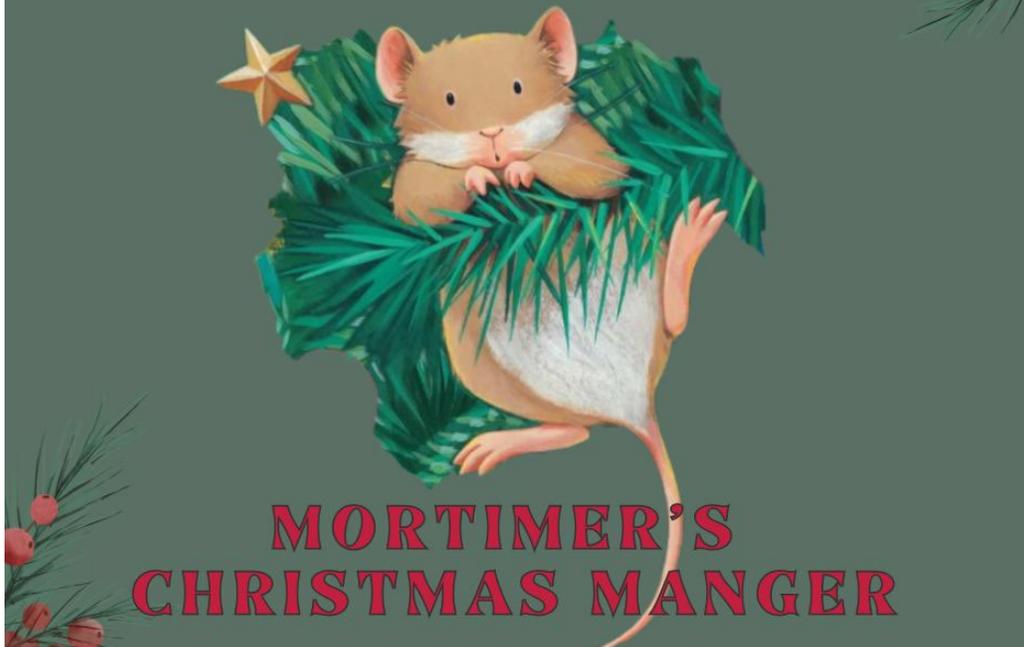


STORIES OF THE SEASON
& STORIES BEHIND THE SONGS



Larchmont Avenue Church

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

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

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



PRELUDE

“Midnight Clear”

Ben Wien, piano

Arr. Marianne Kim

INTROIT

“The Root of Jesse”

Douglas Kostner

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Peter Bynum

***THE PEACE**

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

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

The DeFelice Family

One: Because so many wander through wilderness days, because shadows linger in valleys we all know too well, and because our world aches for healing, we light candles.

All: Because suffering is real—yet often unseen—and because our attention is so easily pulled away, we light candles.

One: One for hope, one for peace, one for joy, and now, one for love...*(four candles are lit)*

All: May these flames stretch beyond our walls, softening all that is hardened.

One: May they shine into every shadowed place with tenderness and truth.

All: And may their fire clear space within us for love fierce enough to transform the world.

One: Children of God, do not fear—love is already rewriting the story.

***OPENING HYMN #100 “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

Rev. Anna Grace Claunch

Shepherd of our souls, we anticipate your coming but do not feel ready.

We have done too much, and not done enough. We have focused too much on ourselves, and not enough on others. Reclaim us, renew us, and restore us, O God. Let your face shine, that we might find you again, and follow...

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)*

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

STORY OF THE SEASON *Mortimer's Christmas Manger*

Rev. Bynum

by Karma Wilson and Jane Chapman

ANTHEM

“Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day”

Arr. Howard Helvey

Ben Wien & Douglas Kostner, piano

*Tomorrow shall be my dancing day:
I would my true love did so chance
to see the legend of my play,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
This have I done for my true love.*

*Then was I born of a virgin pure,
Of her I took fleshly substance;
Thus was I knit to man's nature,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
This have I done for my true love.*

*In a manger laid and wrapped I was,
So very poor this was my chance,
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass,
To call my true love to my dance;
Sing O my love, O my love, my love, my love;
This have I done for my true love.*

NEW TESTAMENT READING Matthew 1:18-25

SERMON

“Under Sealed Orders”

Rev. Bynum

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE HYMN #104 *(verse 1)*

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you a-right? Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight! O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast, to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Claunch

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

“Away in a Manger”
Ben Wien & Douglas Kostner

Arr. Robert Vandall

***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 #115**

“Away in a Manger”

***BENEDICTION**

Rev. Bynum

POSTLUDE

“Angels We Have Heard on High”
Ben Wien & Douglas Kostner, piano

Arr. Victor Labenske

*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.*

100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
 3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
 4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
 work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
 stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
 mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
 depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
 jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
 liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
 Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
 The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
 This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
 those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
 food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
 prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

By employing an energetic Irish folk song for its melody, this ballad-like paraphrase of the *Magnificat*, Mary's song at her meeting with her relative Elizabeth (Luke 1:46-55), recaptures both the wonder and the faith of the young woman who first recognized what God was doing.



name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

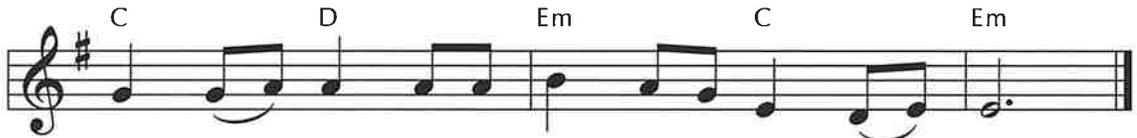
Refrain



My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the



fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the



dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.

Away in a Manger

Capo 3: (D)
F

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

(A7)
C7

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

(G)
Bb

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

(A7)
C7

(D)
F

(Em)
Gm

(A7)
C7

(D)
F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.

Announcements & Happenings

FLOWERS & PRAYERS

- Do you have a prayer request to share? Call our prayer line (914) 834-1800, ext. 342.
- **Christmas Poinsettias:** Dedicate a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one. Suggested donation is \$30/plant. Sign up by TODAY (www.lacny.org/givingpage). Select Poinsettia option in the drop-down menu.

HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

- Sunday 12/21 – **Christmas Open House at the Manse** (181 Larchmont Avenue) 4-6 pm.
- Sunday 12/21 – **Youth Christmas Party** (210 Villa Ave, Mamaroneck) 2 pm
- Monday 12/22 – **Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service** 7 pm
- Wednesday 12/24 – **Family Friendly Christmas Eve Service** 5 pm
– **Traditional Candlelight Christmas Eve Service** 8 pm

MUSIC

Dec 21: Pianist: Ben Wien & LAC Advent Choir

Christmas Eve 5 PM service: Flautists: Melanie Huang, Claudia Huter, Nico Crevier, Imogen Morrall. String Quartet.

Christmas Eve: 8 PM service: Larchmont Symphonia, LAC Christmas Choir. Flautists: Melanie Huang, Claudia Huter, Nico Crevier, Imogen Morrall. Harpist: Debra Whitman. Pianist Ben Wien

SERVICE

On **January 25th** during Coffee Hour the 2026 Service Trip Team will be having a fundraiser for their February trip to the Dominican Republic. Come join us for pancakes and to learn more about the work they will be doing!

THIS WEEK AT LAC

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

10:00 am Worship (Sanctuary/Online)
11:00 am Coffee Hour (Russell Hall)
2:00 pm Youth Christmas Party (AP Manse)
4:00 pm Manse Open House

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

7:00 pm Longest Night Service (Sanctuary)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)
8:00 pm Christmas Eve Service (Sanctuary)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

Merry Christmas!

The church office will be closed December 25-26, December 29-31, and January 1-2.

STAY CONNECTED

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)

