

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

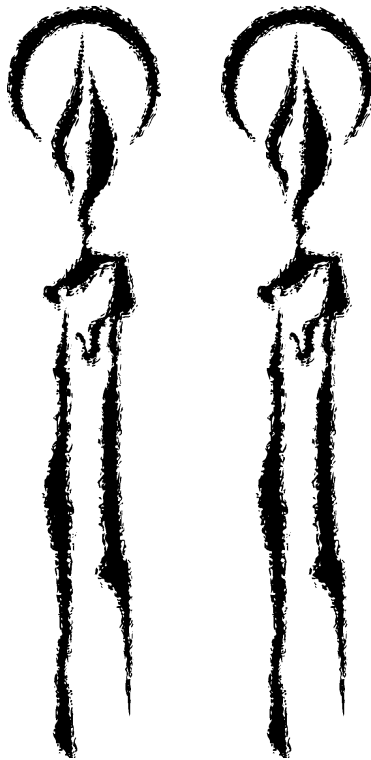
Stephen Griffith, Transition Senior Pastor
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Gretchen Olson Kopp, Vicar

2650 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131-3616
402-341-7761
www.kmlchurch.org

December 4, 2022

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT



At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHILDREN'S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the service, or follow Ms. Boe upstairs for an activity in the Sunday School room, and Ms. Carlsen for Children's Choir.

(stand)

ADVENT WREATH 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.**

*Text: Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.*

ADVENT WREATH PRAYER

- ☐ We praise you, O God,
☑ for this circle of light that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, kindle within us the fire of your Spirit, that we may be light shining in the darkness. Enlighten us with your grace, that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. Amen.**

(light the second candle)

PROCESSIONAL 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

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



2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the

3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . . for

4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



hun - gry and the poor; that

friends and fam - i - ly; for

wa - ter and the word; that you



we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,

life and for love, for our work and our play,

nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,



CANTICLE OF PRAISE

(congregation sings Refrain; Choir will sing verses)

Refrain



Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and
peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



1 Lord God, heav-en - ly King, al - might-y God and Fa - ther,
we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you

Refrain



for your glo - ry. Glo - ry to God in the high-
est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.



2 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.

Refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and
 peace to God's peo - ple on earth. 3 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. A - men. A - men.

Final refrain

Glo - ry to God in the high - est, the high - est, and peace to God's
 peo - ple on earth. Glo - ry to God in the high -
 est, the high - est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☞ Stir up our hearts, Lord God,
 ☞ to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; 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

Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. ³His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19 (read responsively)

¹Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

**²that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

**⁴Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

**⁶Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

**¹⁸Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

¹⁹And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰and again he says, “Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”; ¹¹and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹²and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

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

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume 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. ¹⁰Even 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.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

SERMON

Pastor Griffith

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Now the Heavens Start to Whisper"

ACS 901



1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow - ing thin.
2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon - light now be - gin to drift a - way.
3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis - dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with - in:
Dia - mond bril - liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com - ing day.
come to bless with fire and fra - grance hours of yearn - ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom - ise, deep - ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
Christ, the morn - ing star of splen - dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost - line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
Heav - en's em - ber fans to full - ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

THE NICENE CREED

☐ God has made us God's people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

☑ We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary

and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **P** God, in your mercy,
 G hear our prayer.

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

Prayers This Week: Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Robin Perkins, Jerry Weible

On-going Care: Don Burton, Shirley Dietrich, Carol Duncan, Mike Edris, Marge Grabow, Susie Henry, Richard & Betty Holzer, Pr. Bob Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Rosanne Klug, Orville & Julie Knapp, Chris Meyer, Lara McCormick, Debra Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Brenden Frerck, Wyatt Johnson, Tyler Johnston, 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; Katie Larson, Columbia; Rev. Robert and Kathy Moore, Wittenburg Center, Germany; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin, as they assist refugees from the war in Ukraine

Other Prayers: *Seminarrians*— Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks, Justin Perkins

THE PEACE IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
G And also with you.

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this church possible. We encourage everyone to give. 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 or place your offering in the plates that are located at the entrances to the Sanctuary. For those of you watching through our media outlets, if you are able, please mail in your offering or donate online. Thank you!



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Thou That Tellest Good Tidings to Zion”

by John Purifoy

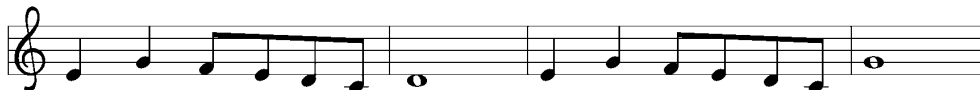
(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Take, Oh, Take Me As I Am”

ELW 814

sing three times



Take, oh, take me as I am; sum - mon out what I shall be;



set your seal up - on my heart and live in me.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☞ Eternal God,
- ☞ you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

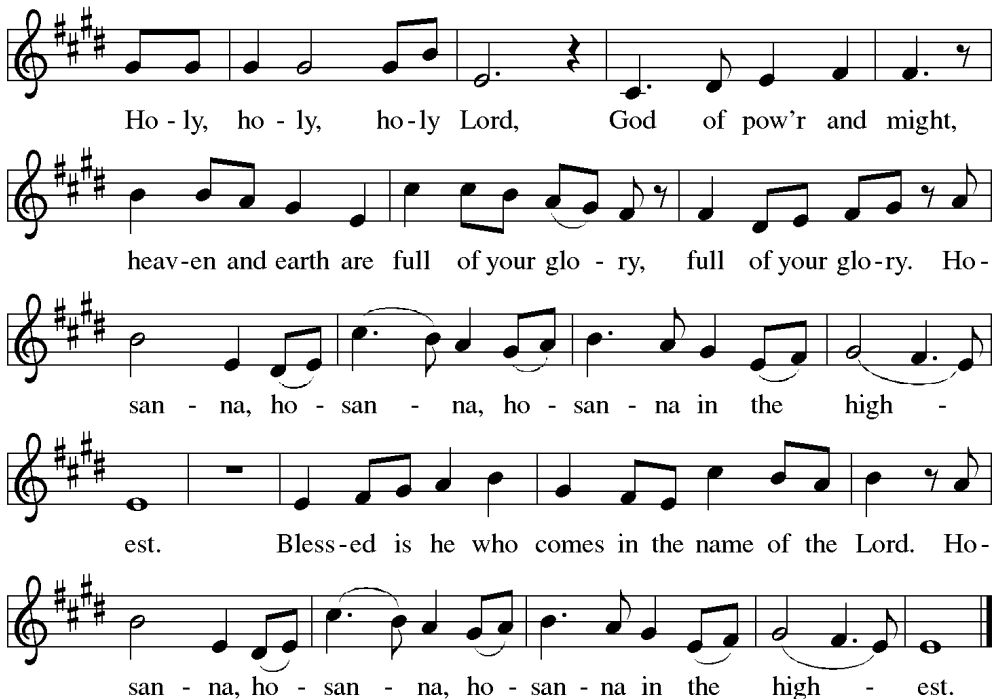
C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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 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 choirs of angels, 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, 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, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: ...
Do this for the remembrance of me.

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 Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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.

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, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

-  Come, do not fear!
-  Here is your God, who has come to save you.

(sit)
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 who 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. The form of distribution is intinction: you will receive the consecrated bread and then you may dip the bread into the wine. Gluten free bread is available upon request.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

"Loaves Were Broken, Words were Spoken"

ACS 966



1 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken by the
2 Loaves were bro - ken, words were spo - ken in a
3 Loaves are bro - ken, words are spo - ken, as in
4 By the loaves you break and give us, send us



Gal - i - le - an shore. Je - sus, Bread of life from
qui - et room one night. In the bread and wine you
faith we gath - er here. Je - sus speaks a - cross the
in your name to share bread for which the mil - lions



heav - en, was their food for - ev - er - more.
gave them, Christ, you came as Light from Light.
a - ges: "I am with you; do not fear!"
hun - ger, words that tell your love and care.



Refrain
By your bod - y bro - ken for us, by your



wine of life out - poured, Je - sus, feed a - gain your



peo - ple. Be our Host, our Life, our Lord.

**1 "Eat this bread, drink this cup,
come to me and never be hungry.
Eat this bread, drink this cup,
trust in me and you will not thirst."**

**2 Jesus Christ, bread of life,
those who come to you will not hunger.
Jesus Christ, risen Lord,
those who trust in you will not thirst.**

Text: Taizé Community

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(stand)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Faithful God,

C in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- ☞ God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✙ bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

"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
Spanish text © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Liturgica, admin.
OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

DISMISSAL

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

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*



KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Stephen Griffith	Transition Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Gretchen Olson Kopp	Vicar
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
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaughter	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

**2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761**

**Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org**

December 3 & 4, 2022

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.

Today at Kountze

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. Our form of distribution is Intinction.

Children in Worship

We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a 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.

Thank you for supporting the ministries of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.



Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God given by Tom Holcome in memory of wife, Jean

Kountze Café

Sundays from 9:30—11:00 AM

Join us each Sunday for breakfast. The suggested donation is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger for the hot breakfast (this Sunday) and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Children's Choir

Second Floor Music Room

9:15 AM (after the 9 AM Children's Blessing)

Grades K-5 - Choir

Grades 6-8 - Director's Assistants

The choir will rehearse immediately after the children's blessing at the 9:00 AM service (9:15 AM). If you have any questions, please contact Barb at 402-341-7761.

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). **This week:** Christmas Program Rehearsal

Youth Forum

In December, all 7th – 12th graders are encouraged to help with the youth Christmas Program preparation from 10:10 to 10:50 AM in the Children's Choir Room. On Sunday, December 18 at deFreese Manor, we will host a Christmas Caroling Party for the Sunday School Youth and the residents.

Adult Forum

Fellowship Hall, 10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **This week:** Advent Preview **Next week:** End of Year Giving with Lutheran Planned Giving

Today at Kountze, continued

Eucharistic Ministers
Sunday, December 4
10:20 AM.

Grab some breakfast and meet in the Fellowship Lounge. We will be doing some reorganizing as we need to provide home communion to a few more people. Looking forward to spending some time with you and thanking you for your good service toward members for this very important ministry.

Holden Village, 2023
July 22 – 29, 2023

Join us for a week at Holden from July 22 – 29, 2023. A meeting with more details will take place on **Sunday, December 4** at 12:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall. A zoom link is available for those who will need to connect in that way. We need to send in a reservation request by **December 5** and a reservation list with a deposit by **January 5**. This meeting will also have us pondering the travel plans to and from Holden Village.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

- G h f h p e h u # 7 # / x q g d | #
Advent 2
Homebound Communion
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)
9:30—11:00 AM Breakfast
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:20 AM Eucharistic Minister Meeting
12:15 PM Holden Village Info. Mtg.
- G h f h p e h u # 8 # P r g g d | #
10:00 AM Pantry
6:00 PM Bible Study
5:30 PM KCCC Meeting
- G h f h p e h u # 9 # x h v g d | #
9:00 AM Staff Meeting
- G h f h p e h u # 10 # h g q h v g d | #
11:00 AM Advent Lunch
11:00 AM Bible Study
12:15 PM Worship
5:00 PM Advent Dinner
6:30 PM Worship
7:30 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

- G h f h p e h u # 11 # w k x u g d | #
11:30 AM Property Committee
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
- G h f h p e h u # 12 # l u g d | #
5:00 PM Pantry
- G h f h p e h u # 13 # d w u g d | #
5:00 PM Worship
- G h f h p e h u # 14 # / x q g d | #
Advent 3
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)
9:30—11:00 AM Breakfast
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:20 AM Young Adult (21-40) Gathering
12:15 PM Book Group
3:30 PM Tuba Christmas Concert

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Bible Study
Mondays, 6:00 PM or
Wednesdays, 11:00 AM
Enter through the Farman Office door to join with others and Pastor Shari for time of learning and sharing. The 11:00 AM Wednesday Bible Study will be 30 minutes so you will have time to have lunch before our 12:15 Advent worship. We will be exploring the Lutheran World Relief Study with the following Advent themes:

- Dec. 5 & 7 Finding Hope in the Wilderness
 - Dec. 12 & 14 Preparing the Way for the Lord
 - Dec. 19 & 21 Emmanuel, God With Us
 - Dec. 26 & 28 No Study
- In January we will explore Epiphany Themes as we unwrap the present of Christ in our lives.

Alternative Gifts

Now through December 18

When you give someone an Alternative Gift, you triple the blessings: The person who receives the gift not only feels your love and generosity, they will be honored that you gave them a gift that truly makes a difference in someone’s life. You will also feel the blessing of giving a gift that represents God’s love and compassion for all people and rejects the commercialization of Christmas. The third blessing is for the child or family who benefits from your gift of food, medicine, education, or a step toward self-sufficiency. An order sheet is in your bulletin.

Wednesdays in Advent

December 7, 14, & 21

Eucharist at 12:15 PM

Vespers at 6:30 PM

Featuring Marty Haugen’s musical setting, *Holden Evening Prayer*. The pastors’ reflections at these services will follow the theme “Holy Darkness.”

Meals will be served at 11:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

KMLC Young Adults

All Adults ages 21 - 40

Sunday, December 11

10:20 AM

You are invited to meet in the Link. The gathering will include listening to ideas of creating space for you at Kountze Memorial and providing information about the Omaha Lutheran Young Adults Organization and the ELCA Upcoming Young Adults Gathering in New Orleans in 2024. Please consider how you might be a part of this ministry!

Merry Tuba Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 11

3:30 PM

Kountze Memorial

Free to the Public

Bring your friends, the concert is free and open to the Public. It should be a fun way to spend a Sunday afternoon. For those tuba/euphonium players who are interested in playing along, registration is 1:00 PM with rehearsal at 2:00 PM. Bring your own music stand. There is a \$10 participation fee for all players. For more information, contact Nate Griffith at 402-980-6121.

Omaha Lutheran Young Adults—Table Theology

Sunday, December 11

6:30 PM

Everett’s on Maple

Rev. Dr. Ashley Hall will be leading this discussion

Lutheran Women Omaha, LWO

Tuesday, December 13, 12:00 Noon

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

For reservation and more info., Call Faith, 402 734 4629

Middle School NE Synod Gathering

Grades 6-8 and Adult Leaders

Saturday, January 14, 10:00 AM to

Sunday, January 15, 1:00 PM

Held at First Lutheran Church in Kearney

This year’s theme is “Lean on Me” with theme verses: Isaiah 41:13 & 1 Corinthians 12:12-20. Registration Rates: Regular registration by **December 15**: \$58 and Last Chance registration by **December 26**: \$68. Please return the registration form with payment to Pastor Shari to get registered.

Candlelight Carol Service

Saturday, December 17

5:00 PM; Prelude 4:40 PM

Come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with singing and worshipful reflection. Nursery is provided. Please join us for this special evening of hope, joy, and fellowship! A cheese and dessert reception following the service.

Children’s Christmas Program

Sunday, December 18

9:00 AM

New Member Class

January 15 & 22

12:15 PM

Lunch will be Served

If you’re interested in learning more about Kountze Memorial and the possibility of becoming a member of our congregation, please come to the New Member classes. Call the church office if you have questions and to let us know if you will be attending and if you’ll need nursery care.

Worship with us this Christmas Season!

Christmas Eve

4:00 PM

Family Worship

7:00 PM

Candlelight Worship (TV and Livestream)

11:00 PM

Candlelight Worship

Christmas Day

10:00 AM

NOTE TIME CHANGE

Worship (TV and Livestream)

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 27

Sunday: 9:00: 144 11:00: Error! MergeField was not found in header record of data source.

Wednesday: 12:15: 9 6:30: 32

Total: 276

Streaming: 73

Cox Cable: 154

Pantry Guests Served: 195 (inc. 62 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served:

Offering:

\$27858.12 (Regular) \$9860.13 (Specials)

\$1865.5 (Debt Reduction)

God of judgement, mercy, and peace.

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

Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Isaiah 11:1-10	The peaceful kingdom
Tuesday	Romans 15:4-13	Good news for Jews and Gentiles
Wednesday	Psalm 96	Praise to God who comes in judgment
Thursday	Psalm 149	Praise for God's goodness to Israel
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19	A prayer for guidance for the king
Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	Jesus and John the Baptist



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For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. Romans 15:4 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week: Dear God, help us to see in your judgment the cleansing power that frees us to bear the fruit of the new life in Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer: God of peace and love, we thank you for this food and ask that all people have food on their tables and a roof over their heads. Amen.

A Blessing to Give: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. (Romans 15:13)

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

- When you think of God as judge, what do you imagine?
- Have you ever felt judged because of your faith in God? Explain.

Read: Matthew 3:1-12.

In the Gospel of Matthew, no one gets a free pass. Pharisees and Sadducees are severely chastised. The masses are shown following almost anyone at any given moment. The disciples display their own shortcomings throughout the Gospel. John the Baptist questions if Jesus really is the anticipated Messiah (Matthew 11:2-3). Jesus' own righteousness gets betrayed, even by those closest to him. It is clear that God's rule needs divine judgment. It's not a judgment that desires punishment but one that brings truth to misunderstanding and cleansing and humility to offset self-righteousness. God's judgment is about correction and new beginnings, not threats. God's judgment finds all of us coming up short and in need of a Savior, in the need of Jesus. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus and baptized him. Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit cleanses to create a changed life. The result is a people set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name.

Discuss: In what ways have you been set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name?

Pray: God of judgment and mercy, cleanse our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit that we may trust in you and bear the fruit of peace, joy, and love for all through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve the poor and needy with fairness and compassion rather than judgement?

During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. For this second week of Advent, light the first candle of hope and a second candle of peace on the Advent wreath. This week, we focus on the peace that Jesus brings us to set aside our differences and trust in God's promise. Say: Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, the light of Christ that gives us hope and peace.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11