

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

January 7, 2024

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

EPIPHANY of OUR LORD



The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

C Amen.

P Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God,

C **for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.**

P Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family. Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom. At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit. By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

C **We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace and love.**

P To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Arise, Your Light Has Come!

ELW 314

1 Arise, your light has come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.

2 Arise, your light has come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

3 Arise, your light has come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

4 Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

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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.

C And also with you.

KYRIE

The musical score for the Kyrie consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff is labeled 'Leader' and the second 'All'. The lyrics are: 'Lord have mercy on us, Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy on us, Lord have mercy on us.' The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a steady rhythm.

GLORIA



Sing glo - ry to God, and peace on earth.

We sing glo - ry to God in the high - est.

We_ wor - ship you, we_ give_ you thanks.

We_ praise you for_ your glo - ry Lord.

Sing glo - ry to God, and peace on earth.

Glo - ry to God in the high - est.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Almighty and ever-living God,
- ☑ **you revealed the incarnation of your Son by the brilliant shining of a star. Shine the light of your justice always in our hearts and over all lands, and accept our lives as the treasure we offer in your praise and for your service, 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 60:1-6

Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

☒ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (read responsively)

¹Give the king your justice, O God,

and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that 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.

⁴**Let 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.

⁶**Let 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.

¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.

¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out¹ in distress,
the oppressed, and those who¹ have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-12

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler

who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon.

SERMON

Pastor Wynard

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

ELW 311 vs. 1,2,4

**1 Hail to the Lord's anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
your reign on earth begun!
You come to break oppression,
to set the captive free,
to take away transgression
and rule in equity.**

**2 You come with rescue speedy
to those who suffer wrong,
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
are precious in your sight.**

**4 Kings shall fall down before you,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore you,
your praise all people sing.
To you shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
your kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.**

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.

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** 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 Idona Meyer

Prayers This Week: Martha Eckmann, Nita Mueller, Marce Picha, Gary Westerman

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

One Small Child

by Lloyd Larson

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Blessed Be the God of Israel

ELW 250 vs. 1 & 2



1 Blessed be the God of Is - ra - el who comes to set us free
2 With prom - ised mer - cy will God still the cov - e - nant re - call,



and rais - es up new hope for us: a Branch from Da - vid's tree.
the oath once sworn to A - bra - ham, from foes to save us all;



So have the proph - ets long de - clared that with a might - y arm
that we might wor - ship with - out fear and of - fer lives of praise,



God would turn back our en - e - mies and all who wish us harm.
in ho - li - ness and righ - teous - ness to serve God all our days.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ God of abundance,
- ☑ **receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

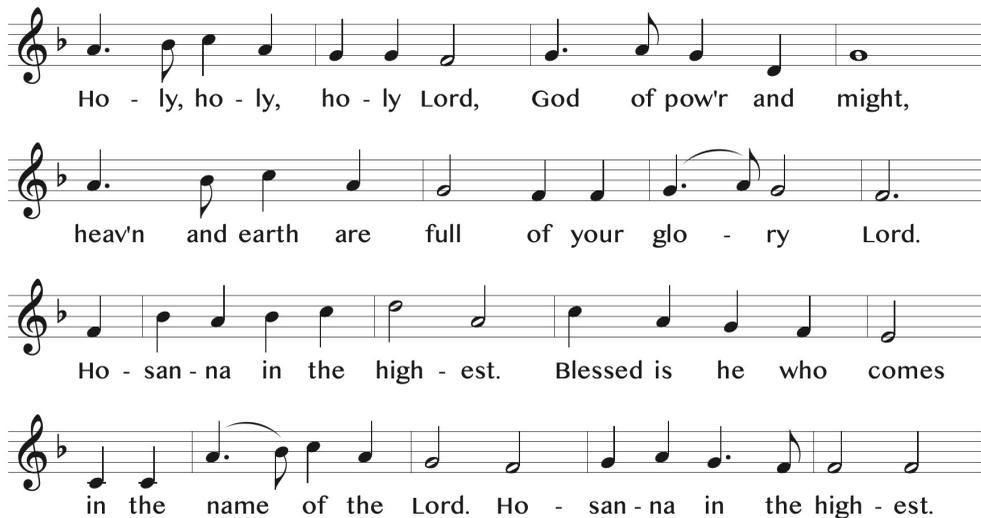
HOLY COMMUNION

- 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.**

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

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

SANCTUS



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

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

- ☐ 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:

- ☑ **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

- ☐ With this bread and cup ...
We look with hope for his coming.

- ☑ **Come, Lord Jesus.**

- ☐ Holy God, we long for your Spirit ...
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

- ☑ **Come, Holy Spirit.**

- ☐ All praise and glory are yours, ...
one God, now and forever.

- ☑ **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

- ☑ **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



INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- Come to the table of peace.
- Glory to God in the highest!**

(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.



1 When a star is shin-ing o - ver east - ern hills,
 2 Where the world is wait-ing for an un - known day,
 3 Lead us on, O Day-star, in the qui - et night;



when the air is si - lent, and the clam - or stills,
 where a voice for - got - ten cries, "Pre - pare the way!"
 guide us through the shad-ow with your gen - tle light;



when the night is wait-ing, and the old hopes rise,
 Where an earth - ly pow - er makes the heart turn cold,
 show us in a man-ger our re - demp-tion's sign;



then the time has rip - ened and the heart grows wise.
 there the gifts are of - fered— in - cense, myrrh, and gold.
 bring us to a morn-ing where the prom - ise shines.



Refrain
 Lead us on, lead us on, to a morn-ing where the



prom-ise shines. Lead us on, lead us on,



to a morn - ing where the prom - ise shines.

- 1** Bright and glorious is the sky,
radiant are the heavens high
where the golden stars are shining.
All their rays to earth inclining
beckon us to heav'n above,
beckon us to heav'n above.
- 3** Sages from the East afar,
when they saw this wondrous star,
went to find the king of nations
and to offer their oblations
to the child, the newborn king,
to the child, the newborn king.
- 4** Him they found in Bethlehem,
yet he wore no diadem;
there they saw a maiden lowly
with an infant pure and holy
resting in her loving arms,
resting in her loving arms.

Text: Nikolai F. Grundtvig, 1783-1872; tr. Jens Christian Aaberg, 1877-1970, alt.
Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

(stand)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** God our redeemer,
G you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy,
send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory,
born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- ☞ God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Christ Is the King!

ELW 662 vs. 1,2,4,5

**1 Christ is the king! O friends, rejoice;
brothers and sisters, with one voice
let the world know he is your choice.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**4 Let Love's all reconciling might
your scattered companies unite
in service to the God of light.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**2 Oh, magnify the Lord, and raise
anthems of joy and holy praise
for Christ's brave saints of ancient days.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

**5 So shall the church at last be one;
so shall God's will on earth be done,
new lamps be lit, new tasks begun.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Text: George K. A. Bell, 1883-1958, alt.
Text from Songs of Praise Enlarged Edition © Oxford University Press 1931. All rights reserved.

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

† † †

Liturgy arranged by ©2022 Cynthia I. Gonzales, Ph.D., Music Director at FLC-San Marcos, TX.

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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

January 6 & 7, 2024

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.

Today at Kountze Memorial

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.



Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God with grateful hearts by Ken & Chris Kendall in celebration of their 50th wedding anniversary

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

Sunday School and Children's Choir

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

Will not be held January 7. Join us again on January 14. Sunday School will continue with the rotation model and Children's Choir students will join Barb Carlsen on the 2nd floor in the Sunday School Music Room again on January 14.

Youth Forum

Lower Level Youth Room

10:10 AM

Join us in the Youth Room again beginning January 14 for time of community, learning, and serving.

Adult Forum

Join us at 10:10 AM on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. **This Week:** Lutheranism in America: Muhlenberg and Schmucker **Next Week:** Fellowship

Eucharistic Ministers—Homebound Communion

If you are a Eucharistic Minister, please meet with Pr. Shari in the OSJ room after Worship this weekend or next Wednesday for a “check-in” even if you don't have anyone to take communion to at this time. Pr. Shari would also

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

like to talk to anyone interested in becoming a part of this ministry to provide communion once a month to those that are unable to attend worship in person. She can answer any

questions you may have at that time. If you are unable to make this time, please speak with Pr. Shari in the upcoming weeks.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

January 7 Sunday

Epiphany of Our Lord
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)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Adult Forum

January 8 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
1:15 PM Finance Committee

January 9 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

January 10 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group
12:15 PM Worship
1:00 PM Devotions @ deFreese Manor
4:00 PM Executive Committee
6:00 PM Confirmation @ St. Timothy

January 11 Thursday

Council Reports Due
9:30 AM WELCA Board
11:30 AM Property Committee
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
6:00 PM Worship & Music

January 12 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry
5:00 PM Service Event - Pantry/Meal/
Movie

January 13 Saturday

Jan 13 - Jan 14 NE Synod Middle
School Gathering (gr 6-8)
5:00 PM Worship

January 14 Sunday

Epiphany 2
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-6)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour
10:15 AM New Member Class
12:15 PM Book Group

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

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>

Confirmation Resumes

January 10

6:00 PM

Confirmation resumes at St. Timothy's Lutheran Church.

Confirmation Photos

If you have any group photos from 2017 - 2021 and you would be willing to share with the church office, we would be most grateful. We want to make sure we have a photo of each of the Confirmation Classes of KMLC.

Kountze Family Service Project:

Friday, January 12

5:00 PM

Join us in the Pantry to volunteer and then following the service to our community, we will be serving pizza and

watching a movie in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a friend, your favorite movie, and a snack to share.

Middle School Gathering

Grades 6-8

January 13-14, 2024

We will be gathering at Sheridan Lutheran Church in Lincoln. The cost will be covered by Kountze Memorial.

New Member Class

January 14 & 21

10:15 AM

If you are interested in finding out more about Kountze Memorial or would like to join our congregation, we ask you to consider attending our next New Member Class. Childcare is available. Please plan on attending both classes. New members will be received on Sunday, January 28. Please call the church office if you have questions and let us know if you plan to attend.

High School Retreat for Grades 9-12

Carol Joy Holling Camp

January 19-21, 2024

Theme: (un)Equal

Come and join us as we dive into this past summer's theme, "UnEqual". Along with the lessons we will learn about God's love, we will also be experiencing some favorite camp activities, God's creation, and of course, fellowship! Cost \$100 per camper. This cost includes lodging, meals, and

programming on Friday through Sunday. Register by January 17 at <https://www.cjhcenter.org/hs-retreat>

Annual Reports Due January 28

If you are responsible for a report in our Annual Report, please have them turned in to Debbie Bogue no later than January 28. Reports are welcome—and preferred—anytime before that date. Thanks.

Dinners for 8

Consider signing up to join a dinners for 8 group in February, March, and April. It is a time when your group will have a meal together each month. This meal can take place in homes, in restaurants, or at the church. Or you may decide to attend a fish fry or another organization's fundraiser. It is up to your group. Please **sign up by January 21** at the Welcome Desk or by calling the church office. You will be informed about the groups, so you can begin to find times and places to meet.

Summer Bible Camp at Carol Joy Holling! Register by January 31 for Early Bird Pricing

Kountze Memorial will cover the cost if you register by January 31. If you register after this date, you will need to pay the additional cost. Kountze Camp Week is June 16-21, but you can attend camp whenever it is convenient for you. Check out the schedule for the different camp opportunities for grades K-12 as well as day camps and leadership training for high school-age youth and Special Needs camps at <https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

In order for the church to pay the fee, choose

- to mail your payment,
- select "Pay items in Full"
- then "Pay by Check/Money Order"
- Email a copy of the receipt to shari@kmlchurch.org

and we will submit payment on behalf of your youth. If you have any questions, please reach out to church staff. To register go to

<https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

Join Us in Spreading Joy: Offer a Ride to Church!

Are you looking for a simple yet impactful way to make a difference in someone's day? Consider sharing the gift of a ride to church! Your willingness to offer a ride even one or two weeks a month can brighten someone else's Sunday. Please call or email the church office to see if there's someone in your neighborhood or on your way to church that would like a ride. Open your heart and car doors to help others experience the joy of attending church.

Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle, & TV Broadcast

The new sign up posters are now available. Be sure to sign up for your special date early so it's still available. Altar Flowers are provided by Janousek Florist and cost \$20 a bouquet. The Eternal Candle is \$7.50 and sponsoring a TV broadcast is \$210.

Scholarships

The KMLC Scholarship Program makes scholarship funds available to any eligible college-bound student member. Active members of Kountze Memorial planning or continuing to attend ANY college, university or seminary may submit an application. Additional eligibility requirements are noted on the application. Applications can be picked up in the Youth Center, Church Office, or downloaded from the church web site at www.kmlchurch.org and go to Grow > Youth Ministries > Scholarships. **Applications are due on March 1, 2024.** **Applications received after this date will not be accepted.** Please note: Scholarships are not automatically renewable and recipients must re-apply each year. Funds are sent directly to respective institutions. Submit your applications, along with supporting documentation, by mail to KMLC, Attn Scholarship Committee, 2650 Farnam St., Omaha NE 68131; in person to the church office; or by e-mail to info@kmlchurch.org

Television Ministry

Did you know Kountze has a Television production room? Well, we do, and the production crew would be glad to show you how everything works. If you have any experience with computers, we can train you so you could be a part of this community ministry. High school youth, this is a great way to get your high school community service hours! Come and check it out.

Kountze Food Pantry

Thank-you to everyone who provided gloves, hats and scarves for our Pantry guests. In January we will continue to need gloves, especially for adult men. As the coldest months of the year approach, these items will be needed most of all. You may leave them in the donation box in Fellowship Hall or consider ordering online and having them delivered directly to the Church. If you would like to join us in fulfilling our mission to "Feed the Poor in Christ's Name", please sign up to volunteer at the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/200834787701155>

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, 12/28/23 — Wednesday, 1/3/24

Saturday: 34

Sunday: 9:00: 121 11:00: 63

Wednesday: 12:15: 14

Total: 246

Streaming: 54

Pantry Guests Served: 232 (inc. 72 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: (Closed)

Offering:

\$18,972.33 (Regular) \$9,822.98 (Specials)

\$1,237.00 (Debt Reduction)

Christians are fellow heirs, members of the same body.

EPIPHANY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Epiphany observances.

Isaiah 60:1-6	Crowds coming to Jerusalem
Ephesians 3:1-12	Paul's mission to the Gentiles
Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14	Prayer to guide the king
Matthew 2:1-12	The visit of the wise men



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR EPIPHANY

In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. **Ephesians 3:5-6 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Epiphany:

God of the nations, unite your church through your rule of justice and mercy so that all may see your grace through Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may this gift of food remind us of your daily care for us and all those in need through Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem to be our Savior. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the light of Christ shine brightly in your life.

EPIPHANY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- Give examples of times or places when unity is important.
- How is the unity of the church consistent with God's mission of reconciliation in Christ?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Ephesians 3:1-12.

The wise men from the east are a central part of Epiphany. They represent the world far from the Jewish and biblical center of Israel and Jerusalem. They do not know the God of Israel. They follow the stars, not the Scriptures. Epiphany reminds us that the good news of Jesus is to reach all the world. Ephesians truly grasps this message. The unity of Jews and Gentiles reveals what Jesus' saving work is about. Ephesians sees the unity of the church as the very example of the gospel. Gentiles are now "*fellow heirs, members of the same body*" (v. 6). God's epiphany or self-revelation is centered on Jesus who has come for all to know and to receive the "*gift of God's grace*" (v. 7). Unity was a very real challenge to the New Testament church. Tensions existed between communities of Jewish and Gentile Christians. The church today is to hear and respond to that same message of one body in Christ. All Christians share equally in God's mission.

Discuss: How do you think honoring all believers as equal recipients of God's grace contributes to the mission of the church?

Pray: **Loving God, your message of grace and peace shines brightly for all. Give us faith to boldly be part of the one body and mission of the church through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Bible Readings and theme for Epiphany, how can you reach out to those different from you with care and support?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

For centuries Epiphany Day was the second most important church festival, even more important than Christmas. The church celebrates the time when Jesus was made known to the wider world through the visit of the wise men (Magi). Epiphany is also associated with the blessing of homes as a place to welcome friends and strangers. The Magi followed a star that led them to Jesus. In remembrance of this journey, light a candle during your devotional time to symbolize Jesus as the light of the world and to remind you of the star the Magi followed to the Christ child. *Say this blessing:* **Lord Jesus, light this room and our lives with your presence. Amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51