

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

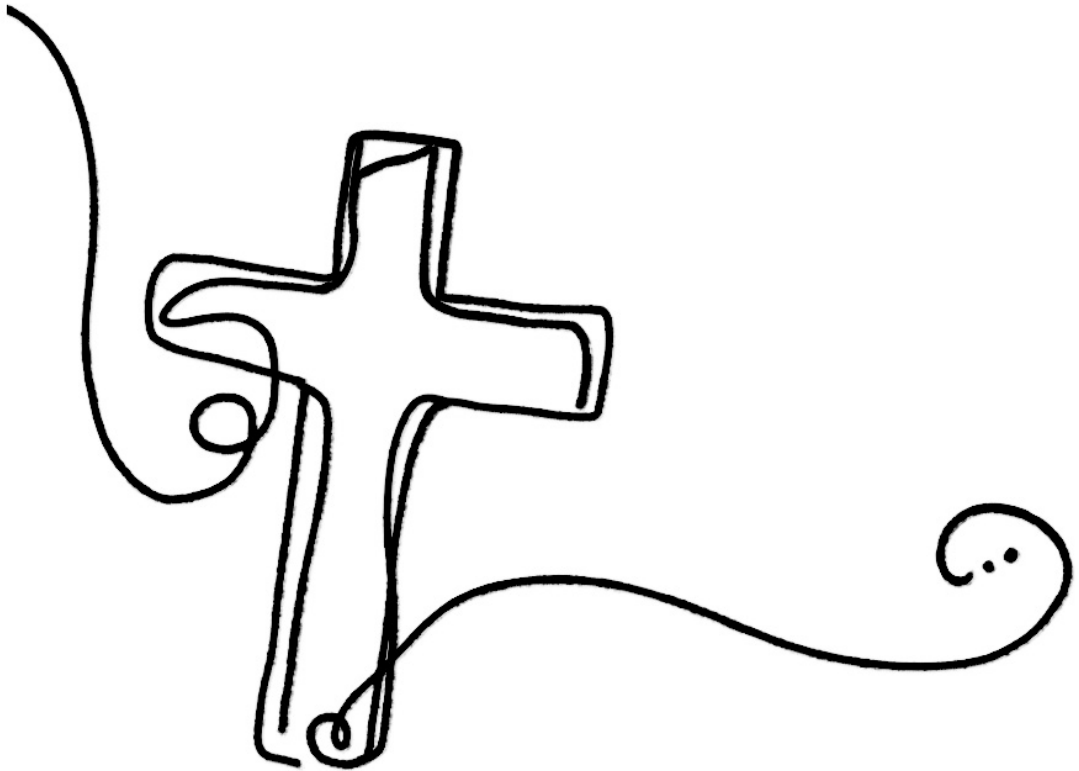
Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
Eric Haitz, Deacon
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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

June 21, 2026

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



God does not promise that the path of the disciple will be easy. Jeremiah feels the pain of rejection from those who do not want to hear what he has to say. Jesus declares that his words may bring stark division. Even so, we need not be afraid for God accounts for each hair on our heads. Though we may experience rejection, frustration, division, and death, God's grace and love make us a new creation each day. Marked with the cross and filled with holy food, we are sent from worship to witness to Christ in the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

L Blessed be the holy Trinity † one God, whose compassion endures forever.

C Amen.

L Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

L Compassionate God,

C we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

L Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."
In the name of God,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.
Rest in God's love.

C Amen.

1 Let the whole creation cry,
 "Glory to the Lord on high!"
 Heav'n and earth, awake and sing,
 "Praise to our almighty king!"
 Praise God, angel hosts above,
 ever bright and fair in love;
 sun and moon, lift up your voice;
 night and stars, in God rejoice.

2 Servants striving for the Lord,
 prophets burning with the word,
 those to whom the arts belong
 add their voices to the song.
 Pow'rs of knowledge and of law,
 to the glorious circle draw;
 all who work and all who wait,
 sing, "The Lord is good and great!"

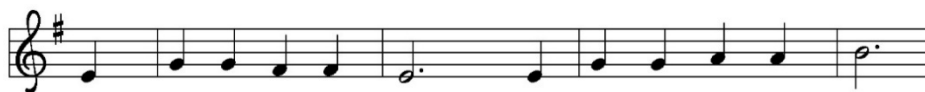
3 Men and women, young and old,
 raise the anthem loud and bold,
 and let children's happy hearts
 in this worship take their parts;
 from the north to southern pole
 let the mighty chorus roll:
 "Holy, Holy, Holy One;
 glory be to God alone!"

Text: Stopford A. Brooke, 1832-1916, 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



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.

2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.

3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.

Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Teach us, good Lord God,
- ☑ to serve you as you call us, to speak your truth in love and not be silent, to follow Christ even when it is costly, to give ourselves without fear, and to trust that nothing can separate us from your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 20:7-13

Jeremiah accuses God of forcing him into a ministry that brings him only contempt and persecution. Yet Jeremiah is confident that God will be a strong protector against his enemies and commits his life into God's hands.

O Lord, you have enticed me, and I was enticed; you have overpowered me, and you have prevailed. I have become a laughingstock all day long; everyone mocks me. ⁸ For whenever I speak, I must cry out; I must shout, "Violence and destruction!" For the word of the Lord has become for me a reproach and derision all day long. ⁹ If I say, "I will not mention him or speak any more in his name," then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot. ¹⁰ For I hear many whispering: "Terror is all around! Denounce him! Let us denounce him!" All my close friends are watching for me to stumble. "Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him and take our revenge on him." ¹¹ But the Lord is with me like a terrifying warrior; therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail. They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed. Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten. ¹² O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous; you see the heart and the mind; let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause. ¹³ Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord! For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 69:7-10, 16-18 *(read responsively)*

⁷ Surely, for your sake I have suffered reproach,
and shame has covered my face.

⁸ **I have become a stranger to my own kindred,
an alien to my mother's children.**

⁹ Zeal for your house has eaten me up;
the scorn of those who scorn you has fallen upon me.

¹⁰ **I humbled myself with fasting,
but that was turned to my reproach.**

¹⁶ Answer me, O Lord, for your love is kind;
in your great compassion, turn to me.

¹⁷ **Hide not your face from your servant;
be swift and answer me, for I am in distress.**

¹⁸ Draw near to me and redeem me;
because of my enemies deliver me.

SECOND READING

Romans 6:1b-11

In baptism we were incorporated into the reality of Christ's death and resurrection. We have been made new in Christ through his death and resurrection to live freed from sin.

Should we continue in sin in order that grace may increase? ² By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it? ³ Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ For whoever has died is freed from sin. ⁸ But if we died with Christ,

we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰ The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

ℒ Word of God, Word of Life.

☩ Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ℒ Alleluia!

☩ Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?
You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia!

ℒ The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

☩ Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 10:24-39

Jesus warns his disciples that their ministry in his name will meet with opposition. However, he assures them that they need not fear for the truth will come to light. Life is found in Christ.

Jesus said to the twelve: ²⁴“A disciple is not above the teacher nor a slave above the master; ²⁵ it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household! ²⁶“So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered and nothing secret that will not become known. ²⁷ What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. ²⁸ Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather, fear the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. ³⁰ And even the hairs of your head are all counted. ³¹ So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. ³²“Everyone, therefore, who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. ³⁴“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, ³⁶ and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household. ³⁷“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, ³⁸ and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.”

ℒ The Gospel of the Lord.

☩ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 2 years through 4th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags, located in the back of the entrance hall, during the regular sermon or go to the Upper rooms for a story time. All children will return to their families in time to receive communion. 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

Deacon Haitz

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Build a Longer Table

ACS 1062 vs. 1, 2, 4



1 Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
2 Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
4 When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, strang - er turns to friend,
For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

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THE APOSTLES' CREED

☐ Let us confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

☑ **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: **L** 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)

Sympathy: to the family and friends of James Reed

Prayers this week: Ellie Carlson, Rod Carlson, Kathy Sickert (friend of Leigh & Vicki Freeman)

On-going Care: Judi Boe, Warren Cooke, Mike & Candace Edris, Kathy Englert, Janice Hansen, Chris Jensen, Linda Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Kate McCoy, Ralph Morse, Jeff Perkins, Noelle Phelps, Jane Ross, Allyson White

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Mallory Hoogestraat, daughter of JD & Julie Hoogestraat, Wyatt Johnson, grandson of Ken & Linda Johnson; Tyler Johnston, son of Robert & Michelle Johnston, Daniel Milstead, nephew of Darlene Anderson; Cody Ray, grandson of Betty Callies; Dannika Rees & Takao Elliott, daughter & son-in-law of Eric & 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; Lily & Collin Piening, Keith Jansen, Laura Jansen, Japan; Rev. Bridget Gautieri, Wittenburg Center, Germany; Rev. Robert & Kathy Moore, Leipzig, Germany; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

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

THE PEACE IS SHARED

L 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

Goodness of God

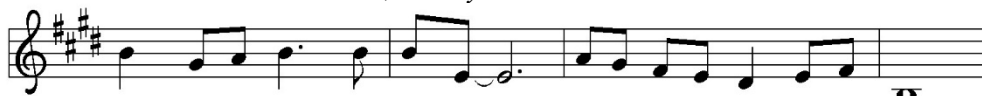
by Jenn Johnson, Jason Ingram,
Ben Fielding, Ed Cash & Brian Johnson
Arr. by Ed Kerr, Orch. by Dan Galbraith
Emily Rimington, *vocalist*

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil

ELW 512



Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.



Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.



When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,



warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.



Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

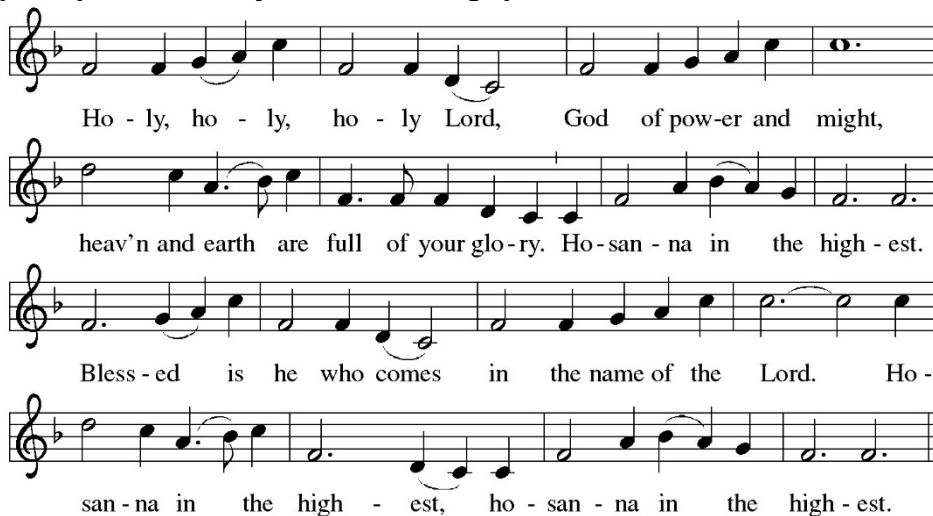
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OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ Loving God,
- ☑ **we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. 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.**
- Ⓐ It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav'n 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

- Ⓐ Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, ...
... and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, ...
... Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, ...
... Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, ...
... be all honor and glory, now and forever.

- Ⓢ **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

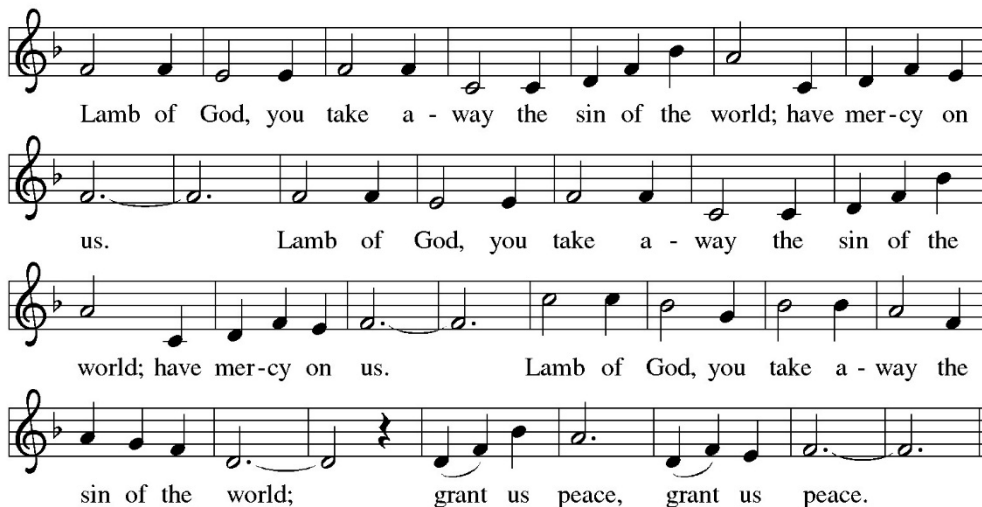
☐ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:

☑ **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, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☐ Come, share in the feast!

☑ **Heaven has come near.**

(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.*

Refrain

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom;
praise and glory forevermore!**

**1 Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God. *Refrain***

**2 Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ forever.**

Refrain

**3 For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;
to make all things new. *Refrain***

Text: Marty Haugen b. 1950

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I Come with Joy

ELW 482 vs. 1, 2, 4, 5

**1 I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.**

**2 I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.**

**4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.**

**5 Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.**

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

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

L Compassionate God,

C **through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

☐ Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, † one God, bless, heal, and hold you today and always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

To Christ Belong, in Christ Behold

ACS 958



1 To Christ be - long, in Christ be - hold God's
2 The brood - ing Spir - it moves un - seen as
3 Re - joic - ing in God's prom - ise strong, our



won - ders still un - fold: the bur - ied
liv - ing wa - ters stream to quench all
treasure and our song, in faith we



grain springs forth a - gain with fruit one hun - dred - fold.
thirst and bring to birth a new com - mu - ni - ty.
cling, and glad - ly sing: to Christ we now be - long.



Bap - tized in - to the death of Christ, with
The bind - ing shroud is here re - leased, the
In Christ a - bide, in Christ be - hold the



Christ from death we rise, drawn through the
veil of sin and grief, and in their
world be - loved and whole. In love re -



night by dawn - ing light in - to a - bun - dant
place a wreath of grace and robes of joy and
main, by love pro - claim God's won - ders still un -



life, in - to a - bun - dant life.
peace, and robes of joy and peace.
told, God's won - ders still un - told.

Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952

Text © 2011 Susan R. Briehl, admin. Augsburg Fortress

DISMISSAL

☐ Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

☑ 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	Facility & Events Director
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
Dan Collett	Facility Assistant
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Heidi Pospisil	Pantry Director
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

June 20 & 21, 2026

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



To all fathers and father figures on this special day. Thank you for the love, strength, and guidance you provide.

Today, we celebrate you and the incredible role you play in our lives.

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 Pastor Lucy by following the link or QR Code. <https://calendly.com/pastor-lucy/45min>



Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor of Patricia Grow given by Trish Daffer; in memory of Hannah Rief on her 24th birthday given by her parents and siblings

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of LeClare Steffen given by Thomas & Tracey Gehringer-Steffen

Television Broadcast is sponsored by Mark Andreesen in memory of his father, Earl

Kountze Café Lite

9:30—11:00 AM

Free-will Offering

Now through Labor Day weekend, we are serving a lighter fare for breakfast. If you would like to help with breakfast, even just for a Sunday or two, please contact Sherri Labedz.

Children's Sermon

Children are invited to sit with their families at the beginning of the service. Following the children's sermon, youth who are going into grade four and younger are invited to follow the adult leader upstairs for the Kountze Summer Reading Program. The kids will

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

enjoy a story book on important life lessons. Coloring sheets, fidgets, and sensory items will be provided. They will return to their families for communion.

Are you an adult interested in reading to the youth? Use the following link or QR code to sign up to read. You may also reach out to Kristin at kristin@kmlchurch.org.

<https://tinyurl.com/2epndk6z>



Summer Reading

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

Join us Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall.

6/21 Fellowship

6/28 Growing in Faith, Building a Foundation: Youth & Young Adult Ministry at Kountze Memorial

This Week at Kountze Memorial

June 21 Sunday

Pentecost 4

Father's Day

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:30 AM Kountze Café Lite

10:10 AM Adult Forum

June 22 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

June 23 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

12:30 PM Circle 3

June 24 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship

7:00 PM Handbell Rehearsal

June 25 Thursday

1:00 PM Circle 4

4:00 PM Healing Gift Clinic

June 26 Friday

9:00 AM Service Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

June 27 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

June 28 Sunday

Pentecost 5

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:30 AM Kountze Café Lite

10:10 AM Adult Forum

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

VBS Volunteer Meeting

St. Timothy Lutheran Church

June 24

6 PM

Pizza will be provided

Kountze Memorial Youth Ministry Parent Survey

Parents/guardians, please take a few minutes to share your thoughts regarding our Youth Ministry Program. This survey is anonymous and will help us plan youth activities and Sunday Youth Forum for next year. Please do not include your name or your youth's name unless you would like someone to follow up with you. The survey can be found by using the QR code or the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/yhmp3jsf>



Parent Survey

other local non-profits. We will be working with deFreese Manor, the Kountze Love Thy Neighbor Pantry, YES House, Physicians Mutual, and many other charities focused on helping those in our neighborhood. While Service Fridays are limited to those going into 7th–9th grades, we do need some adult support. If you have time, we could use some adult volunteers during our activities. In addition, we will be focusing on collecting hygiene supplies to make care bags. Soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, lotion, Q-tips, and any other basic necessities you can imagine is needed. These items can be dropped off at the Sunday School office. If you have questions about Service Fridays, or would like to volunteer your time, please contact Kristin at kristin@kmlchurch.org. Sign up your middle school student with QR code or the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/3sjzfpmk>



Service Fridays

Service Fridays

Through July 31

9 AM - 4 PM

Grades 7 - 9

Service Fridays are a chance for Middle School Students to spend time in fellowship while giving back to the community. Each Friday, students that are going into grades 7, 8, and 9, are invited to Kountze to work together in partnership with ministries connected to Kountze and

Youth Social Justice League Summer Field Trip

Tuesday, July 21

9 AM—4 PM

Middle and high school youth are invited to join us and the Urban Abbey Youth Social Justice League for a day of exploring Omaha's "third spaces"—places where people gather, connect, and build community. Participants will

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

visit several locations, ride the ORBT, and learn about inclusion, community building, and social justice. Hosted by the Kountze Mercy & Justice Team. Please scan the QR code to **register by July 1** or go to:



Justice & Mercy

<https://forms.gle/Cyctn3TdoCtmsBnX9>

Confirmation "Boot Camp"

Do you have a student who wasn't able to participate in Wednesday night Collaborative Confirmation classes? Do you want a Confirmation "refresher" course? We are looking to do a Confirmation "Boot Camp" for students (and adults) who for whatever reason didn't get the traditional Confirmation experience or would like a little more. Please contact Pastor Lucy if you would be interested in participating and we will look for a good time and format.

Halloween Costume Collection

Do you have years of gently used Halloween costumes tucked away that don't fit anyone in your house any more? If so, please bring those gently used costumes to the church to be donated! If you have questions on donations or would like to assist in the event in the fall, please reach out to Toby Rees (402-979-1425 or toby@kmlchurch.org).

Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is in need of your gifts and service. 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. We are always in need of gently used grocery bags.



Pantry

<https://tinyurl.com/uausddd>

Celebrate Pride with Us!

July 17-18

The Heartland Pride Festival & Parade is just around the corner. Once again, Kountze members have the opportunity to gather in community to watch the parade, or participate with the Reconciling In Christ congregations of the ELCA. Scan the QR code or visit the SignUp Genius with the link below to indicate that you are interested. More specifics about where and when to meet will be sent to those who sign up. Let's share love and community together!



Pride Festival

<https://tinyurl.com/yv88e79r>

Omaha Collaborative VBS

July 19-22 (Sunday to Wednesday)

St. Timothy Lutheran Church

(93rd & Dodge)

Supper (for families) 5:15 PM

Program 6 - 8 PM

Pre-K through 5th Grade

Five Omaha Area Lutheran Churches have joined forces to serve together. Our program this year is "Snowball Mountain Challenge - Find your Strength in God." Each evening begins with a simple meal provided in the Café for all participants and their families. Children will rotate through story stations, craft activities, science experiments and of course games! Please register your child/ren now so we can have all the supplies needed and be ready for a great week together. The child registration form can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/2m5trfbd>



VBS Registration

Middle-High School students are welcome

to participate as staff to make this a great learning experience for all. Adult volunteers are also needed. Volunteer registrations can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/29ppewa2>



VBS Volunteers

FYI: For those ages 18 and over, we will be requiring a background check through your home church, if you haven't already done one. Thank you for volunteering your time and talents to VBS. We are happy to have you!

School Supply Drive

The youth will be hosting a school supply drive this summer. We are asking for supplies and backpacks to fill for our Love thy Neighbor Pantry in Kountze Commons. Notebooks, folders, crayons, markers, colored pencils, pens, glue, scissors, etc. are welcome. Please bring items to church by August 2. We will be packing backpacks on August 9.

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, June 11—Wednesday, June 17

Saturday: 19

Sunday: 9:00: 114 11:00: 49

Wednesday: 12:15: 11

Total: 193

Streaming: 39

Pantry Guests Served: 427 (inc. 102 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 8

Offering:

\$10,840.96 (Regular)

\$2,511.58 (Specials)

\$162.00 (Debt Reduction)

Christ gives new life to make a difference in the world.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 10:24-39	The call and cost of discipleship
Monday	Jeremiah 20:7-13	Jeremiah denounces his persecutors
Tuesday	Romans 6:1b-11	Dying and rising with Christ
Wednesday	Genesis 21:8-21	Hagar and Ishmael are sent away
Thursday	Psalms 86	Save me, Lord
Friday	Ephesians 4:17-24	The old and the new life
Saturday	Psalms 69:7-18	God can be trusted
Sunday	Matthew 10:40-42	Receiving and serving others



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life. Romans 6:4 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Merciful God, help us to trust that all we are and hope to be is found in the new life we have through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, all good things come from you; thank you for your goodness that gives us food to eat this day. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God set you free. (Psalm 69:18)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What are three things that are important to you?
- What do you think it means to pick up your cross and follow Jesus? (Matthew 10:38)

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 10:24-39.

Core values are important because they define what we stand for and who we are. Jesus says that following him is an all-or-nothing proposition. It is non-negotiable. Sometimes we must let go of what we treasure in life to gain what really counts in God's kingdom. In the process, Jesus gives several stark contrasts, many of which are hard to hear. Following Jesus will lead some to be rejected by family, which was a reality in first century Christianity and can be true today, too. Acknowledge Jesus and he will acknowledge you. Deny him and he will deny you. Amid these tough passages is Jesus' repeated theme of not being afraid. Jesus warns us not to deny him before others, but Peter does deny him three times before Jesus' crucifixion (Matthew 26:69-75). Peter learns that mercy, not judgment, is the ultimate core value in the kingdom. God's mercy takes away our fear. Jesus calls us to make a difference and to rely on him. We all falter. Jesus doesn't. This is the dramatically different way of life that moves us from fear and judgment to grace and mercy.

Discuss: How does God's mercy help you face your fears?

Pray: **Dear God, may our life in Christ give us peace and good courage as we live each day with others. 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 encourage someone to be courageous and face their fears?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

In many countries around the world today, the third Sunday in June, is Father's Day. It is a special day to cherish the role of fathers and of those with whom we have had a paternal relationship. Think or talk about the father(s) and other men in your life. Write a list of their names, read them aloud, and pray: **Dear God, thank you for the gift of fathers and all men who have made a difference in our lives. For the care they have given us and the guidance they have shared with us, we give you thanks. Amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Jeremiah 28:5-9; Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18
Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42