

### KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Dn. Eric Haitz	Deacon
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Toby Rees	Director of Kountze Commons
Sheila Valquier	Youth Director
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Fleming	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaight	Janitorial Staff
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director



# KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

**2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761**

**Omaha, NE 68131  
www.kmlchurch.org**

**December 6 & 7, 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.*

### **Today at Kountze Memorial**

#### **Children’s Choir & Children’s Sermon**

**9:15 AM**

##### **Grades K-6**

Children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen following the 9 AM Children's Blessing. Children in grades K-4 not wanting to participate in Choir may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper Rooms. All the children will return to their seats in time to receive communion. The children will be practicing for the Christmas Program and then they will not meet from December 14—January 4.

#### **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 Breakfast – Come Lend a Hand!**

Do you enjoy the smell of coffee brewing, lively conversation, and helping people start their Sunday with a good meal? The Kountze Breakfast Committee is looking for a few more helping hands for setup and cleanup on Sunday mornings. We especially need volunteers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month, and we’re also looking for “kitchen subs” who can fill in when regular helpers are unavailable. You’ll work side by side with experienced volunteers, learn the rhythm of the kitchen, and share in the fun and fellowship that happens behind the scenes. If you’d like to know more or try it out, please contact Sherri Labedz at 402-578-4331 and learn what it’s like to serve in this simple but very meaningful ministry. Thank you for considering being part of the Sunday Breakfast team!

#### **Sunday School**

**10:10 AM**

**Ages 2 years-6<sup>th</sup> Grade**

Join us in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Sunday School Rooms where the

#### **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 or anyone who does not commune will receive a blessing. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (for health or other reasons) have communed fully. Our form of distribution is Intinction, meaning you will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip it 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 plates 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 Pas-  
tor Lucy by fol-  
lowing the link or  
QR Code. [https://  
calendly.com/pastor-  
lucy/45min](https://calendly.com/pastor-lucy/45min)



## Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

children will see how Jesus taught his followers to live in God's word and spread that message to others through art, games, storytelling, and missions. The kids can enjoy the same breakfast upstairs that is being served in the Fellowship Hall while listening to the lessons of the day. No Sunday School from December 14—January 4. Sunday School will resume on January 11.

### Youth Forum

**Sundays, 10:15 AM**

### Youth Center

**Grades 7-12**

You are invited to grab breakfast and bring it to the Youth Center each week during the Sunday Faith Formation hour.

### Adult Forum

**Sundays, 10:10 AM**

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall for breakfast and then stay for Adult Forum.

### Advent Alternative Gift Market

**Sundays, Now - December 14**

**9:30 - 11:30 AM**

**Saturday December 13 (after the Candlelight Carol Service)**

Plan to shop now! Shop next door to the Kountze Café area beginning November 23. Shop ELCA Good Gifts for different monetary gifts that fight hunger and transform lives. Shop physical handmade gifts from Global Mamas that support women and their families in Ghana. Donate to the Kountze Memorial Healing Gift Free Clinic and/or our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry to help local families in honor of your family and friends.

### Youth Progressive Dinner

**Sunday, December 7**

**Grades 7-12**

**5—8:30 PM**

Please join us for our Annual Progressive Dinner! Invite friends and plan for an evening of fun as we travel to host homes for our meal, and return to Kountze for dessert. We will depart from the church at 5 PM and plan to return by 8:30 PM. If you haven't already, please let Sheila Valquier know if you plan to attend this morning.

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## This Week at Kountze Memorial

### December 7 Sunday

Advent 2  
Homebound Communion  
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal  
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship  
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)  
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-6)  
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast  
9:30 AM Alternative Gifts  
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour  
4:30 PM Youth Mission Trip Info Mtg.  
5:00 PM Youth Progressive dinner

### December 8 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

### December 9 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting  
6:00 PM Circle 3

### December 10 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group  
11:00 AM Advent Lunch  
12:15 PM Worship  
1:00 PM Devotions @ deFreese Manor  
3:00 PM Finance Committee  
4:00 PM Executive Committee  
5:00 PM Advent Dinner  
6:30 PM Worship  
7:30 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

### December 11 Thursday

Council Reports Due  
9:30 AM WELCA Board  
11:30 AM Property Committee  
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic  
5:30 Faith Formation Meeting

### December 12 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

### December 13 Saturday

9:00 AM Christmas Program Rehearsal  
3:30 PM CCS Choir Rehearsal  
5:00 PM Candlelight Carol Service  
(prelude begins at 4:30 PM)  
6:00 PM(ish) Alternative Gifts

### December 14 Sunday

Advent 3  
Noisy Offering  
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal  
9:00 AM &  
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)  
9:00 AM Children's Christmas Program & Worship  
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast  
9:30 AM Alternative Gifts  
10:10 AM Adult Forum  
11:00 AM Worship  
3:00 PM Tuba Christmas Concert

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## For Your Calendar/News & Notes

### Pledge Cards

You should have received a letter and pledge card in the mail for our Imagine stewardship campaign. Please bring those pledge cards back in December and put them in the designated box in the narthex or mail them back to the church office in the envelope provided. Contact us with questions - we'd be happy to help. And THANK YOU for your generous gifts - they empower us, together, to do even more than we could imagine toward God's work in our community and around the world!

### Candlelight Carol Service

**Saturday, December 13**

**Prelude 4:30 PM**

**Service 5:00 PM**

The annual Candlelight Carol Service has become a beloved tradition at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church! We hope that you, your family, and friends can join us for this special service of sacred Scripture and poetry, congregational carols, communion, and choral, handbell and instrumental music. Please join us for this special evening as we journey through

## For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

Advent and celebrate the birth of our Savior! Nursery care will be provided. Cheese and dessert reception following the service, and shop the Alternative Gift Market.

### Children's Christmas Program

**Sunday, December 14**

**9 AM**

The kids are working hard to learn some of your favorite Christmas hymns. Come learn about the story of Christmas as told by our students!

### "Noisy Offering"

**Sunday, December 14**

We will have a "Noisy Offering" competition between the elementary students, youth groups kids, and the adults. Save up your change and we will have containers to pour your coins into. All the proceeds will go towards the ELCA Good Gifts program.

### Merry Tuba Christmas Concert

**Sunday, December 14**

**3:00 PM**

### Held at Kountze Memorial

The concert is free and open to the public. Bring your friends. It's a fun way to spend a Sunday afternoon!

For those tuba/euphonium players who are interested in playing along, registration is at 1:00 PM with rehearsal at 2:00 PM. Bring your own music stand. There is a \$10 participation fee for all players. For more information, contact Nate Griffith at 402-980-6121.

### Youth Christmas Party

**Middle School & High School Youth**

**December 20**

**3-6 PM**

You are invited for an afternoon of cake pop decorating, a white elephant gift exchange, pizza and drinks, Christmas movies, and lots of festive fun downstairs in the youth room. Bring a friend and a wrapped white elephant gift—something inexpensive or even something fun you already have at home. Please email our KMLC Youth Director, Sheila Valquier at [sheila@kmlchurch.org](mailto:sheila@kmlchurch.org), so we can plan for food and supplies! See you there!



Email Sheila

### Christmas Movie & Cookie-Making Night

**College Age—30's Adults**

**Saturday, December 20**

**6-8 PM**

Join us in the church kitchen and we'll bake Christmas cookies together while enjoying a festive holiday movie. All young adults are welcome—whether you joined us for Friendsgiving or couldn't make it, we'd love to see you there! Feel free to invite a friend. Email Deacon Eric to RSVP—[eric@kmlchurch.org](mailto:eric@kmlchurch.org).



Email Dn. Eric

### Summer Youth Mission Trip

**Dates: July 6-12, 2026**

**Location: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**Early Bird Registration: \$750 until Dec. 31, 2025**

**Regular Registration: \$800 January 1-April 1, 2026**

**\$50 Deposit required for registration**

**Cost includes transportation, meals, and lodging.**

**Register ASAP by contacting Sheila Valquier.**

The Nebraska Synod Journey is a week-long experience for youth in grades 8 through 12 and their adult leaders. In 2026, we will gather in Pittsburgh for service, learning, worship, fellowship, and opportunities to grow in faith while learning from our neighbors in Pennsylvania. We will work as a team to raise funds to offset the cost. Presence and participation at fundraising events required. Scholarships are available.

### Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is in need of your gifts and service. The current needs for the pantry are pasta sauce, soup, & chili beans. You may leave your donation in the box marked "Food Pantry," located in the Fellowship Hall. Tax deductible slips are available on the inside pocket of the box. Please join us as a volunteer in the pantry in the Kountze Commons volunteer as it fits your schedule. We have options for volunteers of all abilities. Please use the QR code or the following link to sign up and join our mission.



Pantry

<https://tinyurl.com/uasdddp>

If you have questions about the Pantry, you can call Toby Rees at 402-979-1425.

**Pantry Dinner in a Bag:** Check out the insert in your bulletin and prepare a bag/bags for our Pantry. These kits are designed to be budget-friendly and easy to prepare, containing shelf-stable ingredients and a recipe card. A different recipe card will be in your bulletin now through Advent, and you can find more recipes online if you would like to pack a bag, or two, or six for our Pantry guests.

### Calling all Artists and Makers!

**Friday, February 6**

If you are artistically inclined, please consider donating a work for a silent auction. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Group Mission Trip. Email [kristin@kmlchurch.org](mailto:kristin@kmlchurch.org) for donation information.

### Attendance & Giving

**Thursday, Nov. 27—Wednesday, December 3**

**Saturday: 6**

**Sunday: 9:00: 113 11:00: 49**

**Wednesday: 12:15: 26**

**Total: 268**

**Streaming:**

**Pantry Guests Served: 324 (inc. 151 children)**

**Medical Clinic Guests Served: 0**

**Offering:**

**\$21,018.61 (Regular) \$508.00 (Specials)**

**\$765.98 (Debt Reduction)**

*Advent is a season of peace.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Isaiah 11:1-10	The peaceful kingdom
Tuesday	Romans 15:4-13	Good news for Jews and Gentiles
Wednesday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Thursday	Isaiah 55:10-13	God's people will celebrate
Friday	2 Thessalonians 3:16	Final greeting of peace
Saturday	Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19	A prayer for guidance for the king
Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	Jesus and John the Baptist



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## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

**Romans 15:13 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus Christ, you who bring hope to the world, guide our steps to walk in your way of peace. Amen.

### Mealttime Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for this food. May this gift of love strengthen us to live lives of hope and peace through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May the God of hope fill you with peace. (Romans 15:13)

## CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What is something you are concerned about or that worries you?
- Jesus comes to bring peace. How do you experience the peace that Jesus brings?

## DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Matthew 3:1-12.

In the Bible the wilderness is a place of repentance, cleansing, and renewal. With John the Baptist, something quite dramatic is happening in the wilderness: preparing for the coming of Jesus into our world and lives. The coming of Jesus represents the ultimate experience of repentance, cleansing, and renewal by living in a way that bears good fruit and that shows love for God and neighbor. John sounds harsh with words of judgment, not peace and hope. However, God's work of judgment is its own act of preparation and renewal. God's judgment promises to put an end to sin, death, and evil. That is our great hope.

*Discuss:* In the world today, where do you look for God's power of renewal and peace?

*Pray:* **Lord Jesus, come into our lives and cleanse us of all that is within us that is not part of your kingdom of hope, peace, joy, and love. Amen.**

## SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you bear good fruit and show kindness to those in need?

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

This week light two candles on the Advent wreath: the Candle of Hope and the Candle of Peace. The Candle of Peace reflects God's peaceful kingdom.

*Leader:* **This is the second week of Advent. Advent means *coming*. We are waiting and watching for the coming of Christ.**

**Let us light the Candles of Hope and Peace.** [Light two candles]

*All:* **The 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.** (Isaiah 11:6)

*Leader:* **Let us walk in the light of Christ that gives us peace.**

*Pray:* **Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming with hope and peace. May we walk in the light of the Lord and live in peace with all that you have made. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10  
James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11