

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor

Eric Haitz, Deacon

H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

2650 Farnam Street

Omaha, NE 68131-3616

402-341-7761

www.kmlchurch.org

December 7, 2025

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT



At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

L Blessed be the holy Trinity, **☩** one God,
whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

L Long-expected God,

C we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,

reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.

We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance,

and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.

Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us,

that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

L God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C Amen.

ADVENT WREATH HYMN

Hark, the Glad Sound!

ELW 239 vs. 2

2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND PRAYER

▮ We light two candles for two people: you and me. The way of Jesus is not often the easy one, and so we walk it together.

▮ **We light two candles to say YES to the invitation to walk the way of Jesus together.**

(light the second candle)

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing!

ELW 393 vs 1-4

1 **A hymn of glory let us sing!**
New hymns throughout the world shall ring:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ, by a road before untrod,
ascends unto the throne of God.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

2 **The holy apostolic band**
upon the Mount of Olives stand,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
and with his faithful foll'wers see
their Lord ascend in majesty.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

3 **To whom the shining angels cry,**
"Why stand and gaze upon the sky?"
Alleluia! Alleluia!
"This is the Savior!" thus they say,
"this is his glorious triumph day!"
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4 **"You see him now, ascending high**
up to the portals of the sky."
Alleluia! Alleluia!
"Hereafter Jesus you shall see
returning in great majesty."
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

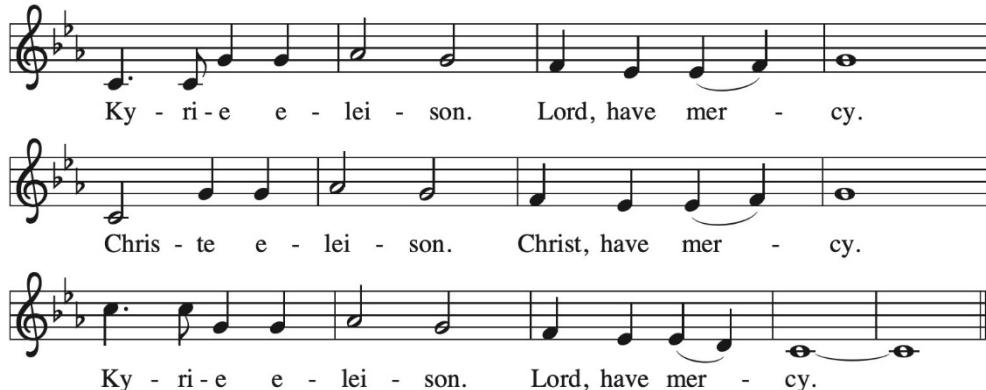
Text: Bede, 673-735; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship
Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

GLORIA

1 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
3 Glo - ry to you, God, for yours is the earth;
yours is the prom - ise, the bless - ing, the birth.
yours the a - noint - ing, the ra - di - ant worth.

Ours the re - joic - ing for Word giv - en frame;
Ours the re - joic - ing for spir - its a - flame;

ours the thanks - giv - ing to your ho - ly name.

Ours be the tell - ing of deeds great - ly done;
yours be the glo - ry, O God, yours a - lone.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

L Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son.

C By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 11:1-10

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 172

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.² The 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.³ His 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,⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed 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.⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins.⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them.⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.⁹ They 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.¹⁰ On 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.

PSALM 72:1-7, 18-19 (read responsively)

¹ Give the king your justice, O God,

and your righteousness to the king's son;

² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁸ **Blessed are you, Lord God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

¹⁹ And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

SECOND READING

Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus,⁶ so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

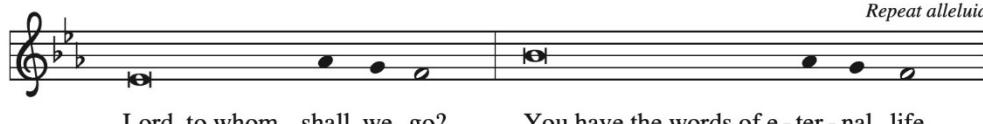
"Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name";¹⁰ and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people";¹¹ and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him";¹² and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope."¹³ 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.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



L The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,² "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.'

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him,⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them,

“You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¶ The Gospel of the Lord.

¶ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, 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, in the back of the entrance hall, available to those who prefer to stay with their families. Once the service is over, please place the used activity bags in the baskets provided, so they can be sanitized and replenished for next week.

SERMON

Pastor Hall

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Blessed Be the God of Israel

ELW 250

**1 Blessed be the God of Israel
who comes to set us free
and raises up new hope for us:
a Branch from David’s tree.
So have the prophets long declared
that with a mighty arm
God would turn back our enemies
and all who wish us harm.**

**2 With promised mercy will God still
the covenant recall,
the oath once sworn to Abraham,
from foes to save us all;
that we might worship without fear
and offer lives of praise,
in holiness and righteousness
to serve God all our days.**

**3 My child, as prophet of the Lord
you will prepare the way,
to tell God’s people they are saved
from sin’s eternal sway.
Then shall God’s mercy from on high
shine forth and never cease
to drive away the gloom of death
and lead us into peace.**

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944, based on Luke 1:68-79

Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

¶ Let us confess together the faith of the Church.

¶ 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: ¶ God of grace,
 ¶ 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: Dan & Marv Svacina (in-laws of Ron & Pam Brown)

On-going Care: John Bodnar, Don Burton, Betty Callies, Nina Castro, Mike Cswercko, Marilyn Dichsen, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Wanda Frykberg, Tracey Gehringer-Steffen, Dale Grundman, Larry & Michele Hunzeker, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Linda Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Julie Knapp, Jack & Marie Kubat, Glenn Lindgren, Elizabeth Luczynski, Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Sharon Miley, Nita Mueller, Walter Nash, Dan & Ginny Rath, Joyce Wachal, Allyson White

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Takao Elliott, husband of Dannika Rees; 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, 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

Other Prayers: *Seminarians* – Joseph Daffer, James Holzer

THE PEACE IS SHARED

¶ The peace of Christ be with you always.
¶ 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. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. You may use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online or mail in your offering or donate online. Thank you!



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

O Thou that Tellest Good Tidings to Zion

music by John Purifoy

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

We Are Waiting for Jesus

ACS 905

1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov-ing Shep-herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Text © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

OFFERING PRAYER

- God of every good gift,
- we offer what we have back to you, knowing that your son is the greatest gift we will ever receive. Grant us glad and generous hearts, ever and always. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And also 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 ADVENT

□ 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'r and

God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your

glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the

Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

¶ O God triune, how majestic is your name in all the earth. ...
... The earth is full of your glory.

¶ **The earth is full of your glory.**

¶ O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer. ...
... The earth is full of your glory.

¶ **The earth is full of your glory.**

¶ We praise you for the heart of Jesus, so filled with your love for this earth.
In the night in which he was betrayed ...
... Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks ...
Gathered around this table, we your children unite in song:
The earth is full of your glory.

¶ **The earth is full of your glory.**

¶ O God triune, your create the worlds, you uphold the living, you embrace the dead. ...
... The earth is full of your glory.

¶ **The earth is full of your glory.**

¶ Amen, and amen.

¶ **Amen, and amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

¶ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.

Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we

for - give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al

and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,

and the glo - ry are yours, now and for ev - er. A - men.

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, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

L Come, receive what God has promised.
C Here is life. God is with us.

(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. If you cannot or choose not to receive the wine, know that the sacrament and God's promised forgiveness are complete in either element.

- 1 Fling wide the door, unbar the gate;
the King of glory comes in state;
the Lord of lords and King of kings,
the Savior of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.
So raise a shout of holy mirth
and praise our God and Lord,
Creator, Spirit, Word.
- 2 He is the rock of our belief,
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
His kingly crown is holiness;
his scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
and worship him with song
for saving us from wrong.

- 3 Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
And blessed be the hearts he rules,
the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
creator of the world,
our only strength for good.
- 4 Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
our hearts are open wide in trust.
Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
We praise your holy name,
from age to age the same!

Text: Georg Weissel, 1590-1635; tr. Gracia Grindal, b. 1943
Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

- 1 Savior of the nations, come;
virgin's son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:
God has chosen such a birth.
- 2 Not by human flesh and blood,
but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.
- 3 Wondrous birth—oh, wondrous child—
from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary's son,
eager now his race to run!

- 4 From God's heart the Savior speeds,
back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death's command,
back to reign at God's right hand.
- 5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.
- 6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L Christ Jesus,

C you have fed us with love incarnate, and we are utterly changed. Send us forth from this meal to be forces for change in this world, as we find the YES within each of us. Amen.

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

¶ May God Most High bless you with courage, as you seek the YES within you;
May God the Christ be born again in every risk you take for the sake of the world;
And may God the Holy Spirit + remind you, again and again, that you are never alone,
and that you are loved beyond measure.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Prepare the Royal Highway

ELW 264

1 **Prepare the royal highway;**
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:

Refrain
Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!

2 **God's people, see him coming:**
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain*

3 **Then fling the gates wide open**
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing: *Refrain*

4 **His is no earthly kingdom;**
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding: *Refrain*

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

DISMISSAL

¶ Go in peace. Keep awake.
¶ **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE



Mark Jones, *organ*

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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.

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>



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 2nd and 3rd 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-6th Grade

Join us in the 2nd Floor Sunday School Rooms where the

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.

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

This Week at Kountze Memorial

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

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, so we can plan for food and supplies! See you there!

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.

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.

<https://tinyurl.com/uausddd>

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



Pantry



Email Sheila



Email Dn. Eric

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 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)

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

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.

Mealtime 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.



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NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10

James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11