

STORIES OF THE SEASON
& STORIES BEHIND THE SONGS



THE LEGEND OF
THE POINSETTIA

Larchmont Avenue Church

60 Forest Park Avenue
Larchmont, New York 10538
(914) 834-1800

First Sunday of Advent

November 30, 2025

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Peter Bynum
Associate Pastor: Rev. Anna Grace Claunch
Director of Music: Douglas Kostner



PRELUDE

“Veni, Emmanuel”
Ben Wien and Douglas Kostner, piano

Arr. Robert Vandall

INTROIT

“The Root of Jesse”
*The root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the gentiles will hope.*

Douglas Kostner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Anna Grace Claunch

THE PEACE

The Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

Robin and Dave Hruska

One: When I look around, I see hunger’s long shadow—empty tables, quiet
kitchens, neighbors waiting for a meal that may not come.

**All: And when I look around, I see shadows of injustice—the rich getting
richer and the poor getting poorer—and someone somewhere will fall
asleep under a bridge tonight.**

One: Into these shadows, we light a candle of hope...*(Lighting of candle.)*

**All: Into every place where despair whispers its name, we kindle a flame of
hope.**

One: May this small light rise like dawn, soft but unstoppable.

**All: May it sing into the darkness that God’s hope is already stirring,
already blooming.**

One: Children of God, do not fear—hope is being born among us.

***OPENING HYMN #772**

“Live Into Hope”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

Rev. Dr. Peter Bynum

**Holy One, you promise that a shoot shall rise from what we thought was
lifeless, that peace will take root in unlikely places, and that creation will
learn to live in harmony. Yet we confess that we struggle to trust your
vision. We forget that you often work through what seems ordinary. We
worry that what we bring is not enough. We hide our simple offerings,
our tentative acts of kindness, our fragile hope.**

**Forgive us, God of new growth. Receive even our smallest gifts and
transform them into something that nurtures life. Teach us to look for
your beauty in places we have neglected and in people we have
overlooked. Mold us into people who trust in your renewing love and
help your hope bloom in this world...**

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*GLORIA (#584)

*Glory, glory, glory, glory be to God on high! Glory, glory, glory, glory be to God on high!
And on earth peace to all people in whom God is well pleased.
And on earth peace to all people in whom God is well pleased.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (in unison)

*Spirit of Hope, as we turn to your Word, let your light fall upon us the way
your grace falls on every humble gift. Plant your truth in us, and help it
take root. Through your living Word, may we be shaped into people of
hope. Amen.*

NEW TESTAMENT READING Romans 13:11-14

STORY OF THE SEASON *The Legend of the Poinsettia* by Tomie dePaolo

ANTHEM

“Poinsettia Carol”

Arr. Frederick Frahm

*Bright red poinsettias to Jesus I bring; and here is rich fruit which is fit for a king;
Flowers and fruit from my homeland, grown in the valleys and mountains:
These gifts I bring you, Niño adorado. Ah!
Canes full of sugar to Jesus I bring; oranges and coffee so rich for the king;
Flowers and fruit from my homeland, grown in the valleys and mountains:
These gifts I bring you, Niño adorado. Ah!*

OLD TESTAMENT READING Isaiah 11:1-10

SERMON

“Small Gifts, Holy Growth”

Rev. Claunch

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE HYMN #79 (verses 1&3)

*Light dawns on a weary world, when eyes begin to see all people's
dignity. Light dawn on a weary world: The promised day of justice
comes. [Refrain]*

*Hope blooms in a weary world when creatures, once forlorn, find wilderness
reborn. Hope blooms in a weary world: The promised green of Eden comes.
[Refrain]*

*Refrain: The trees shall clap their hands; The dry lands, gush with
spring; The hills and mountains shall break forth with singing! We
shall go out with joy, and be led forth in peace, As all the world in
wonder echoes shalom.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER Rev. Bynum

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE GREAT AMEN (*congregation singing*)

*Amen. Amen. Amen. Hosanna in the highest!
Hosanna in the highest! Hosanna in the highest!*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Financial gifts may be shared electronically via the Realm Connect app or by scanning the QR code to the right. Additional pledge cards are available at the Usher Station at the rear of the sanctuary.



OFFERTORY

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”
Caitlyn Carpenter, viola; Ben Wien, piano

Arr. Jason Krug

***DOXOLOGY #607**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore; Praise Triune God whom we adore Amen.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

STORY BEHIND THE SONG

Rev. Bynum

***CLOSING HYMN #136** “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Claunch

POSTLUDE

“Prepare the Royal Highway”
Caitlyn Carpenter, viola; Ben Wien, piano

Arr. Lee Burswold

NOTE: You are welcome to stay and listen to the Postlude, but there is no expectation that you remain seated during this time. Feel free to get up and greet your neighbors.

**Please stand if you are able.*

Announcements & Happenings

PRAYERS

Do you have a prayer request to share?
Call our prayer line (914) 834-1800, ext. 342.

FLOWERS

If you are interested in sponsoring flowers, please contact the office at broodal@lacny.org

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Women's Bible Study- Tues. 12/2@ 11am, Lindsley.
- Men's Bible Study- Thurs. 12/4 @ 8:30 am, Lindsley.
- We love having little ones in worship with us! If you prefer, there is a nursery for infants & toddlers (Room 114/Education Wing). Ask an usher for directions.
- **Join us next Sunday, Dec. 7th immediately following the service for our Advent Craft Workshop!**

MUSIC

It's time for our Advent and Christmas choir!

Rehearsal December 3, 10, 17. Advent choir will be singing in Worship on November 30, December 7, (not 13), 21. And, of course, *Christmas Eve at 8 pm*. You do not have to attend all of these.
Contact Dkoester@lacny.org if interested and for a link to the music of the season.

SERVICE

Midnight Run 12/6 @ 4pm in Russell Hall

Notice of Congregational Meeting

On December 7, 2025, at the end of the worship service, a meeting of the congregation of the Larchmont Avenue Church will be called for the purpose of electing new church officers and three at-large members of the 2026 All-Church Nominating Committee.

THIS WEEK AT LAC

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

10:00 am Worship (Sanctuary/Online)
11:15 am Coffee Hour (Russell Hall)

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

6:00 pm LMYO. (Carhart)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2

11:00 am Women's Bible Study (Lindsley)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

11:00 am Staff Meeting (Lindsley)
5:00 pm 5th-7th Grade Youth Group
6:15 pm 8th-12th Grade Youth Group
7:00 pm Symphonia (Chapel)
7:30 pm Chancel Choir (Russell)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

4:00 pm WCC Rehearsal
7:15 pm AA (Carhart)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

5:30 pm Family Cookie Decorating & Movie Night

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

4:00 pm Midnight Run (Russell Hall)

Visit: www.lacny.org

Senior Pastor : Rev. Dr. Peter Bynum
(pbynum@lacny.org, 914-834-1800 ext. 308)
Associate Pastor : Rev. Anna Grace Claunch
(agclaunch@lacny.org, 914-834-1800 ext. 303)



Update your Realm, today. Use the pew card & drop into the offering or at the back of the church or scan the QR code. Problems? contact broodal@lacny.org. As an Earth Care Congregation, we ask you to please recycle your bulletin.

772

Live into Hope

1 Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed, of sight re -
 2 Live in - to hope! The blind shall see with in - sight
 3 Live in - to hope of lib - er - ty, the right to
 4 Live in - to hope of cap - tives freed from chains of

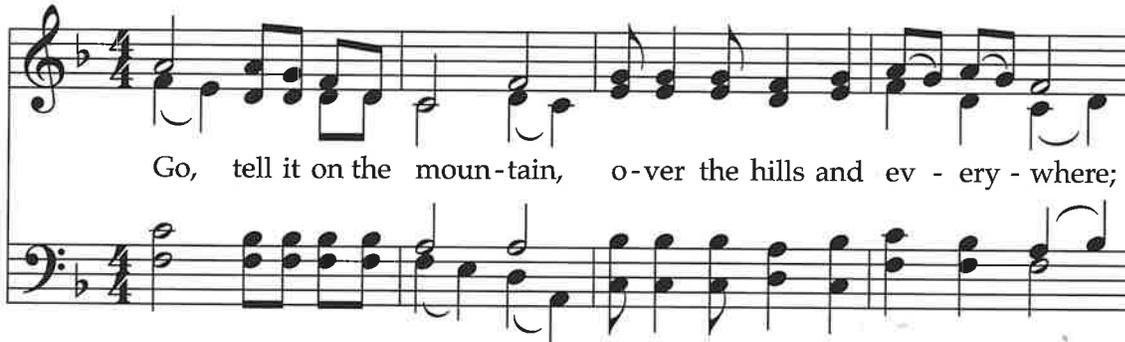
gained, the end of greed. The op-pressed shall be the
 and with clar - i - ty, re - mov - ing shades of
 speak, the right to be, the right to have one's
 fear or want or greed. God now pro - claims our

first to see the year of God's own ju - bi - lee!
 pride and fear, a vi - sion of our God brought near.
 dai - ly bread, to hear God's word and thus be fed.
 full re - lease to faith and hope and joy and peace.

This text on Luke 4:16–20, the author's first, was written for the United Presbyterian Women's National Meeting in July 1976 because the team planning worship could not find a suitable hymn on that passage. She wrote the words with this vigorous 18th-century tune in mind.

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

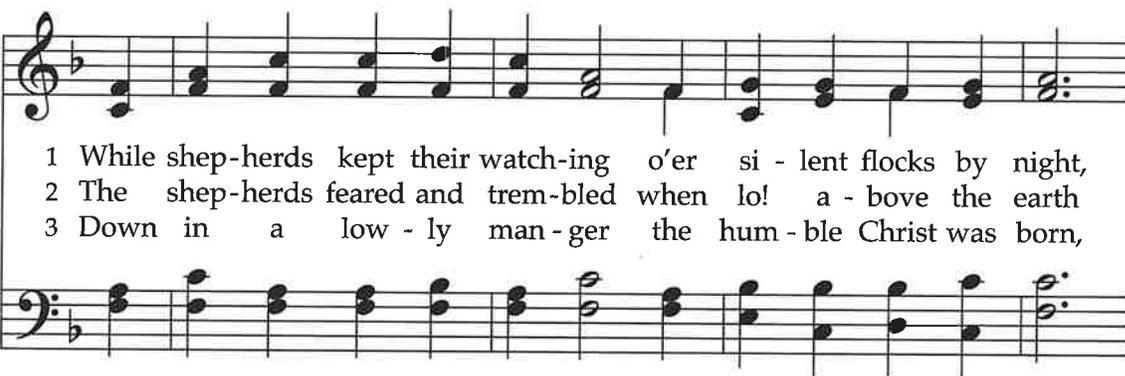
Refrain 



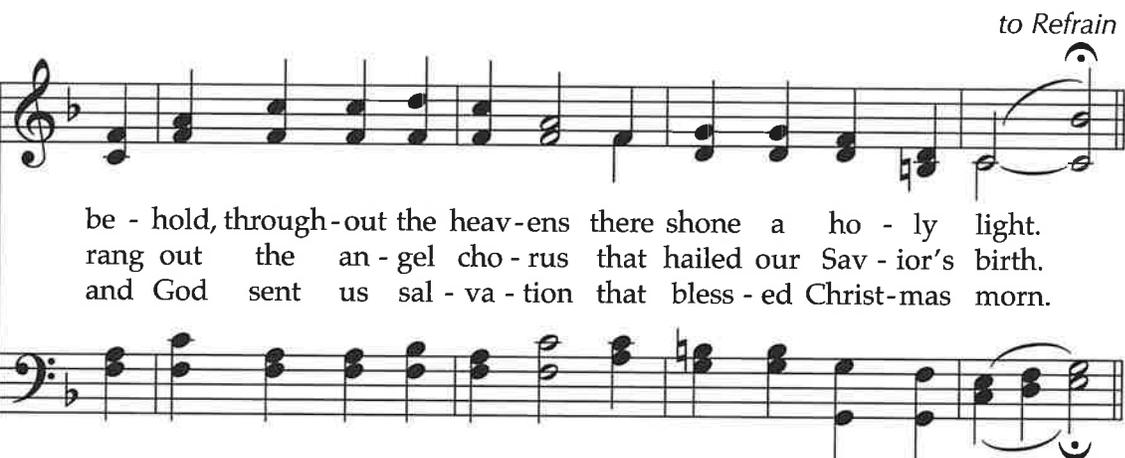
Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;



go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born! Fine



1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,



be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn. to Refrain

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.