

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
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2650 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131-3616
402-341-7761
www.kmlchurch.org

December 5, 2021

9:00 & 11:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT



Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the LORD of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

G Amen.

P Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P God for whom we wait,

G **in the presence of one another,
we confess our sin before you.**

We fail in believing that your good news is for us.

We falter in our call to tend your creation.

We find our sense of self in material wealth.

We fear those different from ourselves.

**We forget that we are your children
and turn away from your love.**

Forgive us, Blessed One,

and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

P God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, † your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

G Amen.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!</p> | <p>3 Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!</p> |
| <p>2 God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you!
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!</p> | <p>4 His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding:
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!</p> |

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward. Then, they may either follow the teacher upstairs for an extended children's sermon (joining us again later in time for Communion) or they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon.

- P** We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may serve our neighbors in need. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.
- G** Amen.

HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

ELW 257 vs. 2

- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way.**

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

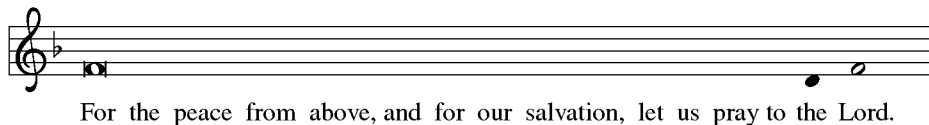
APOSTOLIC GREETING

- ☐ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- ☑ **And also with you.**

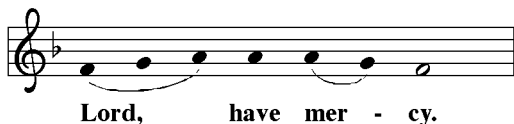
KYRIE



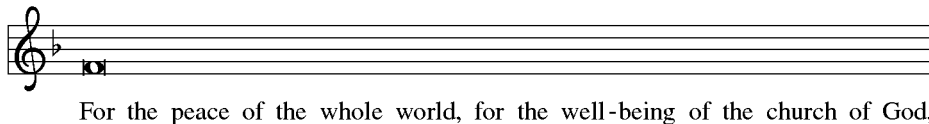
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



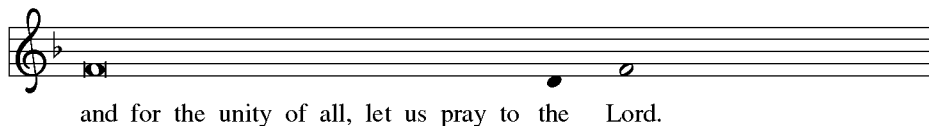
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



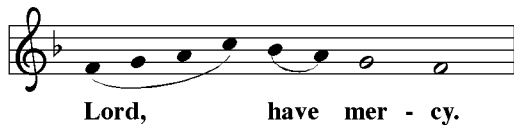
Lord, have mer - cy.



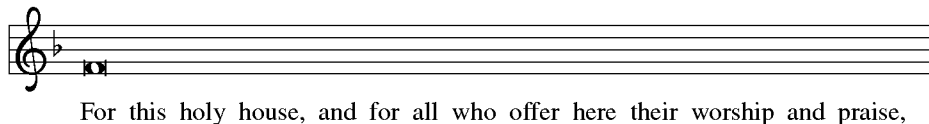
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



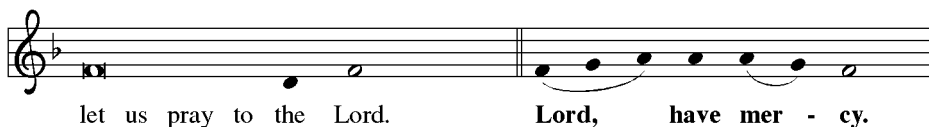
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



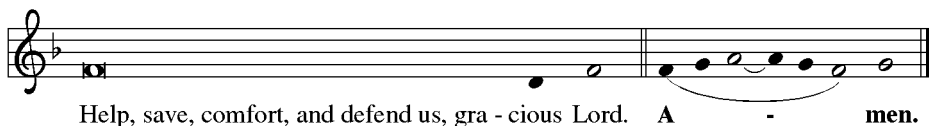
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son.
- C** **By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1-4

God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means “my messenger”) will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God’s people, as silver and gold are refined.

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. ²But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

L The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Luke 1:68-79 (read responsively)

⁶⁸Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,
you have come to your people and set them free.

⁶⁹**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of your servant David.**

⁷⁰Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies,

⁷¹from the hands of all who hate us,

⁷²**to show mercy to our forebears,
and to remember your holy covenant.**

⁷³This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:

⁷⁴to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**free to worship you without fear,
⁷⁵holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.**

⁷⁶And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,

for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

⁷⁷**to give God’s people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

⁷⁸In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

⁷⁹**to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:3-11

The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.

I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

☑ Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

⁵Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’.”

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

SERMON

Pastor Duminy

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“There’s a Voice in the Wilderness”

ELW 255

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 There's a voice in the wilderness crying,
a call from the ways untrod:
Prepare in the desert a highway,
a highway for our God!
The valleys shall be exalted,
the lofty hills brought low;
make straight all the crooked places
where God, our God, may go!</p> | <p>2 O Jerusalem, herald good tidings,
ascend to the heights and sing!
Proclaim to a desolate people
the coming of their king.
Like flow'rs of the field we perish,
like grass our works decay;
the pow'r and the pomp of nations
shall pass like a dream away.</p> |
| <p>3 But the word of our Savior is faithful,
the arm of our God is strong,
who stands in the midst of the nations
and soon will right the wrong.
Lord, feed your flock like a shepherd,
the lambs so gently hold;
in pastures of peace now lead them,
and bring them to your fold.</p> | |

THE APOSTLES' CREED

- P** God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- C** **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

- Response:** Hear us, O God.
 Your mercy is great.

(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)

Sympathy: to the family and friends of John Perkins, father of Jeff Perkins and Jinette Cswercko

Illness: Richard Bock, Judy Boelts, Karen Buchholz, Don Burton, Gail Durban, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Richard Holzer, Renee Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Rosanne Klug, mother of David Klug, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Bobbie Powell, John Rayno, Toby Rees, Sheri Tipton, John Waterman, Darlene White, Don Zinnecker

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Wyatt Johnson, Josh Kropenske, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, Joel Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Rev. Rachel Ringlaben, Argentina; Meghan Brown Saavedra, Mexico; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators

Other Prayers: *Seminarians*—Adam Klinker, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks, Justin Perkins

WE SHARE GOD’S PEACE

- The peace of Christ be with you always.
 And also with you.

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Please Support the overall ministry of Kountze Memorial during these difficult times. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online. If you are able, please mail in your offering or donate on-line. Thank you!



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Every Valley”

John Ness Beck

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain made low;
and the crooked made straight, and the rough places plain.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain made low;
and the crooked straight, and the rough places plain, and all flesh shall see it together.

And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, revealed, and all flesh shall see it together;
for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

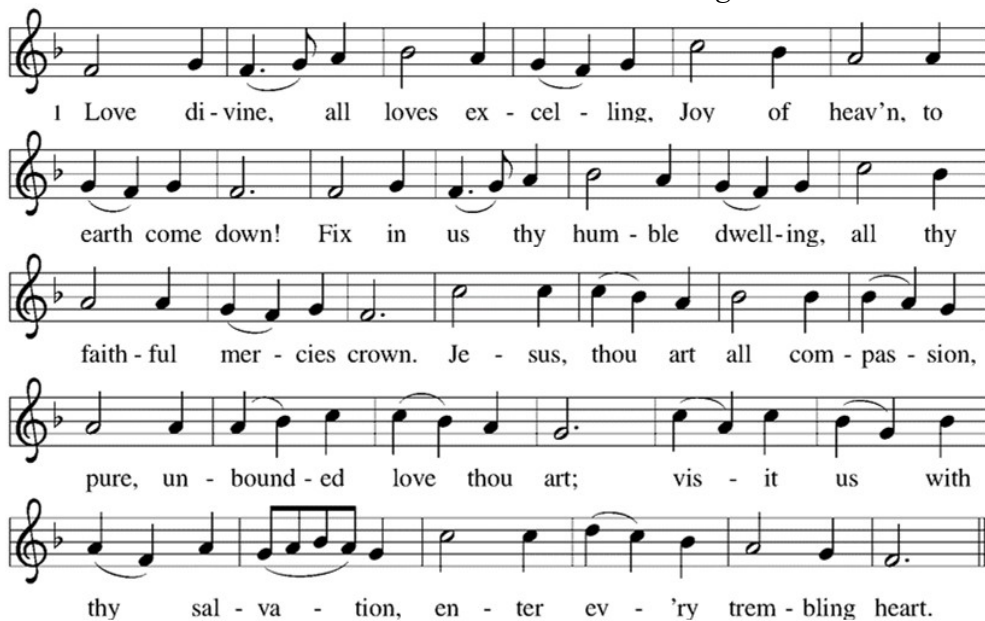
THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

ELW 631, vs. 1

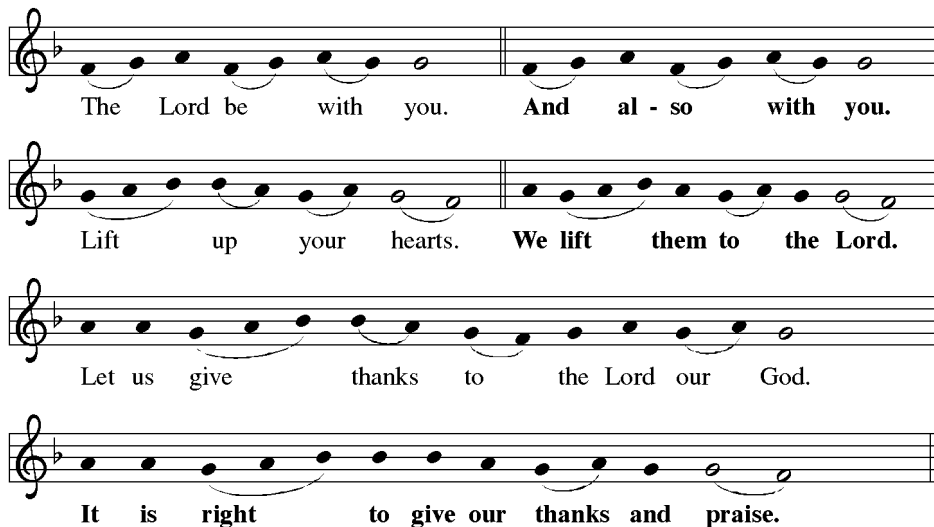


The musical score is written on five staves of a single treble clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: "I Love di-vine, all loves ex-cel-ling, Joy of heav'n, to earth come down! Fix in us thy hum-ble dwell-ing, all thy faith-ful mer-cies crown. Je-sus, thou art all com-pas-sion, pure, un-bound-ed love thou art; vis-it us with thy sal-va-tion, en-ter ev-'ry trem-bling heart." The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some rests and phrasing slurs.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ God of our waiting and watching,
- ☑ **we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

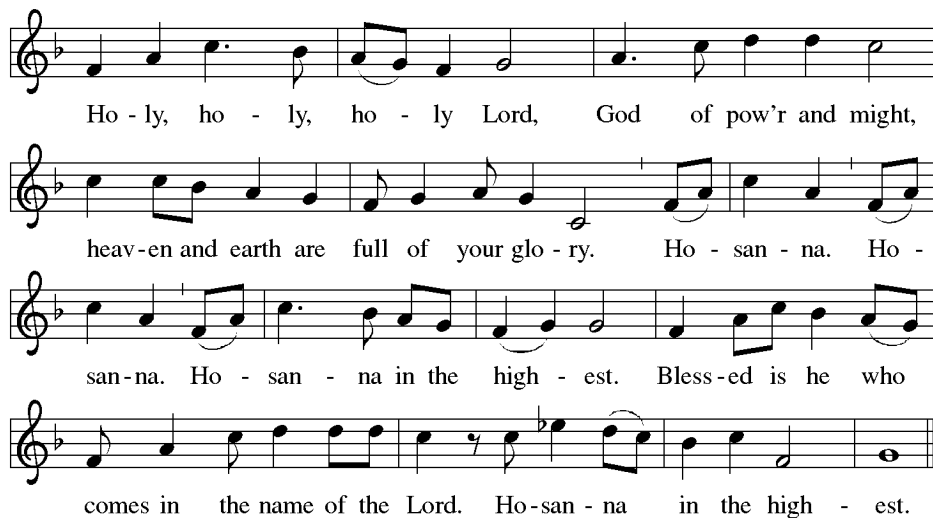
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

- ☐ It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted us, your people, with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life...Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
- C** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- P** With this bread and cup... We look with hope for his coming.
- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** Holy God, we long for your Spirit...Bring the gift of peace on earth.
- C** **Come, Holy Spirit.**
- P** All praise and glory are yours...one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P** Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:

- C** **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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- P** Feast on God's gift of grace.
- C** **We come to Christ's banquet.**

THE DISTRIBUTION

All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You feel weak in faith, come to be strengthened. And you who feel you have no faith, come so that the God of steadfast love will touch your heart with hope and joy.

Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.

(sit)

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

- 1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly-minded,
for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descending
comes full homage to demand.**
- 2 King of kings, yet born of Mary,
as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful
his own self for heav'nly food.**
- 3 Rank on rank the host of heaven
spreads its vanguard on the way;
as the Light of light, descending
from the realms of endless day,
comes, the pow'rs of hell to vanquish,
as the darkness clears away.**
- 4 At his feet the six-winged seraph,
cherubim with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence,
as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"**

Text: Liturgy of St. James; tr. Gerard Moultrie, 1829-1885, alt.

Refrain

- One bread, one body, one Lord of all;
one cup of blessing which we bless,
and we, though many throughout the earth,
we are one body in this one Lord.**
- 1 Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
woman or man, no more. *Refrain***
- 2 Many the gifts, many the works,
one in the Lord of all. *Refrain***
- 3 Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
gathered to one for all. *Refrain***

Text: John Foley, SJ, b. 1939
Text © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ and OCP Publications,
5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.
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“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

- 1 "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.**
- 2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills, bow down in humble favor.**
- 3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's 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.**

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635-1711;
tr. Catherine Winkworth. 1827-1878. alt.

COMMUNION BLESSING

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☞ Most High God,
☞ you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of
your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and
our guest. Amen.**

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- ☞ The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, though Jesus Christ for whom we wait.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!”

ELW 246

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding!
"Christ is near," we hear it say.
"Cast away the works of darkness,
all you children of the day!"</p> <p>2 Wakened by the solemn warning,
from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling,
shines upon the morning skies.</p> | <p>3 See the Lamb, so long expected,
come with pardon down from heav'n.
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
one and all, to be forgiv'n;</p> <p>4 So, when next he comes in glory
and the world is wrapped in fear,
he will shield us with his mercy
and with words of love draw near.</p> <p>5 Honor, glory, might, and blessing
to the Father and the Son
with the everlasting Spirit
while unending ages run!</p> |
|---|---|

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Christ is near.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, Organist



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KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Shari Duminy	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu	Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe	Christian Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Sarah Jewell	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Kayla Slaight	Housekeeper
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton	Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer	Director of the Weber Clinic
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

December 4 & 5, 2021

Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a "City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry" and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for over 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.

Holy Communion

All who are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. Instructions will be provided during worship. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully.

Children in Worship

We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Quiet activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a Quiet Room, just off the west side of the main sanctuary, that includes a TV and a variety of toys, games, and books for young children.

Nursery

Our nursery is available from 9 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it

Attendance Cards

All those attending worship are encouraged to fill out the card included in your bulletin and place in the offering plate.

Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices

Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

E-news & Social Media

If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the

attendance card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828.

Today at Kountze

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in memory of Jean Holcombe by Tom Holcombe

Children's Choir

9:05 AM

Ages K-6th Grade

Barb Carlsen will be leading the singers during the 9:00 AM sermon. Those interested in participating in choir will come forward for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath and then go to the upstairs choir room for practice before returning for Communion.

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and fellowship. There are no scheduled topics for Forum at this time.

Sunday School

Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

Join us on Sundays on the 2nd floor for Sunday School. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9:00—10:00 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery).

Youth Forum

Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

All 7th - 12th Graders are invited to join us!

This Sunday—Serving in the World

Today at Kountze, continued on next page

Today at Kountze, *continued*

Nebraska Synod Middle School Youth Gathering Saturday, January 5

9:00 AM—6:00 PM

Carol Joy Holling Camp

Words: What R U Trying 2 Say? Is the theme of the day. Sixth—8th graders are invited to participate with the cost for the day being \$20. Information can be found on the Youth Board in the Youth Room. Registration fee is due in the church office by Sunday, December 5.

At this time, if you need to be able to get into the church building after office hours or on weekends outside of worship times, please talk with the church staff at least the day before you plan to be here so we are able to make sure doors can be opened and



alarms will not sound which, if the alarm goes off, will bring the police to attend your event...



We appreciate your assistance and patience.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

December 5 Sunday

Homebound Communion

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:10 AM Children's Choir (K-6th gr)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2 yr-6th gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

December 6 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

December 7 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

December 8 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group

11:00 AM Advent Lunch

11:00 AM Devotions @ deFreese Manor

12:15 PM Worship

5:30 PM Advent Dinner

6:30 PM Holden Evening Prayer—in-person or live-streamed

December 9 Thursday

9:30 AM WELCA Board

11:30 AM Property Committee

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

December 10 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

December 11 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

December 12 Sunday

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

Ongoing and Coming Soon

Mid-week Advent Services

The Days are Surely
Coming.... will be our

theme for Advent this year. We join with ELCA World Hunger in pondering the scripture from Jeremiah and Luke that focus on Zachariah, John the Baptist, and Elizabeth. Join us at 12:15 PM for our Eucharist Worship or at 6:30 PM for Holden Evening Prayer on Wednesdays, December 8, 15, & 22.

If you are unable to worship in person, we are live-streaming the Wednesday evening service. A bulletin may be found on our website.

Advent

Advent Meals

Please join us for Advent meals. Bring your family, friends, neighbors, or call your church friends and meet at Kountze for lunch or dinner. Maybe you met someone new at coffee and cookie hour, give them a call and invite them.

We will need some volunteers to help prepare, serve, clean up, put out placemats, pour drinks, run the dishwasher, etc. so no culinary experience is necessary. If you love to cook, we would be most happy to have you help us with one or all of the meals. Please consider taking an hour or two this Advent season to volunteer before, during, or after

Ongoing and Coming Soon *continued*

one of the meals. Please call the church office if you are able to help. The tentative menu(s) subject to minor changes follows:

December 8

Meatloaf
Mashed potatoes (**not** out of a box)
Mixed steamed vegetables
Dinner roll w/butter
Desert T.B.A.

December 15

Peruvian baked chicken
Cilantro lime rice (plain rice available)
Vegetable
Roll with butter
Desert T.B.A.

December 22

Baked spaghetti w/ meat sauce or alfredo
Garden salad
Garlic bread
Desert T.B.A.

All meals are free will offering and served with choice of coffee, water, or tea.

Lunch: 11:00 AM – Noon

Supper: 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Children's Christmas Program

The program, "The Unbelievable, Super Fantastic, Truly Amazing, Christmas Extravaganza", will be held on December 19 at the 9:00 service only.

The ELCA Wittenberg Center Presents:

The Magnificat: Turning the World Upside Down

The ELCA Wittenberg Center invites you to a three-part webinar series to mark the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's commentary on the Magnificat and the continued significance of Mary's voice. Each hour-long session will take place at 12 PM Central time.

December 15

My Soul Magnifies the Lord:
The Gift of Mary's Voice

December 16

Brought Down the Mighty From Their Thrones:
The Strength of Mary's Voice

December 17

From Generation to Generation:
The Future of Mary's Voice

Register at <http://bit.ly/MagnificatWebinar>

Kountze Food Pantry

Kountze Food Pantry is once again collecting gloves, mittens, and hats! There is always a need in the winter months. Please leave your donations in the pantry box in Fellowship Hall or in the office. Your kindness is greatly appreciated by our guests! Please note: Family Fare receipts must be complete in order to be counted. Partial receipts cannot be submitted.

Pantry Volunteers Needed:

Mondays: 7:30 - 9 AM; 9 - 11 AM; 11 AM - 1 PM

Fridays: 4 - 7 PM

If you would like to help, please sign up to volunteer at the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/200834787701155>

Join us for Worship

Friday, December 24
Christmas Eve 4:00, 7:00, & 11:00 PM

Saturday, December 25
Christmas Day 10:00 AM

4:00 PM—Family Oriented
7:00 & 11:00 PM—Candlelight

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 24

Sunday: 9:00: 171 **11:00:** 50

Wednesday: 12:15: 23 **6:30 :** 44

Total: 312

Streaming: 64

Cox Cable: 210

Pantry Guests Served: 603 (inc. 199 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 0

Offering:

\$11,665.00 (Regular) \$2,262.33 (Specials)

\$3,322.00 (Debt Reduction)

Prepare the way of Jesus.

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday

Sunday	Luke 3:1-6	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Malachi 3:1-4	The promised messenger
Tuesday	Philippians 1:3-11	Peace to God's people
Wednesday	Psalm 126	Harvest of joy
Thursday	Proverbs 24:13-14	Seek wisdom
Friday	Isaiah 40:1-11	A voice in the desert
Saturday	Luke 1:68-79	Zechariah's prophesy
Sunday	Luke 3:7-18	One more powerful is coming



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[A]s it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Luke 3:4 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, may we join with John the Baptist to prepare your way into the world that all may know hope, the forgiveness of sins, and the salvation you bring. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we give you thanks for this meal and your tender mercies that bless us, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord Jesus bless you with hope for each new day.

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When you are expecting company in your home, how do you prepare for their visit?
- How does preparing for the coming of Christ reflect your hope for the future?

Read: Luke 3:1-6.

Baptism by John the Baptist was not the same as that of Jesus. Jesus' baptism brings the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:16). It is our Christian baptism that gives birth to a life of faith and salvation. John's baptism does reveal something about our life in Christ through baptism: daily renewal through repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Christian baptism begins a way of life of daily renewal in grace, free to confess shortcomings and free to receive forgiveness, new life, and new opportunities to love one's neighbor. John prepares the way of Jesus into the world, and so do we with our daily return to our baptism. Our faith, born by the Spirit, gives hope not only to us, but to the whole world because in our relationships with others, we speak of repentance, forgiveness, and salvation for all.

Discuss: How do you share this faith with others?

Pray: **Come, Lord Jesus, renew us in faith each day that we may prepare for your coming into our lives so that all may live in hope through the power of forgiveness. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how can you share the hope of Jesus' coming through your actions or words?

This is the Second Sunday of Advent. Light two blue/purple candles on the Advent wreath. *Say:* **We light the first candle, the Prophet's candle, and the second candle, the Bethlehem candle, naming where Jesus will be born. May we prepare for the coming of Christ into our lives and our world with confidence and with hope for all the world.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18