

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
Shari Duminy, Transitional Associate Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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

November 26, 2023

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY



On this final Sunday of the church year our gospel is Jesus' great story of judgment. In the end, the faithful are those who served Christ by ministering to those who are poor, hungry, naked, sick, or estranged. In the first reading God is the shepherd who seeks the lost, weak, and injured and feeds them with justice. We gather this day to celebrate the reign of Christ and his victory over death, yet we await the consummation of all things yet to come. Acknowledging Christ as our merciful ruler, we go forth that his reign may be known in our loving words and deeds.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved.

C Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Holy One,

C we confess that we are not awake for you. We are not faithful in using your gifts. We forget the least of our siblings. We do not see your beautiful image in one another. We are infected by sin that divides your beloved community. Open our hearts to your coming, open our eyes to see you in our neighbor, open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.

P Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us. Through ☩ Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome, in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

C Amen.

1 Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
 once for our salvation slain;
 thousand thousand saints attending
 join to sing the glad refrain:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 Christ the Lord returns to reign.

2 Now redemption, long-expected,
 comes in solemn splendor near;
 all the saints this world rejected
 thrill the trumpet sound to hear:
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 See the day of God appear!

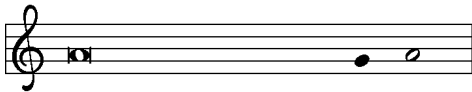
3 Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
 high on thine eternal throne;
 Savior, take the pow'r and glory,
 claim the kingdom as thine own.
 Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
 Thou shalt reign, and thou alone!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



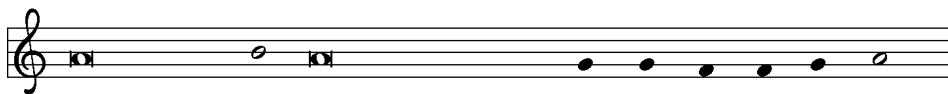
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 wor-ship and praise,



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



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

HYMN OF PRAISE



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



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

☞ O God of power and might,

☞ **your Son shows us the way of service, and in him we inherit the riches of your grace. Give us the wisdom to know what is right and the strength to serve the world you have made, 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

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

Because Israel's kings proved to be bad shepherds, Ezekiel declares that the LORD will assume the role of shepherd in Israel. The LORD will also set over them a shepherd-messiah, "my servant David," who will feed and care for the people.

Thus says the Lord God: I myself will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. ¹²As shepherds seek out their flocks when they are among their scattered sheep, so I will seek out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord God. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with justice.

²⁰Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted at all the weak animals with your horns until you scattered them far and wide, ²²I will save my flock, and they shall no longer be ravaged; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.

²³I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken.

☞ Word of God, Word of Life.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: Psalm 95:1-7a *(read responsively)*

¹Come, let us sing to the Lord;

let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

²**Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving
and raise a loud shout to the Lord with psalms.**

³For you, Lord, are a great God,
and a great ruler above all gods.

⁴**In your hand are the caverns of the earth;**

the heights of the hills are also yours.

⁵The sea is yours, for you made it,
and your hands have molded the dry land.

**⁶Come, let us worship and bow down,
let us kneel before the Lord our maker.**

^{7a}For the Lord is our God,
and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:15-23

In this passage, God is praised for revealing ultimate divine power in raising Jesus from the dead. The resurrected exalted Christ is Lord of both the church and the entire universe, now and in the age to come.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. ²⁰God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Ⓔ Word of God, Word of Life.

Ⓒ Thanks be to God.

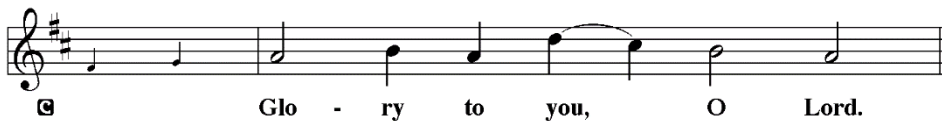
(stand)

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.

⒫ The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.



HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus compares himself to a king who moves among his subjects to see how he is treated: what is done for the least of those who belong to his family is truly done for him.

Jesus said to the disciples: ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ ⁴⁰And the king will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

The Gospel of the Lord.



(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 6th 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 regular sermon, or follow Ms. Boe upstairs for an activity in the Sunday School room.

**1 You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd.
You, Lord, are both prince and slave.
You, peacemaker and sword-bringer
of the way you took and gave.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, whom we both scorn and crave.**

**3 You, who walk each day beside us,
sit in power at God's side.
You, who preach a way that's narrow,
have a love that reaches wide.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our pilgrim guide.**

**4 Worthy is our earthly Jesus!
Worthy is our cosmic Christ!
Worthy your defeat and vict'ry;
worthy still your peace and strife.
You, the everlasting instant;
you, who are our death and life**

*Text: Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1955–1993
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THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

☑ 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **P** Hear us, O God.

G 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 Marilyn Larkowski; to the family and friends of Alice Fitzgerald

Prayers This Week: Jim & Linda Comfort, Idonna Meyer, Diane Rasmussen, Jim West, Gary Westerman

On-going Care: Cheri Biggs, John & Jane Bodnar, Don Burton, Ellie Carlson, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Jessica Hannon, Richard & Betty Holzer, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, Darlene White, Deb Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military*— 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, Colombia; Rev. Bridget Gautieri, 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: *Seminarians*— James Holzer, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks

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

We All Bow Down

LeBlanc & Fetke

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

ELW 679

stanzas 1 & 3

1 For the fruit of all creation,
thanks be to God.
For these gifts to ev'ry nation,
thanks be to God.
For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.

3 For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God.
For the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God.
For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

Text © 1970 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

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OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of all goodness,
C generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. As we gather these gifts from your abundance and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. 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.

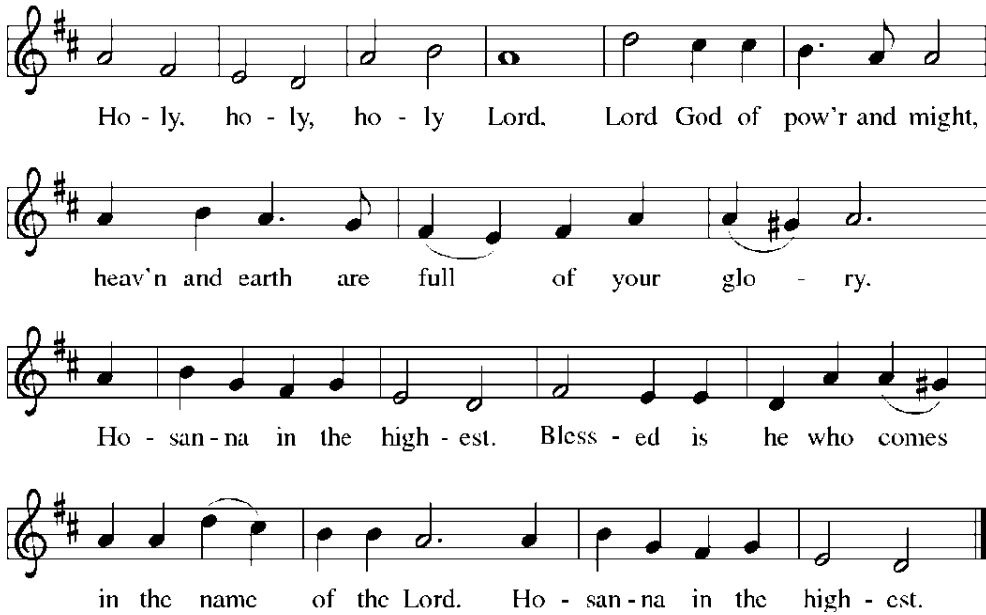
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly. ho - ly, ho - ly Lord. Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
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.

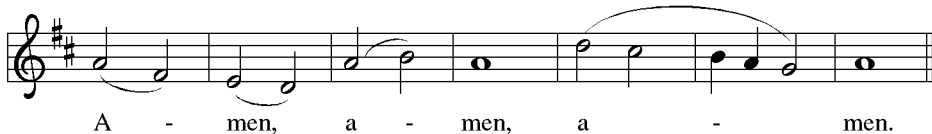
EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- ☐ You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.
... For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

- ☐ Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
... To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



A - men, a - men, a - men.

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.

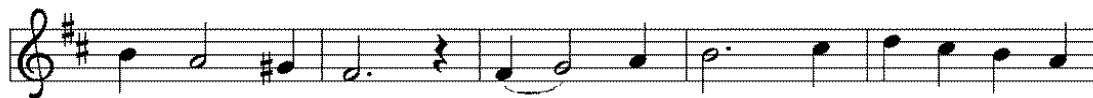
AGNUS DEI



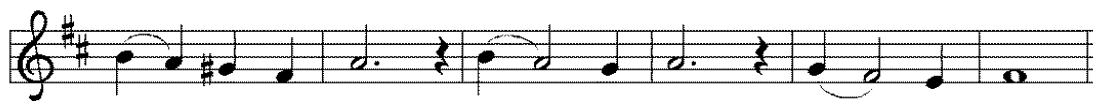
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come and feast at Jesus' table.

C There is a place for all at the banquet.

(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

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

ELW 502

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine forever.</p> <p>2 Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth
and, where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.</p> <p>3 Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.</p> | <p>4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
with thee, dear Lord, beside me,
thy rod and staff my comfort still;
thy cross before to guide me.</p> <p>5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thine unction grace bestoweth;
and, oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!</p> <p>6 And so, through all the length of days,
thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821-1877

**1 Lord, whose love in humble service
bore the weight of human need,
who upon the cross, forsaken,
worked your mercy's perfect deed:
we, your servants, bring the worship
not of voice alone, but heart;
consecrating to your purpose
ev'ry gift which you impart.**

**2 Still your children wander homeless;
still the hungry cry for bread;
still the captives long for freedom;
still in grief we mourn our dead.
As you, Lord, in deep compassion
healed the sick and freed the soul,
by your Spirit send your power
to our world to make it whole.**

**3 As we worship, grant us vision,
till your love's revealing light
in its height and depth and greatness
dawns upon our quickened sight,
making known the needs and burdens
your compassion bids us bear,
stirring us to ardent service,
your abundant life to share.**

**4 Called by worship to your service,
forth in your dear name we go,
to the child, the youth, the aged,
love in living deeds to show;
hope and health, good will and
comfort,
counsel, aid and peace we give,
that your servants, Lord, in freedom
may your mercy know and live.**

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984
Text © 1961 Oxford University Press.

(stand)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

℟ Lord Jesus,

**☩ in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care
for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on
the way. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, ☩ Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

God's Work, Our Hands

ACS 1000

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 God's work, our hands: working together,
building a future, repairing the world,
raising up homes, planting new gardens,
feeding the hungry and shelt'ring the cold.
Bless, God, our hands as we work in your name,
sharing the good news of your gospel.</p> <p>2 God's work, our feet: trav'ling together,
following Jesus to places unknown,
walking as friends, marching for freedom,
running the race with God's future the goal.
Bless, God, our feet as we follow your way,
sharing the good news of your gospel.</p> | <p>3 God's work, our voice: singing together,
praising, proclaiming to all who will hear,
praying for peace, shouting for justice,
claiming God's love for the lost and the least.
Bless, God, our voice as we speak in your name,
sharing the good news of your gospel.</p> <p>4 God is at work in and around us:
seedlings are sprouting and bread's on the rise!
Washed and set free, humbled and honored,
gifted by grace, we respond in God's love.
Bless, God, our lives as we answer your call,
sharing the good news of your gospel.</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
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DISMISSAL

- ☞ Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
☩ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, organ



KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Transitional Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Barrett	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaight	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director
Jill Conway	Director of Kountze Commons



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

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

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

November 25 & 26, 2023

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 the 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. 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. You will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip into the wine.

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 8:45 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. Offering plates are located by the doors in the Nave.

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.

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



Today at Kountze Memorial

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor of Albert's 90th birthday given by the Grage Family

Kountze Café

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 and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Faith Formation

Children's Choir

**9:15 AM (following 9:00 AM Children's Blessing)
Grades K-6**

Join Barb Carlsen on the 2nd floor in the Sunday School Music Room

Sunday School

10:10 AM

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

Join us in the 2nd Floor Sunday School Rooms.

Youth Forum

Lower Level Youth Room

This week: Games

Next Week: Advent Fair

Adult Forum

Join us at 10:10 AM on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. **This week:** Fellowship

Next week: Advent Fair

This Week at Kountze Memorial

November 26 Sunday

Christ the King
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 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour

November 27 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

November 28 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
12:30 PM Circle 3

November 29 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship
6:00 PM Confirmation @ St.
Timothy

November 30 Thursday

12:00 PM Circle 4
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

December 1 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

December 2 Saturday

Homebound Communion
9:00 AM Clinic Board Meeting
9:30 AM Decorate for Advent
2:00 PM Diggins/Drickey Wedding
5:00 PM Worship

December 3 Sunday

Advent 1
Homebound Communion
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
Rehearsal
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:00 AM Norma's Nursery Open
House
10:00 AM Advent Fair

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Decorate for Advent

Saturday, December 2

9:30 AM

You and your family can be part of creating an inviting atmosphere that will inspire hope, love, joy, and peace in our community by helping to decorate for Advent. No special skills are required—just your enthusiasm and willingness to contribute to this joyful project. Join us!

Norma's Nursery Open House

Sunday, December 3

10:00—11:00 AM

Stop by the Nursery sometime between 10:00 & 11:00 AM for our nursery renaming event.

Annual Advent Fair

December 3

10:00 AM - Noon

Join us in making a variety of Christmas decorations including an Advent wreath, Christmas cards, an Advent prayer placemat, an ornament, and more. There will be activities for the children and a photo booth for all.

Advent Meals & Worship

December 6, 13, and 20

Lunch: 11:00 AM – Noon

Supper: 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Worship: 6:30

- Mark your calendars and join us for Advent meals followed by Worship.
- We will have a vegetarian option at each of the meals.
- All meals are free will offering.

Cards with Friends

Thursday, December 7

2:00 PM

Meet in the Fellowship Hall for a time together playing cards. All are welcome. Bring a snack to share.

Annual Merry Tuba Christmas Concert

Sunday, December 10

3:30 PM

Held at Kountze Memorial

Bring your friends, the concert is free and open to the Public. It will be a fun way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

**Progressive Dinner and
White Elephant Christmas Gift Exchange
All Middle and High School Youth
Sunday, December 10 at 5:30 PM**
We will meet in the Fellowship Hall at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. Bring a White Elephant Gift to exchange. We will be transported to 4 homes in the area for Appetizers, Salad, Main Dish with Side, and Dessert. RSVP ASAP with the Church Office so plans can be made for a fun evening together with other church members willing to host our group. It will be an evening to remember.

**Candlelight Carol Service
Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church
Saturday, December 16
Prelude begins at 4:40 PM
Service 5:00 PM
Reception Following
Nursery Care will be Provided**

The annual Candlelight Carol Service has become a beloved tradition at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. We hope that you, your family, and friends can join us for this special service of sacred scripture and poetry, congregational carols, handbells, brass, organ, and piano. Please join us following the service for a lovely reception.

**Children’s Christmas Program
Sunday, December 17
9:00 AM**

We are excited again, to hear our children sing and tell the story of Christ’s birth. The children (grades

prek-6) will present the Christmas story with music. The children should arrive by 8:25 that morning. The children in kindergarten through sixth grade will have a special practice on Saturday, December 16 from 9:00 – 11:00 AM. If you have any questions, please contact Barb Carlsen at carlsen.barbara18@gmail.com.

**ELCA Young Adult Gathering
Young Adults (19-25-year-olds)
July 16-20, 2024, in New Orleans**

An ELCA Young Adult Gathering will take place at the same time as the ELCA National Youth Gathering. Each group will have separate daytime offerings followed by a joint Evening Program. As this is a new event, plans are still being made. We hope you will consider attending this event. Please contact Pr. Shari or the church office if you are interested in attending. For more info or to register, go to

<https://www.elca.church/gathering/attend/young-adult-gathering>

Kountze Food Pantry

This month the Kountze Food Pantry is collecting toothpaste, toothbrushes and floss, or flossing picks. Please place donated items in the marked box in the Fellowship Hall. Thank you to everyone for donating soup in October! We can always use more grocery bags. We use both plastic and paper. Please sign up with the link below if you would like to serve at the Kountze Food Pantry.

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

Too hot? Too cold?

Thanks to a grant from endowment our building management system that controls the heating and air conditioning in many parts of the building has been replaced this week. Please bear with us as we make adjustments to make sure temperatures are more stable and comfortable for everyone.

Statement of Intent cards and magnets can be found in the back of the Nave and in the Fellowship Hall at the Welcome Desk.

GO AND BE

Benevolent

Energetic

Kindhearted

Overjoyed

Unified

Neighborly

Thankful

Zestful

Engaged

KOUNTZE +

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 36
Sunday: 9:00: 162 **11:00:** 61
Wednesday: 12:15 * Conf: *
Total: 259
Streaming: 50
Pantry Guests Served: *
Medical Clinic Guests Served: 25
Offering: *

*Not available at time of printing

Jesus calls his followers to acts of mercy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 25:31-46	The sheep and the goats
Monday	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	God, the true shepherd
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:15-23	Paul's prayer
Wednesday	1 Corinthians 5:1-11	Spiritual gifts
Thursday	Joshua 24:14-28	Always be faithful to the Lord
Friday	1 Peter 5:1-11	Tending the flock of God
Saturday	Psalms 95:1-7a	Worship and obey the Lord
Sunday	Mark 13:24-37	When the Son of Man appears



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Psalm 95:6-7a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, give us eyes to see you and to worship you with our love and service to others for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtimes Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for creating the earth to be fruitful and satisfy our needs for food and shelter, community and peace. In the name of Christ, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May Christ the King give you peace and courage for each day.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What are some duties a shepherd has to do to care for the sheep?
- Jesus is called the Good Shepherd. Why do you think he is called this?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 25:31-46.

In the ancient Near East, the reference to shepherd (v.32) was a reference to the king, the one responsible to care for the people. In the Old Testament, the kings of Israel and Judah usually failed their role as the shepherd who ruled with justice for the poor. In Ezekiel, the Lord takes back the role of king and shepherds the people to safety with the promise of a new shepherd king in the line of David. For the church that shepherd is Jesus, the Son of Man. He comes as judge and as shepherd to separate sheep from goats, the ones who do the will of God and those who do not. The surprise in this reading is that the sheep don't even know they are sheep. They ask when it was that they acted with compassion as though they were serving the Son of Man. The surprising joy is that acts of love and mercy happen even—or especially—when the sheep (followers of Jesus) are not aware of their actions that love others. Following Jesus leads to a life filled with acts of compassion for the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the imprisoned.

Discuss: Where have you seen God's kingdom through people's actions that show love and mercy?

Pray: **God of justice and mercy, we pray for your reign to be visible in us that the world may know your care for the poor and others in need through Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve the stranger and others who need care?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

November 26th is the last Sunday in this church year. Think or talk about your involvement in the ministries of the church in the past year. Consider these questions: What were the highlights? In what ways did you grow in your faith? How did you share your faith with others? Take a moment to consider in what ways you will serve in the congregation and the community in the coming year.

Pray: **God of glory and might, we give thanks that you are our God and that we are the sheep in your hand through Christ our Lord. (Psalm 95:7a)**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37