.

Short-Term Exposure in Mission (STEM): Mexico City, April 4-11, 2026 – We still have space for a couple more team members, especially men and youth. If you are interested, use the information link and

application form in News & Opportunities to apply by Dec. 2, or contact Stan Kruis (skruis@lgrave.org).

Volunteer Opportunity: A few years ago the Welcoming Committee created a Signup Genius for 3 volunteer opportunities: Sunday morning greeters, Sunday morning welcome desk attendants, and Sunday evening greeters; all of which are easy ways to get involved at LaGrave given that we are at church on Sunday already for worship! The only skills required are a smile and friendly welcome offered to members and visitors coming in the doors of our church. If you're interested in one of these roles, please contact Shelly Schat: schathome@gmail.com or (616)443-7105.

Share the Joy – Give a Toy: LaGrave is once again supporting The Other Way Ministries and juveniles in the court system who would otherwise not receive Christmas gifts. If you would like to donate, please drop them off in the MPR by Sunday, December 7. We have an Amazon wish list that will deliver directly to LaGrave if you would like to order online. Find the list in the News & Opportunities email.

The LaGrave Worship Arts Committee is pleased to host a display of artwork by the late **Chris Stoffel Overvoorde**, which will run through **February 1, 2026**, in the Parlor and lower level. Chris Stoffel Overvoorde (1934–2019) was a Dutch American artist and a long-serving art professor at Calvin College. He was known for his extensive work as a painter, printmaker, and graphic designer, for his landscape paintings featuring expansive skies and clouds. Born in the Netherlands, he immigrated to the United States at age 22 and earned his MFA from the University of Michigan in 1966, the same year he joined the Calvin College faculty. During his 31-year career, he served as art department chair and director of exhibitions, and was recognized for integrating his Christian faith with his art and teaching. In 2003, he published the book *Passing the Colors: Engaging Visual Culture in the 21st Century*.

26,000 people watching LaGrave's services every week!? In addition to our regular livestream, every week LaGrave's services are broadcast through the BBS radio & television network. BBS delivers video of our 11am service to people around the world. Last month we averaged 26,739 viewers per week. We are able to see that people are watching in countries like Russia, China, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Brazil, Nigeria, & Israel. Since early this year, we believe 1.1 million people cumulatively around the world have watched the LaGrave livestream. We receive comments from some of these viewers. Here are two of them: "Heard you in Santiago Cuba" – Juan. "Hi, this is Saaaha and I am from Russia. I am 23 yrs. Old and watch the Church show. I am going to be in Army and go to Ukraine. I hope I do not die. Please pray. Very Scared" – Saacha Russia

Prayer Concerns

We praise God for His faithfulness to:

- **Kade Elzinga and Emma Nagel**, who made their public declaration of faith through table fellowship last Sunday, November 23.
- **Yudelis Rodriguez & Briana Alonso**, who received a determination regarding Yudelis' eligibility for work and positive news about job opportunities.
- **Harris Kiekoever**, who will celebrate his 90th birthday on Wednesday, December 3.

Let us faithfully pray for:

- **JoDell Balodis**, who had abdominal surgery on Friday, November 28.
- **Esther Dyk**, who remains hospitalized after extensive hernia surgery.
- **Michael Hoisington**, who is in Jakarta, Indonesia to train Indonesian pastors.
- **Don VandenBosch**, who has returned to his apartment at Freedom Village.

We extend our Christian sympathy to:

- **Trish & Russ Brummel**, in the death of Trish's father, Larry Vredevoogd on Friday, November 21.
- The family and friends of **Mart Sharda**, who passed away on Monday, November 24. His funeral service is pending.

Please pray for:

those receiving hospice services – Bev VandenBosch, George Zandt

those living with cancer – Dan Beimers, Marsha Haan, Sherri Kanten, Anita MacDonald (John Postmus' daughter), Steve Palazzolo, Lloyd Tinholt, Sharon VanHouten, Barb Voskuil

those with other continuing needs – Sandy Buter, Cloe Ann Danford, Jolene DeHeer, Rob Entingh, Sandra Destrempe, Sandy Gronsman, Joyce Jongsma, Larry Kerkstra, Harris Kiekoever, Dorothy Ondersma, Rich (Mamuani) Postma, Jim VandenBerg, Joy Winkle, Joyce Zwiers

those actively serving in the military – Blake Huizenga, Tim VanBeek

Missionary of the Week: African Widows and Orphan Support

(AWOS), which supports Nigerian Christians that have suffered cruel attacks. An elderly woman's 4 sons, 4 daughters-in-law and grandchildren were killed in a jihadist attack on her village. "God's love replaced my anger," she reported, after receiving AWOS's trauma therapy. Pray for AWOS's ministry to these people, and that the attacks will end.

New Members:

This Sunday we welcome **Mark & Julie DeKoster**, who transferred their membership from Calvin Church, Grand Rapids, MI.

Calendar

Sunday, November 30

Morning Worship.....	8:40 AM
10 '0 Clock Hour	10:00 AM
Morning Worship.....	11:00 AM
Vespers Prayer Service	6:00 PM

Monday, December 1

Spa Day Meeting, Library	1:00 PM
Executive Committee, Parlor.....	4:00 PM

Tuesday, December 2

Knitting Group, Parlor	1:15 PM
Welcoming Committee, Parlor	4:30 PM

Wednesday, December 3

Intercessory Prayer, Chapel	9:00 AM
Spiritual Journey, Rec. Room	9:30 AM
Women's Mid Morning Bible Study, Parlor.....	10:00 AM
Women's Watercolor Class	11:00 AM
3-6 Grade Choir	5:15 PM
Grab 'n Go Meal, MPR	5:45 PM
Faith Journey bible Study, Parlor.....	6:30 PM
GEMS	6:30 PM
Youth Outdoors.....	6:30 PM
Chancel Choir.....	7:00 PM

Thursday, December 4

Beth Moore and More, Parlor, 200, Council.....	9:30 AM
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Friday, December 5

Men's Morning Bible Study, Parlor.....	8:30 AM
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Saturday, December 6

Sourdough Cinnamon Roll Class, MPR.....	9:00 AM
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Sunday Volunteers

Assisting This Week: November 30

Security:

8:40: Dave Versluis, Tim Walcott, Zach Kruyf

11:00: Jeff Scholtens, Chad Sholtens

Greeters:

8:40: Beth Swagman

11:00: Evonne & Don Plantinga, Norma Hoeksema

Ushers:

8:40: Brad Post, James VanHekken, Brad Schaap, Chris Weller

11:00: Matt Scholten, Marilyn Rottman, Cyndi Post,
Merv Kamper

Assisting Next Week: December 7

Security:

8:40: Andrew Schimmel Doug VanBeek, Tom Oostema

11:00: Matt Alcumbrack, Colton Alcumbrack

Greeters:

8:40: Laurie Termaat, Galen & Thelma Meyer

11:00: Norma Hoeksema

6:00: Jim & Barb Boelkins, Jane Tol

Ushers:

8:40: Chris Weller, Peter Ackerman, Caleb Ackerman,
Dave Gebben

11:00: Mitch Schroder, Luther Ajim, Matt Scholten, Kris Andrus
(Lessons and Carols)

3:00: Merv Kamper, Brad Schaap, Jeff Scholtens

6:00: Brach Schaap, Jeff Scholtens



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