

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

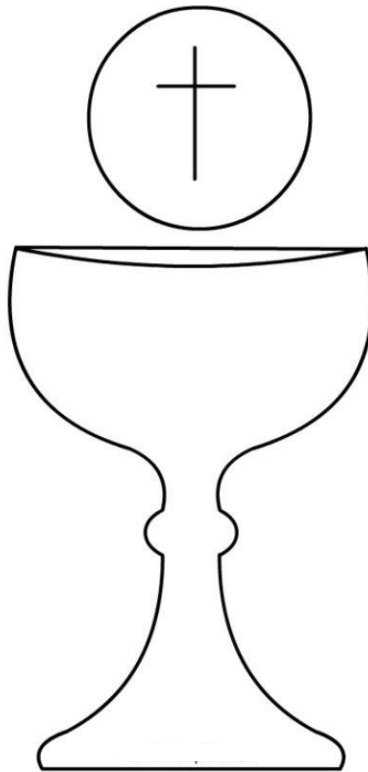
Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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

August 18, 2024

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



Wisdom prepares a feast, sets her table, and invites all to come and eat her bread and drink her wine. The first chapter of John's gospel owes much to the biblical tradition that imagined Wisdom as existing before anything was created and having a role in the work of creation. Christ, the wisdom of God (1 Cor. 1:24), today invites us to eat his flesh and drink his blood. John's gospel includes no account of the institution of the Lord's supper, but here we can't help hearing Jesus' words as an invitation to the meal of bread and wine we share.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy.

C Amen.

P Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God, our provider, help us.

C It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for the life in the world. Amen.

P Beloved people of God:
in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, ✠ the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life.

C Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Praise and Thanksgiving

ELW 689 vs. 1-3

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Praise and thanksgiving, God, we would offer
for all things living, you have made good:
harvest of sown fields, fruits of the orchard,
hay from the mown fields, blossom and wood. | 2 God, bless the labor we bring to serve you,
that with our neighbor we may be fed.
Sowing or tilling, we would work with you,
harvesting, milling for daily bread. |
| 3 Father, providing food for your children,
by Wisdom's guiding teach us to share
one with another, so that, rejoicing
with us, all others may know your care. | |

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984, alt.
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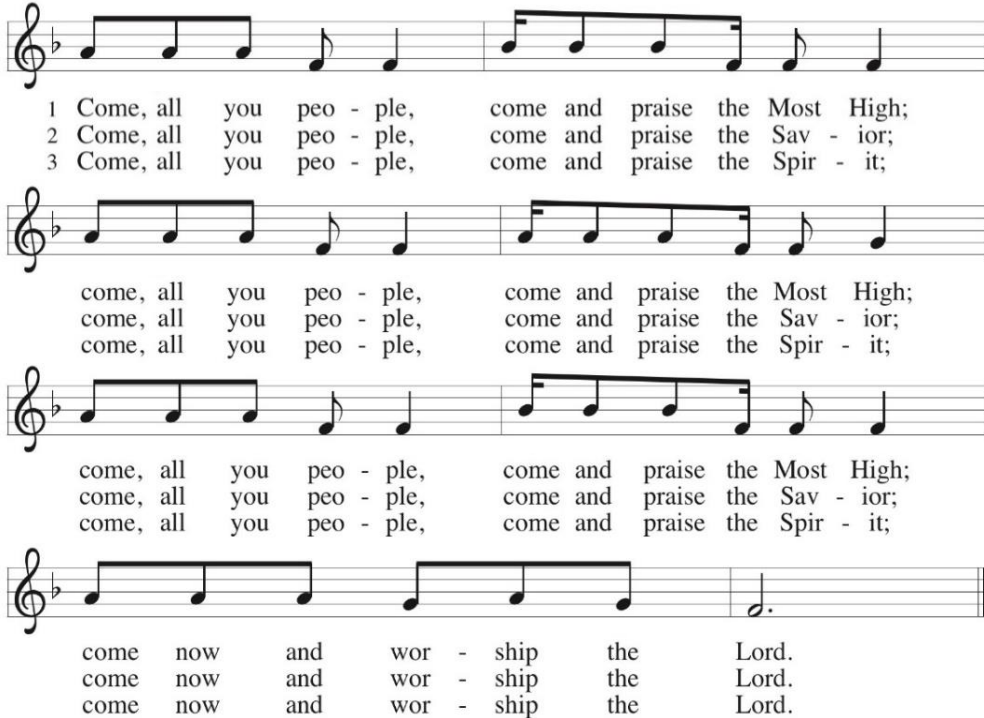
APOSTOLIC GREETING

- 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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

Come, All You People

ELW 819



1 Come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Most High;
2 Come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Sav - ior;
3 Come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Spir - it;

come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Most High;
come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Sav - ior;
come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Spir - it;

come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Most High;
come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Sav - ior;
come, all you peo - ple, come and praise the Spir - it;

come now and wor - ship the Lord.
come now and wor - ship the Lord.
come now and wor - ship the Lord.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Ever-loving God,
- C** your Son gives himself as living bread for the life of the world. Fill us with such a knowledge of his presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life to serve you continually, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Proverbs 9:1-6

Wisdom is portrayed as a woman who invites people to partake of her banquet. Just as ordinary food is necessary for physical life, Wisdom's food—insight and understanding—is necessary for fullness of life with God. Partaking of Wisdom's banquet is the way to life.

Wisdom has built her house,
she has hewn her seven pillars.

²She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine,
she has also set her table.

³She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls
from the highest places in the town,

⁴“You that are simple, turn in here!”
To those without sense she says,

⁵“Come, eat of my bread
and drink of the wine I have mixed.

⁶Lay aside immaturity, and live,
and walk in the way of insight.”

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 34:7-14 (read responsively)

⁷The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD
and delivers them.

⁸**Taste and see that the LORD is good;
happy are they who take refuge in God!**

⁹Fear the Lord, you saints of the Lord,
for those who fear the Lord lack nothing.

¹⁰**The lions are in want and suffer hunger,
but those who seek the Lord lack nothing that is good.**

¹¹Come, children, and listen to me;
I will teach you reverence for the Lord.

¹²**Who among you takes pleasure in life
and desires long life to enjoy prosperity?**

¹³Keep your tongue from evil
and your lips from lying words.

¹⁴**Turn from evil and do good;
seek peace and pursue it.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 5:15-20

True wisdom integrates our new reality in Christ with our Christian fellowship and daily conduct. Because we are filled with the Spirit, Christians regularly rejoice together, give thanks to God for one another, and care for one another. In this way we revere our Lord Jesus Christ.

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Refrain
Leader

All

Lis - ten now for the gos - pel! Al - le - lu - ia! It is

God's word that chang - es us! Al - le - lu - ia!

1 Come, Ho - ly Spir - it, melt and break our hearts of stone,

Refrain

un - til we give our lives to God, and God a - lone.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 6:51-58

In John's gospel, the feeding of the five thousand leads to extended teaching in which Jesus identifies himself as the true "bread of life." Finally, in these verses, he makes a connection that would not be understood until after his death, in light of the church's celebration of holy communion.

Jesus said, ⁵¹"I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; ⁵⁵for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. ⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh

and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C 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

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Around You, O Lord Jesus

ELW 468 vs. 1 & 2

1 Around you, O Lord Jesus,
your own you gather still
to share the feast you give us
with grace our lives to fill.
You say to us so lovingly,
“Take, eat! This is my body!
Take, drink! This is my blood!”

2 We hear your invitation,
and heed, O Lord, your call;
your word of consolation
is spoken here to all.
It draws us to your loving heart;
it brings to us your blessing,
which never will depart.

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

THE APOSTLES’ CREED

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

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

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

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

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

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **P** Merciful God,
 G receive our prayer.

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

Thanksgiving: for the marriage of Randy Bird & Heidi Carlson (8/17/2024)

Prayers this week: LeClare Steffen

On-going Care: Lesley Akers, Betty Callies, Cheri Biggs, John & Jane Bodnar, Don Burton, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Jessica Hannon, Richard & Betty Holzer, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Marie Kubat, Ruth & Charles Martis, Tracey Mason, Lara McCormick, Lynn Meyer, Nita Mueller, Linda Peltz, Jim Perkins, Kathy Preininger, David Samaria, Vinn Stephens, Joyce Wachal, Gary Westerman, Deb Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Wyatt Johnson, grandson of Ken and Linda Johnson; Tyler Johnston, son of Robert and Michelle Johnston, Daniel Milstead, nephew of Darlene Anderson; Cody Ray, grandson of Betty Callies; Dannika Rees, daughter of Eric and Toby Rees; Joel Woosley, son of Debbie Woosley, nephew of Steph Stephens, and grandson of Vinn Stephens

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; Rev. Robert & Kathy Moore, Leipzig, 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* – James Holzer, 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

You Are My All in All

arr. Lloyd Larson

Judy Boelts & Dayle Johnson, *vocalists*

Jean Johnson, *accompanist*

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

As the Grains of Wheat

ELW 465

Refrain

As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were

gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from

all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless - ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when

Refrain

may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

P Jesus, Bread of life,

C you have set this table with your very self, and called us to the feast of plenty. Gather what has been sown among us, and strengthen us in this meal. Make us to be what we receive here, your body for the life of the world. 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,
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy

ELW 192

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est, 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

G **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

P Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

G **Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the table Christ has set.

G **There is more than enough for all!**

(sit)

THE DISTRIBUTION

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. Receiving one element – e.g. bread alone – is considered to have received the full sacrament. 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.

Refrain

1

We eat the bread of teaching,
drink wine of wisdom,
are given here a taste of the kingdom.
Together joined, the greatest and the least,
we all are one at Wisdom's holy feast.

2

Simple ones whose hearts are yearning,
come and gain from Wisdom's learning;
bread and wine she is preparing,
know her loving in the sharing. *Refrain*

3

Enter with delight and singing,
for her richness now is bringing
us this joyful celebration;
eat and drink in jubilation. *Refrain*

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Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997

This Is Christ's Body

ACS 967

This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with

mer-cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,

bro - ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

Text: Anne Krentz Organ, b. 1960

Text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☐

Jesus, Bread of life,
- ☑

we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☐ The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, ✠ be upon you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

By Your Hand You Feed Your People

ELW 469

**1 By your hand you feed your people,
food of angels, heaven's bread.
For these gifts we did not labor,
by your grace have we been fed:**

**2 In this meal we taste your sweetness,
bread for hunger, wine of peace.
Holy word and holy wisdom
satisfy our deepest needs. *Refrain***

Refrain

**Christ's own body, blessed and broken,
cup o'er flowing, life outpoured,
given as a living token
of your world redeemed, restored.**

**3 Send us now with faith and courage
to the hungry, lost, bereaved.
In our living and our dying,
we become what we receive: *Refrain***

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DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. You are the body of Christ.
☑ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*



KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Fleming	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 Omaha, NE 68131
402-341-7761 www.kmlchurch.org

August 17 & 18, 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.*

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



Today at Kountze Memorial

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor of Clara Kidder's 24th birthday given by Mark & Tarna Kidder; in honor of the marriage of Heidi Carlson & Randy Bird (8/17)

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by Jensens, Muchmores, and Luczynskis in memory of past family members

Kountze Café Lite
9:30—11 AM

Free-will Offering
Through Labor Day weekend, we will be serving a lighter fare for breakfast. If you would like to help with breakfast, even just for a Sunday or two, please contact Sherri Labedz.

Adult Forum
Sundays, 10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall for a lite breakfast and then stay for Adult Forum.
This week: Congregational Election Meeting; Leadership, Finance, & Property Ministry Areas.
Next week: Ministry Fair: Worship and Membership

Congregational Election Meeting
Sunday, August 18, 2024
10:15 AM

Please plan to join us between services in Fellowship Hall for our Annual Congregational Election Meeting. We will elect new members to the Council, hear updates and vote on the administrative structure for KCCOC (Kountze Commons Community

Outreach Center), and discuss the use of funds from the sale of deFreese Manor.

Notice of Special Meeting
Kountze Commons
Community Outreach Center
Sunday, August 18, 2024

During the Congregational Meeting at Kountze Memorial

The purpose of this special meeting is to:

1. consider and vote upon the Amended and Restated Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation
 2. consider and vote upon the Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Corporation
- Copies of the Amended & Restated Articles of Incorporation and the Amended & Restated Bylaws are at the Welcome Desk.

Back to School Gathering
Hotdogs & S'mores
Grades 7-12
Sunday, August 18
5:30 PM

Meet at the Link Door (by the tall orange tower) at 5:30 PM for Hot Dogs, Smores & Games in the Courtyard. We have invited our friends from Immanuel in Bellevue to join us. Let us know your plans by signing up and tell us what you can bring to the party. See you there as we grow in relationships and faith.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

August 18 Sunday

Pentecost 13
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:30 AM Kountze Café Lite
10:10 AM Adult Forum/
Congregational Meeting and
Ministry Fair: Leadership,
Finance, Property
5:30 PM Back to School Gathering

August 19 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
August 20 Tuesday
9:00 AM Staff Meeting
1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group
6:00 PM Congregation Council
August 21 Wednesday
12:15 PM Worship
August 22 Thursday
1:00 PM Circle 4
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

August 23 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry
August 24 Saturday
5:00 PM Worship
August 25 Sunday
Pentecost 14
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:30 AM Kountze Café Lite
10:10 AM Adult Forum/Ministry
Fair: Worship and Membership

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Dinners for Eight

Sign up by Monday, August 19.

- Get to know others in the congregation over 3 dinners for 3 months in groups of eight.
- Meet each month for a meal in September, October, and November
- Consider meeting for lunch instead of dinner!
- Enjoy a meal and conversation with one another.
- Sign up at the Welcome Desk or call the church office by Monday, August 19.
- See you around the table!

You are Invited!

John Waterman's 90th Birthday Party

Sunday, August 25

1-4 PM

DAV Hall, 4515 F Street, Omaha

Please RSVP—and get the address of the party - by August 15 via call or text to Shari at 402-830-5769.

Confirmation Orientation

August 28

6 PM

St. Timothy's Lutheran Church (93rd & Dodge)

Do you have a student who will be in 7th or 8th grade this fall? Our Confirmation programming kicks off with an Orientation Meeting & Meal for both students and their adults at St. Timothy's on August 28 at 6 PM **AND**... a lock-in and service night here at Kountze, September 6-7. Look for more information in your email and mailbox soon.

Let the church office or Pastor Lucy know if you have a student who should be included, or if you have any questions.

Rally Day!

Sunday, September 8

We will kick off our Sunday School year with prayers, celebration, games, and fellowship. We are planning a fun and interesting faith-filled Sunday school year. We hope you join us! Classes begin Sunday, September 15

Women's Gathering

Saturday, September 21

11 AM

Jonna Holland will speak about their recent trip to Egypt & Jordan. Watch the bulletin and Good News for more information.

Can You Help?

deFreese Manor is in need of help spreading mulch. No green thumb needed for this project. If you're able to help, please call the church or the office at deFreese. They would appreciate any help you may be able to offer.

Kountze Food Pantry

Do you or anyone you know need service hours? Volunteering at the Kountze Food Pantry is a perfect opportunity to boost your resume and have some fun at the same time! We are in need of strong, young people to help us unload deliveries at 8 AM Monday morning, and to carry out groceries for our guests from 10 AM-12:45 PM. You can work all or part of that time. We also need people on Friday evenings from 5 PM-6:45 PM. There are other positions for people of all ages and abilities. Please consider joining us by signing up at the following link:

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

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, 8/11—Wednesday, 8/14

Saturday: 43

Sunday: 9:00: 154 11:00: 73

Wednesday: 12:15: 14

Total: 284

Streaming: 72

Pantry Guests Served: 1084 (inc. 377 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 20

Offering:

\$12,004.11 (Regular) \$1,792.49 (Specials)

\$997.00 (Debt Reduction)

Jesus came to give us eternal life.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 6:51-58	Christ, the true food and drink
Monday	Proverbs 9:1-6	Wisdom's feast
Tuesday	Ephesians 5:15-20	Be filled with the Holy Spirit
Wednesday	Matthew 26:26-30	The Lord's Supper
Thursday	Exodus 16:27-36	Bread from heaven
Friday	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	The Lord's Supper
Saturday	Psalms 34:9-14	God teaches the fear of the Lord
Sunday	John 6:56-69	Many disciples desert Jesus



SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day." **John 6:54 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, give us wisdom to receive Jesus, the one who comes as the bread of life to fill us with life and love and hope. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this meal; let it remind us of Jesus, the bread of life, who has come into our lives to give us joy that knows no end. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May you be filled with the joy of Jesus dwelling in you.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- ☐ Tell about or reflect on a special meal you had with others. What made that meal special?
- ☐ If Jesus was your guest at a meal, what would you ask him?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Proverbs 9:1-6 and John 6:51-58.

In Proverbs 9, we are invited to enjoy a feast that offers not only food and drink but the pleasure of walking in the ways of God, *"the way of insight"* (v. 6). In John 6, Jesus invites people to feast on the wisdom of God embodied in him, *"the Word made flesh"* (John 1:14). Jesus' words have an obvious connection to the Lord's Supper, the last meal with his disciples before his death. Instead

of retelling the story of the last supper as is done in Luke, Matthew, and 1 Corinthians, this reading in John 6 gives us the meaning of the Lord's Supper. As we feast on Jesus, the bread of life, we live a life that dwells in his presence. We abide in him and he in us. The life God intends for us is eternal life. It is a life that knows no end. When we partake of the Lord's Supper, we receive a way of life filled with divine wisdom, goodness, and mercy. It is what Jesus came to give us.

Discuss: What does the Lord's Supper mean to you?

Pray: **Living God, we thank you for Jesus, the bread of life, who gives us the meal that grants us eternal life through your divine wisdom, goodness, and mercy. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, plan a meal for others to enjoy, especially those in need of encouragement.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The texts this week focus on living wisely and enjoying life that is experienced in the presence of God. In Proverbs 9:6, wisdom is described as walking *"in the way of insight."* Go for a walk and pay attention to what you can notice through your senses. What do you smell, see, hear, touch, and even taste that fill the space you are in? How does awareness of your senses and what you have experienced enrich your life today as a gift of our gracious God? *Pray:* **Creator God, for all that you give to us, help us to be aware and thankful. In Jesus' name, amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18; Psalm 34:15-22
Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69