

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

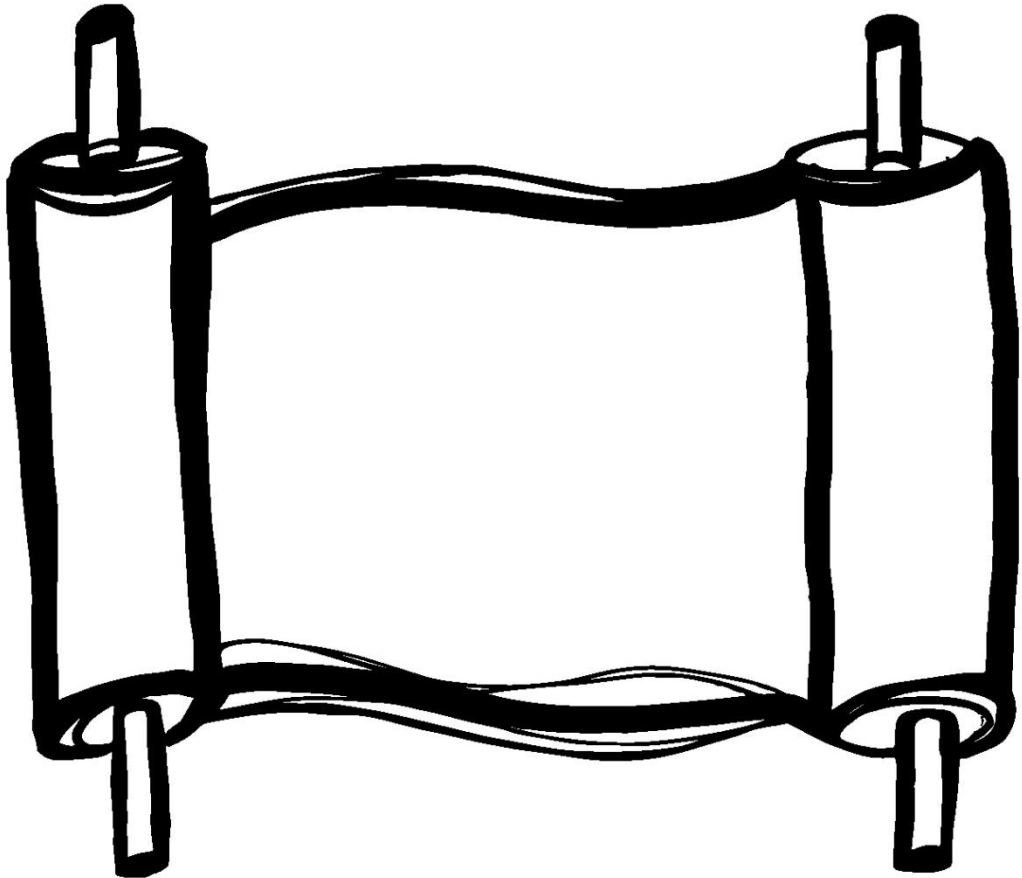
Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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

January 26, 2025

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

THIRD SUNDAY after EPIPHANY



God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

- ☐ Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.
- ☑ **Amen.**

- ☐ 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, 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.**

- ☐ 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.

- ☑ **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.**

- ☐ Almighty God, who gives us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and forgives us all our sins, strengthen us in all goodness and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- ☑ **Amen.**

- 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.**
- 3 You shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
spring in your path to birth.
Before you on the mountains
shall peace, the herald, go;
and righteousness in fountains
from hill to valley flow.**

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.


APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

KYRIE



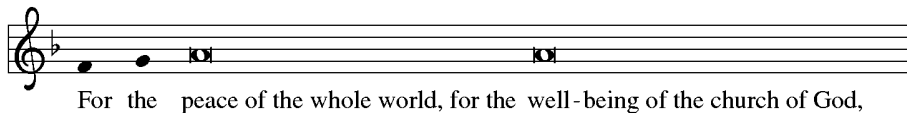
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer-cy.



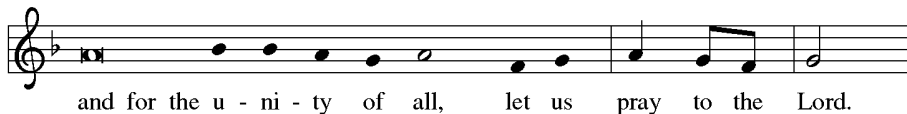
For the peace from above, and for our sal - va - tion, let us



pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



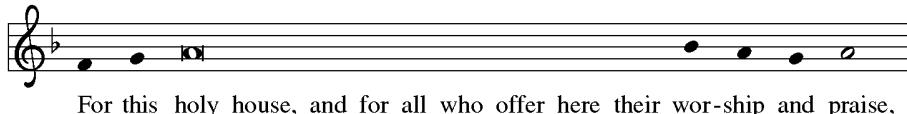
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.




Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



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



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



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

☐ Blessed Lord God,

☑ you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that “the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

All the people of Israel gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, “This day is holy to the Lord your God; do not mourn or weep.” For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

📖 Word of God, Word of Life.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

Psalm 19 (choir or cantor sing verses / congregation sings refrain)



The teach-ing of the LORD re - vives the soul.

- ¹ The heavens declare the glo-ry of God,
and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.
- ² One day tells its tale to another,
and one night imparts knowledge to another.
- ³ Although they have no words or language,
and their voices are not heard,
- ⁴ their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world,
where God has pitched a tent for the sun.
- ⁵ It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;
it rejoices like a champion to run its course.
- ⁶ It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again;
nothing is hidden from its burning heat. *Refrain*

⁷The teaching of the Lord is perfect and re- | vives the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure and gives wisdom | to the simple.
⁸The statutes of the Lord are just and re- | joice the heart;
the commandment of the Lord is clear and gives light | to the eyes.
⁹The fear of the Lord is clean and en- | dures forever;
the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous | altogether.
¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, more than | much fine gold,
sweeter far than honey, than honey | in the comb. *Refrain*

¹¹By them also is your ser- | vant enlightened,
and in keeping them there is | great reward.
¹²Who can detect one's | own offenses?
Cleanse me from my | secret faults.
¹³Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion | over me;
then shall I be whole and sound, and innocent of a | great offense.
¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable | in your sight,
O Lord, my strength and | my redeemer. *Refrain*

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ^{31a} But strive for the greater gifts.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

G Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



☞ The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

☛ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 4:14-21

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 252

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶ When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

☞ The Gospel of the Lord.

☛ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 6th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen. Children in grades K-4 who are not wanting to participate in Choir, may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper rooms. All children will return to the sanctuary in time to receive communion. There are Children's Bibles and activity bags available to those who prefer to stay with their families.

SERMON

Rev. Greg Berger
Assistant to the Bishop, Nebraska Synod

**1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness
with a liberating light;
praise the One who frees the pris'ners,
turning blindness into sight.
Praise the One who preached the gospel,
healing ev'ry dread disease,
calming storms and feeding thousands
with the very bread of peace.**

**2 Praise the One who blessed the children
with a strong yet gentle word;
praise the One who drove out demons
with a piercing, two-edged sword.
Praise the One who brings cool water
to the desert's burning sand;
from this well comes living water
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.**

**3 Praise the one true love incarnate:
Christ, who suffered in our place;
Jesus died and rose for many
that we may know God by grace.
Let us sing for joy and gladness,
seeing what our God has done.
Praise the one redeeming glory;
praise the One who makes us one.**

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955
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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 hear 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: David Weaver; friend of Leigh and Vicki Freeman

On-going Care: Sharon Ambler, Cheri Biggs, John Bodnar, Don Burton, Betty Callies, Mike Cswercko, Marilyn Dichsen, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Jessica Hannon, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Dayle Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Marie Kubat, Dwight Kurbis, Ruth & Charles Martis, Tracey Mason, Lara McCormick, Lynn Meyer, Sandi Miller, Nita Mueller, Diane Nickeson-Ray, Myron Osentowski, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, Dan & Ginny Rath, David Samaria, 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* – Joseph Daffer, 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

Prayer of Thanksgiving

words by Jane Foster Knox
music by Mark Wilson

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

ELW 885

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise God, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise God a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711, alt.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ God of grace,
- ☑ **your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. Amen.**

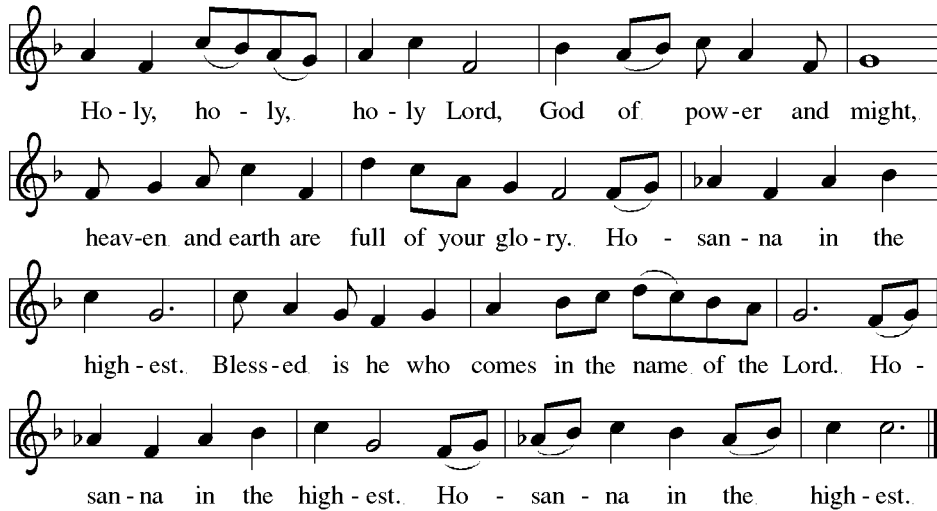
HOLY COMMUNION

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

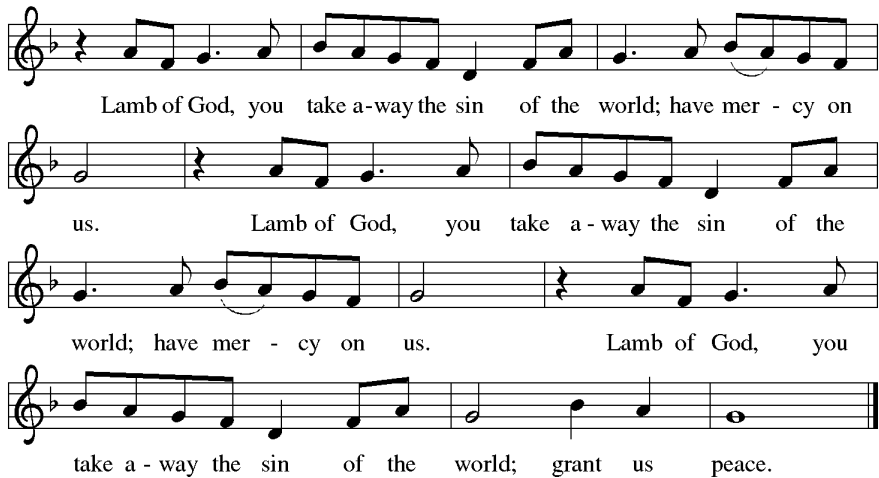
P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

C **Our Father, who art in heaven,**
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

AGNUS DEI



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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- P** Come, eat this meal of gladness.
- G** **The joy of the Lord is our strength.**

(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.

Refrain

**One bread, one body, one Lord of all;
one cup of blessing which we bless,
and we, though many throughout the earth,
we are one body in this one Lord.**

- 1 Gentile or Jew, servant or free,
woman or man, no more. *Refrain***
- 2 Many the gifts, many the works,
one in the Lord of all. *Refrain***
- 3 Grain for the fields, scattered and grown,
gathered to one for all. *Refrain***

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Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

ELW 886

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Oh, for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!</p> <p>2 My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of your name.</p> <p>3 The name of Jesus charms our fears
and bids our sorrows cease,
sings music in the sinner's ears,
brings life and health and peace.</p> | <p>4 He speaks, and list'ning to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.</p> <p>5 Look unto him, your Savior own,
O fallen human race!
Look and be saved through faith alone,
be justified by grace!</p> <p>6 To God all glory, praise, and love
be now and ever giv'n
by saints below and saints above,
the church in earth and heav'n.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

*(rise in body or spirit)***POST-COMMUNION BLESSING****PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- ☞** Nourishing God,
- ☞** at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray, Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ The Spirit of the triune God ✝ bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

We All Are One in Mission

ELW 576

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.
A single great commission
compels us from above
to plan and work together
that all may know Christ's love.</p> | <p>2 We all are called for service,
to witness in God's name.
Our ministries are diff'rent;
our purpose is the same:
to touch the lives of others
with God's surprising grace,
so ev'ry folk and nation
may feel God's warm embrace.</p> |
| <p>3 Now let us be united,
and let our song be heard.
Now let us be a vessel
for God's redeeming Word.
We all are one in mission;
we all are one in call,
our varied gifts united
by Christ, the Lord of all.</p> | |

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955

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DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Live in hope.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

✝ ✝ ✝

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KOUNTZE STAFF

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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

January 25 & 26, 2025

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

Thank You to Rev. Greg Berger, Assistant to the Bishop, Nebraska Synod for preaching today. During Forum today, he will speak about the Synod & our partnership in mission as well as the Call Process.

Children's Choir

9:15 AM

K-6th Grades

Following the 9 AM Children's Blessing, children are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen or join Kristin Boe for a Children's Sermon. Children will return to their seats in time to receive communion.

Children's Sermon

9:15 AM

Grades K-4

Following the 9 AM Children's Blessing, children not wanting to participate in Choir, 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.

Sunday School

10:10 - 10:50 AM

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

The kids can enjoy the same breakfast upstairs while listening to the lessons of the day (the same breakfast that is being served in the Fellowship Hall). If you would like to support the Sunday School with donations of juice boxes or individual milk cartons, we would appreciate it and will be serving those with breakfast.

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

Youth Forum Youth Center 10:10 AM Grades 7—12

Join us in the Youth Center! Any adults interested in helping with Youth Forum, please contact Pr. Lucy.

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: Rev Greg Berger, Assistant to the Bishop

Next week: New Member Reception and What is “Candlemass”/Feast of the Presentation?

New Member Class Continues This Sunday, January 26 10:15 AM

Evensong: A Grand Choir Experience! Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry This Sunday, January 26 4:30-7:00 PM

St. John's Lutheran Church (322 N. Molley Street, Bennington)

Join the Omaha Lutheran Campus Ministry for Evensong: A Grand Choir Experience. Enjoy a chili cook-off and silent auction followed by Holden Evening Prayer with the grand choir. Experience worship, music, faith, and food as we lift our voices together in hope. All are welcome! A free-will offering to support the ministry is encouraged.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

January 26 Sunday

Epiphany 3
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 Continues

January 27 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
11:30 AM Endowment Board

January 28 Tuesday

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

January 29 Wednesday

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

January 30 Thursday

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
7:00 PM Planning Meeting @ Luther Memorial

January 31 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

February 1 Saturday

Homebound Communion
5:00 PM Worship

February 2 Sunday

Epiphany 4
Presentation of Our Lord
Homebound Communion
Receive New Members
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

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Good News Assembly

Tuesday, January 28

9:00 AM—1:00 PMish

If you have a few free hours, we would be glad to put you to work helping to assemble the Good News. There is a great, fun core group to work with. No need to RSVP. Just show up Tuesday morning if you're able. Thanks!

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>

Sunday School Needs Your Empty TP Rolls

We are saving toilet paper rolls for a Sunday School project. Please bring your empty rolls to the Sunday School office throughout the month of February. Thank you!

Cards with Friends

Thursday, February 6

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.

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

KMLC Book Group

Sunday, February 9

12:15 PM

Fellowship Lounge

SACRED NATURE: Restoring Our Ancient Bond with the Natural World by Karen Armstrong

Please join us for a meaningful discussion and time to connect with fellow book lovers.

Ice Skating

Saturday, February 15

3-5 PM

Skate Ribbon

Heartland of America Park

7th Grade through College-aged Young Adults

- Meet at 3 PM at the church or 3:15 PM at the Skate Ribbon at Heartland of America Park.
- Cost is free if you bring your own ice skates, or you can rent skates for \$5.
- Need to RSVP to church office or by signing up on the sign-up sheet at the Welcome Center (in the Fellowship Hall). We will need an email address to send you a waiver form that must be filled out.

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!

Scholarships

Deadline to Apply: March 1

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 website at:

www.kmlchurch.org and go to Grow >

Youth Ministries > Scholarships.

Applications are due on March 1, 2025. 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, in person to the church office, or by e-mail to info@kmlchurch.org

Thrivent Direct Choice Dollars®

Did you know that if you are a Thrivent member, you can direct some of Thrivent's charitable funds to a favorite nonprofit organization or cause?

For more information, go to:

<https://www.thrivent.com/about-us/membership/thrivent-choice>

Kountze Food Pantry

The Kountze Pantry is still 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, January 16—Wednesday, January 22

Saturday: 32

Sunday: 9:00: 116 11:00: 68

Wednesday: 12:15: 11 6:30: 0

Total: 227

Streaming:

Pantry Guests Served: 904 (inc. 285 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 21

Offering: Not available at time of printing

Jesus sets us free.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 4:14-21	Jesus returns to Nazareth
Monday	Nehemiah 8:1-10	Ezra reads God's law to the people
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 12:12-31	One body, many parts
Wednesday	Isaiah 61:1-7	The good news of deliverance
Thursday	Leviticus 25:1-24	The year of jubilee
Friday	Galatians 5:13-15	Christian freedom
Saturday	Psalms 19	God's glory in creation and the law
Sunday	Luke 4:21-30	The prophet Jesus is rejected



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Luke 4:18-19 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, for your message of freedom that is more desired than gold and sweeter than honey, we praise you through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Psalm 19:10)

Mealtime Prayer:

For this food that strengthens the body and your word that strengthens our souls, we thank you. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Spirit of Christ Jesus bless you and set you free.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What burdens or worries do you have? What would help set you free from them?
- Jesus came to set us free. From what would you like Jesus to set you free?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 4:14-21.

This is Jesus' first sermon in Luke. That makes it a particularly important message, one that reveals recurring themes in Jesus' ministry. Jesus chooses to read from Isaiah 61. The message is clear. Jesus has God's Spirit to encourage the poor, free captives, give sight to the blind, and set free those who are burdened. Finally, he is to announce the "year of the Lord's favor" (v.19), a phrase that represents the year of jubilee announced in Leviticus 25. Every fifty years slaves and prisoners would be freed, debts would be forgiven, and lands lost to debts would be returned to ancestral owners. This keeps society from unraveling into unlimited wealth for some and perpetual poverty for others. Jesus brings all sorts of new beginnings for powerless people. Jesus would be one of the powerless and die on a cross as a criminal. His life, death, and resurrection become the good news for a world where unfairness and abuse of powers seem to win the day, but never really will in God's rule.

Discuss: Where is there a need in today's world for Jesus' freeing power?

Pray: **Almighty and merciful God, we thank you for freeing us to serve you with thanksgiving and serve our neighbor in love, through Christ Jesus who preaches good news for all. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how can you help someone be released from their worries?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The closing prayer in Psalm 19 is often used at the beginning of sermons, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer" (v. 14). Pray this verse as part of a morning prayer ritual to honor the day and see your actions and thoughts as a form of praise to God.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Malachi 3:1-4; Psalm 84
Hebrews 2:14-18; Luke 2:22-40