

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

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December 28, 2024
December 29, 2024

5:00 PM
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

LESSONS and CAROLS SUNDAY



"The tradition of the Lessons & Carols service goes back to 19th century England. This special service proclaims the Word not through a sermon but through nine 'lessons,' or scripture readings, and nine accompanying carols. This worship honors the structure of this traditional Lessons and Carols while incorporating different scripture readings and carols to tell the Christmas story."

PRELUDE

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God-with-us,

C we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter,
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.

We have made power and wealth our idols,

while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.

We have overlooked the shepherds,

expecting good news in prettier packaging.

Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace.

Turn us from our ways to your ways.

Grant us the grace to begin again.

Free us from all that keeps us bound,

and forgive our sin,

through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us.

Amen.

P Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, † forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.

C Amen.

1 Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
once you sang creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth:
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

2 Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

4 All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
evermore your voices raising
to the eternal Three in One.
Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt., sts. 1-3; Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, st. 4

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God,
C and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. ⁹They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

**1 It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.**

**3 And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!**

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

(sit)

THE SECOND LESSON**Isaiah 35:1-10**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

**1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.**

**4 He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

THE THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:1-2, 6-7

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.

⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

ELW 272 vs. 1 & 2

**1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung,
it came, a flow'r so bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half-spent was the night.**

**2 Isaiah had foretold it,
the rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half-spent was the night.**

Text: German carol, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, sts. 1-2; Harriet R. Krauth, 1845-1925, st. 3; John C. Mattes, 1876-1948, st. 4

THE FOURTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

- 1 The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
with wings as drifted snow, with eyes as flame:
"All hail to thee, O lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favored lady." Gloria!**
- 4 Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!**

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834-1924

THE FIFTH LESSON

Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

G Thanks be to God.

CAROL

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

ELW 257 vs. 1 & 2

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.**
- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain***

Refrain

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.**

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

THE SIXTH LESSON

Luke 1:39-58

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." ⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home. ⁵⁷Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Canticle of the Turning

ELW 723 vs. 1 & 3

**1 My soul cries out with a joyful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn? Refrain**

**3 From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears
ev'ry tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed,
for the world is about to turn. Refrain**

Refrain

**My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.**

Text: Rory Cooney, b. 1952, based on the Magnificat
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THE SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ELW 279 vs. 1 & 3

**1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

**3 How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.**

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-20

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

**1 Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.**

Refrain

**Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song?**
Refrain

**3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.**
Refrain

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, The Crown of Jesus Music, 1864

THE NINTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

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: ⁶'And 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.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

G Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

CAROL

The First Noel

ELW 300 vs. 1 & 3

**1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

Refrain

**Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.**

**3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain***

Text: English traditional

THE APOSTLES' CREED

☐ With the whole church, let us 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** God of grace,
 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)

Prayers this week: Lydia Baum, Mike Cswercko, Harli Meyer; granddaughter of Lynn & Nancy Meyer,

On-going Care: Sharon Ambler, Betty Callies, Cheri Biggs, John Bodnar, Don Burton, Marilyn Dichsen, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Jessica Hannon, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Dayle Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Dwight Kurbis, Orville & Julie Knapp, Marie Kubat, Ruth & Charles Martis, Tracey Mason, Lara McCormick, Lynn Meyer, Nita Mueller, Diane Nickeson-Ray, Myron Osentowski, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, Dan & Ginny Rath, David Samaria, Laurine Savine, Dorothy Stanzel, Joyce Wachal, Gary Westerman, Allyson White, 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

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: *Seminarians* – 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

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

In the Bleak Midwinter

ELW 294 vs. 2 & 3

2 Heaven cannot hold him,
nor earth sustain;
heav'n and earth shall flee away
when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter
a stable place sufficed
the Lord God almighty,
Jesus Christ.

3 What can I give him,
poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man
I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him—
give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti, 1830-1894

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ God of heaven and earth,
☑ from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. Amen.

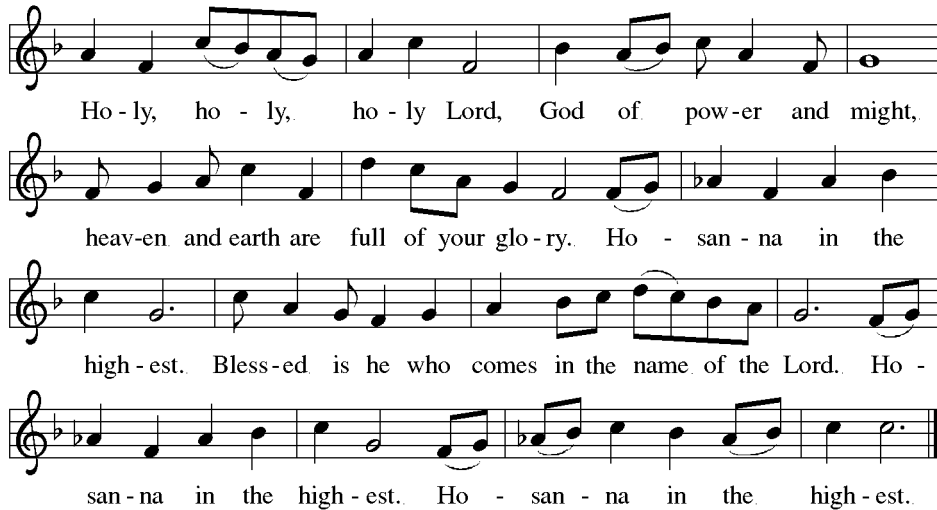
HOLY COMMUNION

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

- ☐ 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-er and might,
heav-en 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

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

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

- C** **Christ has died. Christ has risen Christ will come again.**

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

- C** **Come, Lord Jesus.**

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

- C** **Come, Holy Spirit.**

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

- C** **Amen.**

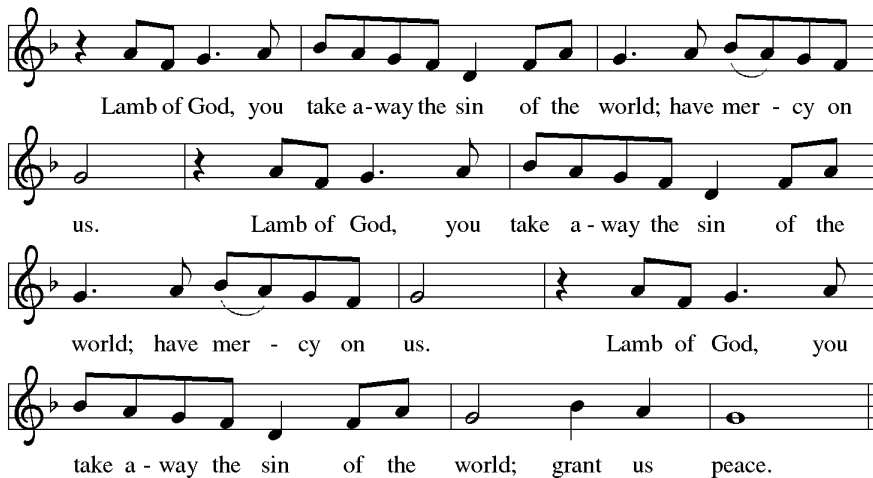
THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

ANGUS 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

C A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.

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.

(sit)

- 1 **What feast of love is offered here,
what banquet come from heaven?
What food of everlasting life,
what gracious gift is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
the bread come down from heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
How sweet the manna given!**
- 2 **What light of truth is offered here,
what covenant from heaven?
What hope of everlasting life,
what wondrous word is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
the sun come down from heaven.
Oh, see and hear and sing!
The Word of God is given!**
- 3 **What wine of love is offered here,
what crimson drink from heaven?
What stream of everlasting life,
what precious blood is given?
This, this is Christ the king,
the sweetest wine of heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
The Son of God is given!**

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939
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Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

- 1 **Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**
- 2 **Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!
Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain***
- 3 **Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

Refrain

**Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Merciful God,

C **we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

P May the God of love, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always.

C **Amen.**

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

O Lord, Now Let Your Servant

ELW 313

1 **O Lord, now let your servant
depart in heav'nly peace,
for I have seen the glory
of your redeeming grace:
a light to lead the nations
unto your holy hill,
the glory of your people,
your chosen Israel.**

2 **Then grant that I may follow
your gleam, O glorious Light,
till earthly shadows scatter,
and faith is changed to sight;
till raptured saints shall gather
upon that shining shore,
where Christ, the blessed daystar,
shall light them evermore.**

Text: Ernest E. Ryden, 1886-1981, alt., based on the Nunc dimittis
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE



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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 28 & 29, 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

Poinsettias are given to the glory of God in memory of Sandy Johnson, given by Curt Johnson and family; Vinn Stephens given by her loving family; Vinn & Dick Stephens given by their daughters; In honor of family given by Joan Jacobson-Trotter; Joan Jacobson-Trotter given by her family; Debby Woosley, beloved mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt

Sunday School & Children's Choir

Regular Sunday School and Children's Choir resume January 12.

Children's Sermon

9:15 AM

Grades K-4

Following the 9 AM Children's Blessing, children may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper rooms. The children will return to their seats in time to receive communion.

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.

Youth Forum

All youth in grades 7-12 are encouraged to join us in the Youth Center at 10:10 AM beginning Sunday, January 12.

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: Fellowship

Next week: Fellowship

This Week at Kountze Memorial

December 29 Sunday

Christmas 1
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Sermon (K-4)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Adult Forum

December 30 Monday

9:00 AM Good News Mailing
10:00 AM Pantry

December 31 Tuesday

New Year's Eve
9:00 AM Staff Meeting

January 1 Wednesday

New Year's Day
Office Closed

January 2 Thursday

2:00 PM Cards with Friends
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

January 3 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

January 4 Saturday

Homebound Communion
5:00 PM Worship

January 5 Sunday

Epiphany of Our Lord
Homebound Communion
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Sermon (K-4)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Adult Forum

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

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.

Sunday School Volunteers Needed

If you would like to help assist and lead the preschool or elementary youth one Sunday each month, please contact Kristin Boe at Kristin@kmlchurch.org.

Good News Mailing

Monday, December 30

9:00 AM

We will be assembling the January Good News on Monday, December 30. If you are available to help, we would appreciate it greatly! It's a fun group and lunch will be served.

Cards with Friends

Thursday, January 2

2:00 PM

We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall on the first Thursday of the month for a time together playing cards. Bring a snack to share if you would like. All are welcome.

High School Youth Trip Info Meeting

Sunday, January 5

10:15 AM

Youth Center

Come and learn about the week of traveling, exploring what our faith means to us, and providing service work in a variety of areas.

KMLC Book Group

Sunday, January 12

12:15 PM

Fellowship Lounge

Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Van Pelt

Remarkably Bright Creatures is the debut novel by Shelby Van Pelt, published in 2022, and a New York Times best seller. This is a book that features Marcellus,

a giant Pacific octopus, as the main character and narrator. Marcellus forms a beautiful relationship with Tova Sullivan, the night cleaning lady in the aquarium where he lives. His intelligence is revealed in his bonding with Tova to help solve the mystery of her 18-year-old son's disappearance at sea 30 years previously. This is a heartwarming story of mystery and love between a lonely woman and intriguing, intelligent living creature. The book is so captivating and entertaining you won't be able to put it down. Please join us for a lively discussion.

Confirmation Classes Continue

St. Timothy's Lutheran Church

(93rd & Dodge)

Grades 7 & 8

Classes Resume Wednesday, January 8

6 - 7:15 PM

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? Contact the church office (402-341-7761 or debbie@kmlchurch.org). We look forward to connecting with you!

Men's Lunch

Thursday, January 16

11:30 AM

Suggested Donation: \$10.00

Kick off the new year with good food and great company at our Men's Lunch! January's gathering promises hearty laughs and warm fellowship—no fancy theme, just the perfect chance to relax after the holiday rush. Stay tuned for menu details, and save the date! Jim's got us covered.

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

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>

Annual Committee Reports

Due January 19

If you are responsible for a report in our Annual Report, please have them turned in to Debbie Bogue in the office no later than January 19. Reports are welcome—and preferred—anytime before that date. Thanks.

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 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!

Year-End Giving

As we approach the end of 2024 we have seen a lot of encouraging numbers - growth in many different areas. But one significant number needs your help - our financial gifts. We are behind budget by about \$100,000 and we need your year-end gifts to help us sustain the programming & mission we're called to together. **As you are able, please prayerfully consider giving an additional gift to Kountze Memorial this December.** We are so grateful for your generosity and for all who participate in the life of our congregation! **Please note:** in order to be posted in 2024, all offerings need to be at church or postmarked by December 31. Thank you.

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>



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 16

10:15 AM

Annual Report and 2025 Budget

KMLC Camp Week

Camp Carol Joy Holling

June 15-20

Vacation Bible School

July 20-23

Ages 2 Years to Grade 5

5:15 PM: Family Dinner

6-8 PM: Class

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, 12/19—Sunday, 12/22

Saturday: 33

Sunday: 9:00: 109 11:00: 89

Wednesday: 12:15: 36 6:30: 62

Total: 231

Streaming: 45

Pantry Guests Served: 261 (inc. 113 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 17

Offering: Not available at time of printing

Christmas peace is a way of life.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 2:41-52	The boy Jesus at the temple
Monday	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Hanna visits Samuel
Tuesday	Colossians 3:12-17	New life in Christ
Wednesday	Proverbs 1:1-7	How proverbs should be used
Thursday	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Ministry of the apostles
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalms 148	Let all things praise the Lord
Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, give us the grace to grow in your ways that we may love others with a peace that passes understanding through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we thank you for this food that helps us grow and be healthy. Just as you were once a child, bring joy, love, and peace to all the children of the world. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. (Colossians 3:15)

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

- How would you describe a relationship you have with a good friend?
- What words describe a person who lives a faith-filled life?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Colossians 3:12-17.

From the gift of baby Jesus to the sharing of gifts at Christmas, there is lots to feel good about this time of year. This reading of Colossians helps us to make those good feelings into a faith-filled way of life. We are to clothe ourselves each day as followers of Jesus and experience the power of love in Christ through our daily relationships. We are to embrace a life where we don't have to be number one. In Christ we have everything we need to face each day ready and content. We can be calm because the storms of life have already lost their power. We can sing for joy because we are forgiven and are free to forgive others as a way of saying, "I love you." With gratitude and thanksgiving, we can teach and learn from one another without embarrassment or resentment. Christmas is present in this passage because it is filled with the love of God and an active pursuit of peace that will not end. We are to live our lives in such a way that we "*let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts*" (v. 15) and as a way of saying to God, "Thank you for Jesus."

Discuss: When is a time you have experienced the love of Christ through your relationships with others?

Pray: **Loving God, in Christ you open for us a way of life filled with forgiveness, love, joy, and peace. For all that we celebrate this time of year, we give you thanks. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible readings and theme for this week, what can you do to show forgiveness and peace to someone?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Christmas is a season of twelve days. St. Francis of Assisi is credited with making the first nativity scene on Christmas Eve in the year 1223. He is also known for his love of animals and birds and felt they should be remembered during Christmas because they were present at the birth of Jesus. Think or talk about what animals you think may have been present at that time. Then go on a walk outside and observe all the animals, both wild and domesticated, that surround you in your neighborhood.

Pray: **Dear Lord, we praise you for all creation. We praise you for mountains and hills, for fruit trees and cedars, for wild animals and cattle, for creeping things, and flying birds. Amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:[1-9] 10-18