

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
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

December 14 & 15, 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 165 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.

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.

Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices

Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

Scan to Give Online



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

Connect with Pr. Lucy

Schedule a time to meet with Pastor Lucy by following the link or QR Code. <https://calendly.com/pastor-lucy/45min>



Today at Kountze Memorial

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by Amanda Plantz in memory of David Penning.

NO Children's Choir or Children's Sermon Today upstairs during today's service - our children ARE the choir and will offer the message today! After the Children's Program during the 9 AM service, children will process to the back together and will return to their seats for communion and the remainder of our worship. After the 9 AM service there will be a short Sunday School activity. Children should go upstairs to receive a treat and a brief time together before they will join everyone downstairs in the Fellowship Hall with their Noisy Offering and a special celebration. Regular Sunday School and Children's Choir resume January 12. Children's Sermon time upstairs during the 9 AM worship resumes next week.

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.

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: Stewardship and 165th Anniversary

Next week: Fellowship

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

Alternative Gifts—Last Sunday!

December 15

Between services ~ 10—11 AM

ELCA Good Gifts, Global Mamas, and

Omaha Bridges Out of Poverty

This Sunday is the last day to do some Christmas shopping and give a gift that shares God's love and truly makes a difference in someone's life. Honor your family and friends with an Alternative Gift this Christmas. There are also some physical items available for purchase.

Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 15

9 AM

We are excited to hear our children sing and tell the story of Christ's birth this Sunday morning. The children (grades Pre K-6) will present the Christmas story with music.

Your Pennies for a Cow?

The Sunday School students have been collecting their change for Alternative Gifts and have a goal of purchasing a

portion of a cow. Please consider donating any change you have with you this Sunday, and join us in a "Noisy Offering" as we combine all our donations together in one large pot. We need your help to surpass our goal for Alternative Gifts.

Pledge Cards

If you haven't brought in your pledge card yet, and would like to turn one in today, ask an Usher for one or pick one up at the Welcome Desk in the Fellowship Hall. This Sunday morning we will celebrate with our children the Christmas story - Jesus' birthday - and in forum the birthday of Kountze. And what do we do at a birthday party? Bring a gift! Your pledge is your gift - in celebration of all God has done and all God is leading us into in the year ahead. And of course, like any good birthday party, there will be cake!

This Week at Kountze Memorial

December 15 Sunday

Advent 3

Good News Deadline

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
Rehearsal

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:00 AM Children's Christmas
Program

9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast

10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour

December 16 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

December 17 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group

6:00 PM Congregation Council

December 18 Wednesday

11:00 AM Advent Lunch

12:15 PM Worship

5:00 PM Advent Dinner

6:30 PM Worship

December 19 Thursday

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

6:00 PM Circle 5

December 20 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

December 21 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

December 22 Sunday

Advent 4

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 Adult Forum

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Advent at Kountze Memorial

Wednesday, December 18

Meals: 11 AM & 5 PM

Cost: Free Will Offering

Worship: 12:15 & 6:30 PM

Plan to Worship this Wednesday and come early for lunch or dinner here at Kountze Memorial. We will have a vegetarian option at each of the meals. If you would like to help in the kitchen (always a fun time) please sign up at the welcome desk or email jim@kmlchurch.org

Menu for December 18: White Chicken Enchiladas (not spicy), refried beans, Spanish rice and dessert.

Homemade Peanut Brittle Sale

Urban Ministry Cooperative Parish

December 15

Between services ~ 10-11 AM

Noni Cambridge, our Staff Treasurer, is selling homemade peanut brittle for the Urban Ministry Cooperative Parish. The proceeds from this Fundraiser goes to support the Raven Fund. This fund supports the underserved in the North and South Omaha Communities with food, rent, and utility bill assistance. Stop by to see Noni and enjoy a yummy treat while helping others at the same time! Peanut brittle makes a great gift.

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

Kountze Youth Christmas Party **Middle School, High School, College Youth** **Kristin Boe's House** **Saturday, December 21** **3—5 PM**

We will decorate sugar cookies, play games, and have a White Elephant Gift Exchange. Please bring a gift—either from home or something you purchase for \$10 or less! RSVP to the church office or at the Welcome Desk.

Kountze Food Pantry

The Kountze Pantry is collecting gloves for men, women, and children. Men's large and extra-large gloves are especially in short supply. Also, we will accept and distribute new or like-new coats to our Pantry guests if they request them. You may leave your donation in the box marked "Food Pantry", located in Fellowship Hall. Tax deductible slips are located on the box. As always, we are in need of volunteers. We have jobs for most ages and abilities. If you are interested in helping out, please sign up at the link below.

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

New Member Classes

January 12 & 26 **10:15 AM**

Explore the potential of joining Kountze Memorial by attending our upcoming new member classes. Please plan to attend both sessions. We will welcome new members on Sunday, February 2. Questions or planning to attend? Call the church office – we look forward to connecting with you!

Carol Joy Holling Camp

Kountze Memorial will cover the cost for any Kountze Memorial child/youth if you register by the **January 31 Early Bird Registration** date. If you register after this date, you will need to pay the additional cost. Kountze Camp Week is June 15—20, 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. 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 info@kmlchurch.org and we will submit payment on behalf of your youth. If you have any questions, please reach out to the church office. To register, use the link below:

<http://NLOM.org/caroljoyholling/register>

Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle, Television Broadcast

New charts are on the bulletin board in the Narthex. All dates are open. Sign up early to get the date/dates you want to honor someone or to celebrate a special event.

Parking at Kountze Memorial **Please Remember**

- There is no Kountze Memorial parking in the lot on the South side of Farnam. That is apartment parking only.
 - No parking Monday - Friday 8 AM - 4:30 PM in the Methodist Clinic parking lot.
 - On Saturday and Sunday, please save spots in the Methodist Clinic lot for those with mobility issues.
- You may park in the deFreese Manor parking lot, at the meters (must pay), or in the West parking lot. Thanks!

Christmas Message

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

View the Christmas Joy video using the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8nj1yxG2vA>

Youth Mission Trip

Kountze Memorial will join other high school youth and leaders from around the Nebraska Synod this summer on mission in Nashville. The Nebraska Synod Journey is a week-long experience for youth who have completed grades 8-12 by the summer of 2025 and their adult leaders. The 2025 Journey to Nashville will feature service learning throughout the Nashville area, worship, fellowship and other activities throughout the city. We will use our gifts as we grow in our faith together and learn about the gifts our neighbors in Tennessee bring to the table.

- Date: July 6-12, 2025
- Location: Nashville, TN
- Cost of event: \$680/person
- We will fundraise to offset the cost to families
- Contact Pr. Lucy or Kristin Boe if you are interested!

Our youth are kicking-off the fundraising for this trip with an Advent Envelope Tree. Just like last year, we ask you to support our youth by taking an envelope and putting a donation inside matching the number on the envelope before returning it. Checks/envelopes should be made out to Kountze Memorial and clearly marked "Youth Mission Trip" in the memo line. Many, many thanks!

Attendance & Giving **Thursday, 12/5—Wednesday, 12/11**

Saturday: 22

Sunday: 9:00: 156 **11:00:** 72

Wednesday: 12:15: 0 **6:30:**

Total: 250

Streaming: 50

Pantry Guests Served: 989 (inc. 333 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 19

Offering:

\$22,284.23 (Regular) \$6,720.77 (Specials)

\$12,273.32 (Debt Reduction)

Living a life of repentance brings joy.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 3:7-18	One more powerful is coming
Monday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	A song of joy
Tuesday	Philippians 4:4-7	The Lord is near
Wednesday	Isaiah 9:1-7	A child is born
Thursday	Hebrews 13:7-17	Service that pleases God
Friday	Luke 15:1-7	The parable of the lost sheep
Saturday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Thanksgiving and praise
Sunday	Luke 1:39-55	Mary visits Elizabeth

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

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

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, may the good news of your coming fill our hearts with joy and lead us to love you and have compassion for others. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, bless our homes with joy this Advent. As we enjoy your gifts of food, make us ready for Jesus, the one who is to come. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with joy.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What is some good news you have heard recently?
- A life of repentance brings joy and loving actions. How is that good news for us?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 3:7-18.

John the Baptist gets people's attention with words of condemnation, warning, and confrontation. And it works, or at least the crowd is riveted for a while. The people wonder what to do to get their lives in order. Simple: don't abuse your power and wealth; share; be generous. They are to show a life of repentance, which means living life differently because of God's ways and power. However, John's suggestions aren't the "how-to steps" to achieving a successful life. They are examples of behaviors of a life that trusts the good news. A life of repentance brings joy and loving actions. The good news of Jesus changes everything with the power of grace, mercy, and peace. John the Baptist describes it as the life that bears "*fruits worthy of repentance*" (v. 8).

Discuss: How would you describe the good news of Jesus to others?

Pray: Righteous God, we thank you that earthly powers that abuse others are condemned; we ask that your reign of peace bear the fruit of repentance in us, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how might your actions bring joy to someone this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The third candle on the Advent Wreath symbolizes the theme of joy. Discuss or think about the joy that Jesus brings to the world. Light the first candle of hope, the second candle of peace, and the third candle of joy on the Advent Wreath.

Say: In Isaiah's song, he names God as the source of our salvation and the one to trust without fear. Isaiah cries out, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." Let us give thanks for the joy that Jesus brings. (Isaiah 12:2-3)

Pray: Thank you, Lord Jesus for giving us joy. Fill our lives with joy this Advent. Amen.

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