

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

## A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

**Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor**  
**H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor**  
**Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor**

**2650 Farnam Street**  
**Omaha, NE 68131-3616**  
**402-341-7761**  
**[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)**

**December 12, 2021**

**9:00 & 11:00 AM**

**THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT**



*Christ's presence in our midst in the wonder of the holy supper is cause for singing. The nearness of the God in prayer, in every circumstance, is cause for rejoicing. The coming of one "more powerful" than John, even with a winnowing fork in hand, is good news—and cause for exultation—for us who are being saved. Great joy is the tone for the third Sunday of Advent.*

# 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><b>1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,<br/>the Savior promised long;<br/>let ev'ry heart prepare a throne<br/>and ev'ry voice a song.</b></p> | <p><b>3 He comes the broken heart to bind,<br/>the bleeding soul to cure,<br/>and with the treasures of his grace<br/>to enrich the humble poor.</b></p> |
| <p><b>2 He comes the pris'ners to release,<br/>in Satan's bondage held.<br/>The gates of brass before him burst,<br/>the iron fetters yield.</b></p>   | <p><b>4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,<br/>your welcome shall proclaim,<br/>and heav'n's eternal arches ring<br/>with your beloved name.</b></p>    |

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

### LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

*Children (aged 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> 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. 3

- 2 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law in cloud, and majesty, and awe.**

*Refrain*

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

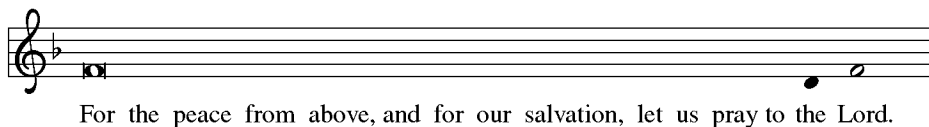
## APOSTOLIC GREETING

- ☐ 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.**

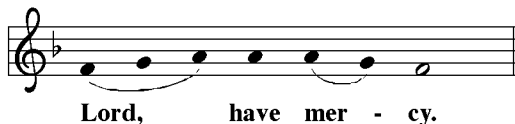
## KYRIE



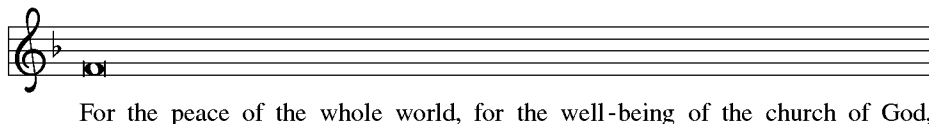
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mer - cy.**



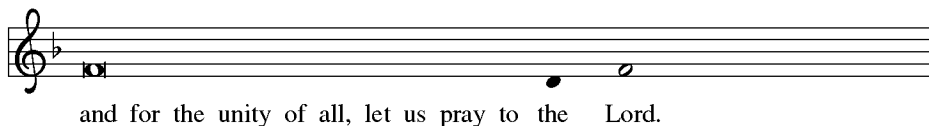
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



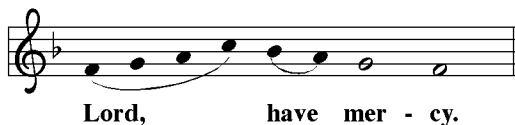
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



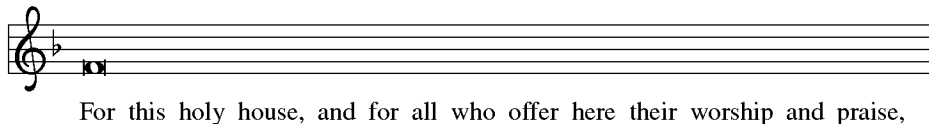
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



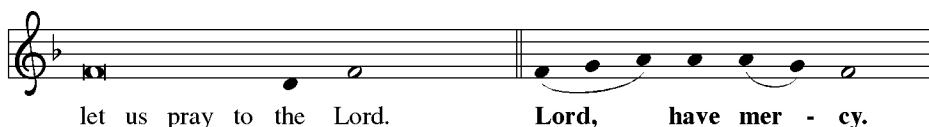
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



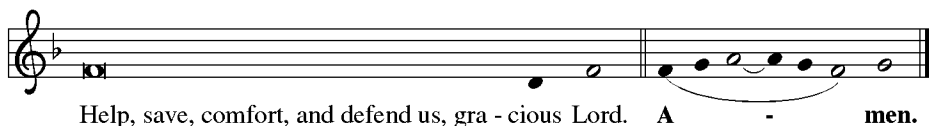
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



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 the wills of your faithful people, Lord, God,  
**C** and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; 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

**Zephaniah 3:14-20**

*The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.*

**S**ing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

<sup>15</sup>The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

<sup>16</sup>On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

<sup>17</sup>The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing

<sup>18</sup>as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

<sup>19</sup>I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup>At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

**L** The word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### PSALM: Isaiah 12:2-6 (read responsively)

<sup>2</sup>Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,  
for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation.

<sup>3</sup>**With joy you will draw water  
from the wells of salvation.**

<sup>4</sup>And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name;  
make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup>**Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously;  
let this be known in all the earth.**

<sup>6</sup>Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion,  
**for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.**

## SECOND READING

Philippians 4:4-7

*Despite being in prison, Paul is remarkably upbeat as he writes this letter. Here, he urges his friends in Philippi to trust God with all their worries and concerns with the hope that they will experience God's joy and peace.*

**R**ejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup>Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup>Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

☐ 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 3:7-18

*John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.*

**J**ohn said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “*You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?*” <sup>8</sup>*Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.* <sup>9</sup>*Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”*

<sup>10</sup>And the crowds asked him, “*What then should we do?*” <sup>11</sup>In reply he said to them, “*Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.*” <sup>12</sup>Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “*Teacher, what should we do?*” <sup>13</sup>He said to them, “*Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.*” <sup>14</sup>Soldiers

also asked him, “*And we, what should we do?*” He said to them, “*Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.*”

<sup>15</sup>As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup>John answered all of them by saying, “*I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*” <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup>So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

**SERMON**

*Pastor Hall*

(stand)

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*“All Earth is Hopeful”*

**ELW 266**

- 1 All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last!  
Furrows lie open for God's creative task:  
this, the labor of people who struggle to see  
how God's truth and justice set ev'rybody free.**
- 2 People of Israel, you heard the prophet tell:  
"A virgin mother will bear Emmanuel";  
she conceived him, "God with us,"  
our brother, whose birth  
restores hope and courage to children of this earth.**
- 3 Mountains and valleys will have to be prepared;  
new highways opened, new protocols declared.  
Almost here! God is nearing, in beauty and grace!  
All clear ev'ry gateway, in haste, come out in haste!**
- 4 We first saw Jesus a baby in a crib.  
This same Lord Jesus today has come to live  
in our world; he is present, in neighbors we see  
our Jesus is with us, and ever sets us free.**

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946



## 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:** **P** Hear us, O God.  
**C** **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 Joseph S. Jones, father of Abbi Carreto

**Illness:** Richard Bock, Judy Boelts, Karen Buchholz, Don Burton, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Susie Henry, Richard Holzer, Renee Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Rosanne 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, 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

*“Prepare Ye the Way”*

by Michael Barrett

Sing we now the promise! Christ is coming soon!  
Sing we out in gladness! Christ is coming soon!  
Make a joyful noise. Lift high your heart and voice.  
Sing we now Hosanna! Christ is coming soon!

Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Prepare ye the way.

Let every valley be exalted. Let every mighty mountain be brought low.  
The crooked be made straight. The rugged places plain.  
Let all the world prepare the way! Prepare the way!

Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.  
Prepare the way of the Lord. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Prepare ye the way. Prepare ye the way. Prepare ye the way.  
Prepare ye the way. Prepare ye the way!

### THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

## OFFERTORY HYMN

*“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”*

ELW 631, vs. 1

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.

## OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of our waiting and watching,
- C** 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.

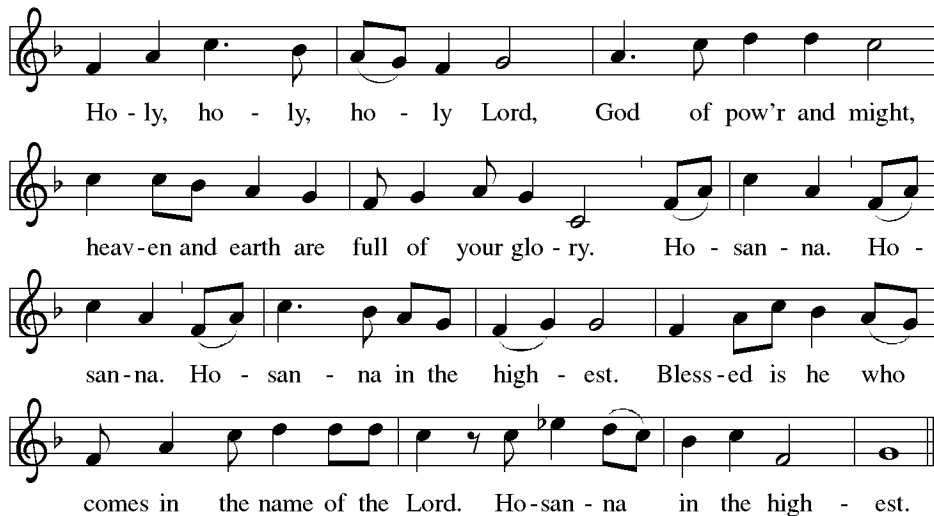
## HOLY COMMUNION

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.

## PREFACE FOR ADVENT

- P** 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 all the choir of angels, 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.

## EUCCHARISTIC 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

☒ 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

☐ Feast on God's gift of grace.

☒ We come to Christ's banquet.

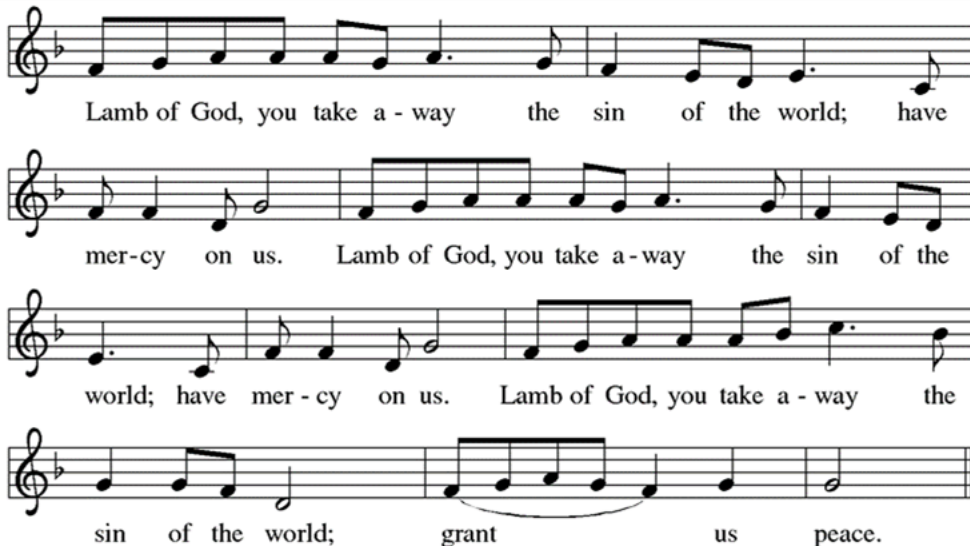
## THE DISTRIBUTION

*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 O Lord, we praise you,  
 bless you, and adore you,  
 in thanksgiving bow before you.  
 Here with your body  
 and your blood you nourish  
 our weak souls that they may flourish.  
 O Lord, have mercy!  
 May your body, Lord, born of Mary,  
 that our sins and sorrows did carry,  
 and your blood for us plead  
 in all trial, fear, and need:  
 O Lord, have mercy!**

**2 Your holy body  
 into death was given,  
 life to win for us in heaven.  
 No greater love than  
 this to you could bind us;  
 may this feast of that remind us!  
 O Lord, have mercy!  
 Lord, your kindness so much did move you  
 that your blood now moves us to love you.  
 All our debt you have paid;  
 peace with God once more is made.  
 O Lord, have mercy!**

**3 Lord God, bestow on  
 us your grace and favor,  
 that we follow Christ our Savior  
 and live together  
 here in love and union,  
 nor repent this blest communion.  
 O Lord, have mercy!  
 Let not your good Spirit forsake us,  
 by this holy banquet remake us.  
 Give your church, Lord, to see  
 days of peace and unity.  
 O Lord, have mercy!**

Text: German hymn, 15th cent., st. 1;  
 Martin Luther, 1483-1546, sts. 2-3; tr. composite

- 1** Around you, O Lord Jesus,  
your own you gather still  
to share the feast you give us  
with grace our lives to fill.  
You say to us so lovingly,  
“Take, eat! This is my body!  
Take, drink! This is my blood!”
- 2** We hear your invitation,  
and heed, O Lord, your call;  
your word of consolation  
is spoken here to all.  
It draws us to your loving heart;  
it brings to us your blessing,  
which never will depart.

- 3** We are your own forever;  
until our final breath  
we will be true and never  
in joy, in grief, in death  
depart from you, for you are still  
among your people dwelling,  
as you have said you will.

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

“You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”

*Refrain*

- You satisfy the hungry heart  
with gift of finest wheat.  
Come give to us, O saving Lord,  
the bread of life to eat.
- 1** As when the shepherd calls his sheep,  
they know and heed his voice;  
so when you call your fam'ly, Lord,  
we follow and rejoice. *Refrain*
- 2** With joyful lips we sing to you  
our praise and gratitude  
that you should count us worthy, Lord,  
to share this heav'nly food. *Refrain*
- 3** Is not the cup we bless and share  
the blood of Christ outpoured?  
Do not one cup, one loaf, declare  
our oneness in the Lord? *Refrain*
- 4** The myst'ry of your presence, Lord,  
no mortal tongue can tell:  
whom all the world cannot contain  
comes in our hearts to dwell. *Refrain*
- 5** You give yourself to us, O Lord;  
then selfless let us be,  
to serve each other in your name  
in truth and charity. *Refrain*

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997  
Text © 1977 Archdiocese of Philadelphia

## COMMUNION BLESSING

*(stand)*

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**P** Most High God,

**G** 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

### BLESSING

**P** 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

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

ELW 249

**1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of kings!**

**3 We hail you as our Savior, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without your grace we waste away  
like flow'rs that wither and decay.**

**2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;  
make straight the way for God within,  
and let us all our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.**

**4 Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,  
and make us rise to fall no more;  
oh, let your face upon us shine  
and fill the world with love divine.**

**5 All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won,  
whom with the Father we adore,  
and Holy Spirit, evermore.**

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite

### DISMISSAL

**P** Go in peace. Christ is near.

**G** Thanks be to God.

### POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

*Mark Jones, Organist*



## 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](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

**December 11 & 12, 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**

### **Children's Choir**

**9:05 AM**

#### **Ages K-6<sup>th</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Graders are invited to join us!

**This Sunday**—Youth Gathering Bible Study – Living God's Boundless Forgiveness

## Today at Kountze, *continued*

### Poinsettias

**Cost: \$10.00 each.**

**Deadline to order: Today, Sunday, December 12**

Giving a poinsettia is a special way to honor or remember loved ones. You may also simply give a gift of love to honor someone special. If you would

like to order a poinsettia, please fill out the form in the bulletin and drop it in the offering plate during Worship. Poinsettias will be available for pickup after the 11:00 PM Service on Christmas Eve or after the 10:00 AM Worship Service on Christmas Day.

## This Week at Kountze Memorial

### 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-6<sup>th</sup> gr)  
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)  
10:10 AM Adult Forum

### December 13 Monday

9:00 AM Joseph Scott Jones Visitation & Funeral  
10:00 AM Pantry

### December 14 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting  
7:00 PM Circle 3 - Kountze Commons Link

### December 15 Wednesday

Good News Deadline  
11:00 AM Advent Lunch  
12:15 PM Worship  
5:30 PM Advent Dinner  
6:30 PM Holden Evening Prayer

### December 16 Thursday

Council Reports Due  
12:00 PM Circle 4 - Potluck  
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic  
7:00 PM Circle 5

### December 17 Friday

1:00 PM Barb Carlsen's Swing Choir Concert @ KMLC  
5:00 PM Pantry

### December 18 Saturday

9:00 AM Christmas Program Rehearsal  
5:00 PM Worship

### December 19 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-6<sup>th</sup> gr)  
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)  
10:10 AM Adult Forum  
10:30 AM Executive Committee

## Ongoing and Coming Soon

### Worship Assistants Needed

**Advent, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Beyond...**

If you are a Communion Assistant or Lector and would like to serve on Christmas Eve or Day—or any other time—please be sure to sign up (SignUp Genius) as soon as possible.

If you are an Usher, there is an Usher schedule in the back of the Sanctuary for you to sign up on as soon as you know which service you will be attending. Anyone wishing to help can also call the church office to sign up if you prefer. Thank you for serving in this way! New volunteers are always welcome.

### 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 Zechariah, 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 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 Meals

**Wednesdays—11:00 AM or 5:30 PM**

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.

### Advent Meal Volunteers Still Needed

Please call the church office if you are able to help.

## Ongoing and Coming Soon *continued*

The tentative menu(s) subject to minor changes follows:

### 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

### Willowdale Elementary Swing Choir Concert

#### Held at Kountze Memorial

**Barb Carlsen, Director**

**Friday, December 17, 1:00—2:00 PM**

Barb is bringing her 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade swing choir to Kountze for a short concert for their parents. We are invited to attend the concert as well.

### Children's Christmas Program Rehearsal

**Saturday, December 18, 9:00—11:00 AM**

### Children's Christmas Program

**December 19, 9:00 AM**

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 500<sup>th</sup> 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:** 33

**Sunday: 9:00:** 126 **11:00:** 52

**Wednesday: 12:15 PM:** 30 **6:30 PM:** 45

**Total:** 286

**Streaming:** 70

**Cox Cable:** 197

**Pantry Guests Served:** 700 (inc. 237 children)

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 25

**Offering:**

\$16,145.00 (Regular) \$5,651.56 (Specials)

\$51,362.00 (Debt Reduction)

*Joyous news for the needy.*

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 3:7-18	One more powerful is coming
Monday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	A song of joy
Tuesday	Philippians 4:4-7	The Lord is near
Wednesday	Isaiah 55:6-13	Invitation to abundant life
Thursday	2 Corinthians 8:1-15	Encouragement to be generous
Friday	Proverbs 15:23	Expressing joy with our words
Saturday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Thanksgiving and praise
Sunday	Luke 1:39-55	Mary visits Elizabeth



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*So, with many other exhortations, he [John the Baptist] proclaimed the good news to the people. Luke 3:18 (NRSV)*

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

God of love, bring your joy and compassion to those in need and help us to change our ways when we are insensitive to others, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, with this food give us joy to know that you care for us every day of our lives through Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the power and love of God give you joy through Christ our Lord.

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

- Tell or think about a time you experienced great joy.
- How does the message of John the Baptizer bring joy as well as repentance?

*Read:* Luke 3:7-18.

John the Baptist calls the people, “*brood of vipers.*” He demands repentance. What does not reflect “*good fruits*” of repentance will be burned up in “*unquenchable fire.*” John calls his message “*good news.*” Really? Yes, really. The good news is that injustices that harm people’s lives will not be tolerated. We can do simple steps to make a positive difference by giving food, clothing, and fair treatment to others. All of this prepares us for the coming of the Messiah who baptizes with the Holy Spirit and a cleansing fire. The good news for a life of faith is that there is real joy in God through Jesus Christ. The power of God is present in this Messiah, this Jesus. Thanks be to God for this joyous news!

*Discuss:* What steps can we take to prepare for the coming of the Messiah?

*Pray:* **Come, Lord Jesus, bring your power and your rule of justice and mercy to all the world, and lead us to bring joy and love to others. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, in what way can you bring joy to the needy?

This is the Third Sunday of Advent. Light two blue/purple candles and the pink candle on the Advent Wreath.

*Say:* **We light the first candle, the Prophet’s candle, the second candle, the Bethlehem candle, and the pink candle, the Shepherd’s candle, representing the joy the shepherds felt upon finding the Christ child. May we prepare with joy for the coming of Christ Jesus our Lord.**

*Pray:* **Dear God, give us faith to trust your word, love to care for others, hope in your promise, and joy for the coming of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK’S READINGS:** Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55  
Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]