

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

July 12, 2026

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

SEVENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



God's word is like the rain that waters the earth and brings forth vegetation. It is also like the sower who scatters seed indiscriminately. Our lives are like seeds sown in the earth. Even from what appears to be little, dormant, or dead, God promises a harvest. At the Lord's table we are fed with the bread of life, that we may bear fruit in the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

✠ Amen.

℣ Let us confess our sin to God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

℣ Compassionate God,

✠ 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.

℣ 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.

✠ Amen.

1 A mighty fortress is our God,
a sword and shield victorious;
he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod
and wins salvation glorious.
The old satanic foe
has sworn to work us woe!
With craft and dreadful might
he arms himself to fight.
On earth he has no equal.

2 No strength of ours can match his might!
We would be lost, rejected.
But now a champion comes to fight,
whom God himself elected.
You ask who this may be?
The Lord of hosts is he!
Christ Jesus, mighty Lord,
God's only Son, adored.
He holds the field victorious.

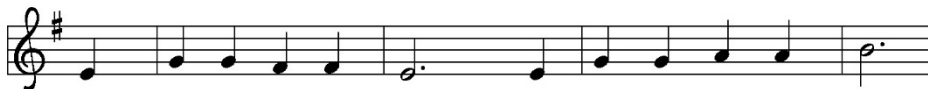
4 God's Word forever shall abide,
no thanks to foes, who fear it;
for God himself fights by our side
with weapons of the Spirit.
Were they to take our house,
goods, honor, child, or spouse,
though life be wrenched away,
they cannot win the day.
The kingdom's ours forever!

Text: Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. Lutheran Book of Worship
Text © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

- L** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
C 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

☞ Almighty God,

☛ **we thank you for planting in us the seed of your word. By your Holy Spirit help us to receive it with joy, live according to it, and grow in faith, hope, and love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:10-13

God's word to Israel's exiles is as sure and effective as never-failing precipitation. Their return to the Holy Land in a new exodus is cheered on by singing mountains and by trees that clap their hands.

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there until they have watered the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose
and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.
¹² For you shall go out in joy
and be led back in peace;
the mountains and the hills before you
shall burst into song,
and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.
¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress;
instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle,
and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial,
for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

☞ Word of God, Word of Life.

☛ **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 65:1-13 (read responsively)

¹ You are to be praised, O God, in Zion;
to you shall vows be fulfilled.

² **To you, the one who answers prayer,
to you all flesh shall come.**

³ Our sins are stronger than we are,
but you blot out our transgressions.

⁴ **Happy are they whom you choose and draw to your courts to dwell there!
They will be satisfied by the beauty of your house, by the holiness of your temple.**

⁵ Awesome things will you show us in your righteousness, O God of our salvation,
O hope of all the ends of the earth and of the oceans far away.

⁶ **You make firm the mountains by your power;
you are girded about with might.**

⁷ You still the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves, and the clamor of the peoples.

⁸ **Those who dwell at the ends of the earth will tremble at your marvelous signs;
you make the dawn and the dusk to sing for joy.**

⁹ You visit the earth and water it abundantly; you make it very plenteous; the river of God is full of water.

You prepare the grain, for so you provide for the earth.

¹⁰ **You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges;
with heavy rain you soften the ground and bless its increase.**

¹¹ You crown the year with your goodness,
and your paths overflow with plenty.

¹² **May the fields of the wilderness be rich for grazing,
and the hills be clothed with joy.**

¹³ May the meadows cover themselves with flocks, and the valleys cloak themselves with grain;
let them shout for joy and sing.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:1-11

There is no condemnation for those who live in Christ. God sent Christ to accomplish what the law was unable to do: condemn sin and free us from its death-dealing ways. The Spirit now empowers proper actions and values in our lives and gives us the promise of resurrected life.

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. ⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

☒ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

☒ Alleluia!

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

☒ The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 292

In Matthew's gospel, both Jesus and his disciples "sow the seed" of God's word by proclaiming the good news that "the kingdom of heaven is near." Now, in a memorable parable, Jesus explains why this good news produces different results in those who hear.

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ² Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³ And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴ And as he sowed, some seeds fell on a path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸ Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹ If you have ears, hear!"

¹⁸ "Hear, then, the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰ As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, ²¹ yet such a person has no root but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²² As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of this age and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing. ²³ But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

☒ 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

Rev. Bridget Gautieri

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

O God, Whose Word Well-Planted

ACS 975



1 O God, whose word well-plant - ed yields fruit a hun - dred - fold,
2 O God of seed and har - vest, of sun and soil and rain,
3 O God, your fi - nal har - vest of his - t'ry's an - cient field



we praise your grac - es grant - ed to those who sowed of old,
at - tend the word we sow, lest its plant - ing be in vain.
will test with truth the proud - est that hu - man work can yield.



who by their wit - ness scat - tered good seed up - on the soil
Send show - ers of your Spir - it, bright sun - shine of your grace,
Op - pres - sion's blight will van - ish, fair free - dom's fruits in - crease;



where oth - ers, reap - ing, gath - ered the har - vest of their toil.
that mul - ti - tudes who hear it your gos - pel may em - brace.
and love and joy will flour - ish to clothe the earth with peace.

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., 1923–2007
Text © 1990 Augsburg Fortress

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,
 C 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 Mirrah Fleming (niece of Danielle Fleming)

Prayers this week: Debbie (friend of Leigh & Vicki Freeman), Carol Carlson, Kathy Englert, Judith Hamaker

On-going Care: Judi Boe, Ellie Carlson, Warren Cooke, Rod Carlson, Mike & Candace Edris, Lucy Etherton, Bob Fonda, Wanda Frykberg, Chris Jensen, Linda Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Kate McCoy, Ralph Morse, Lynnette Olson, Noelle Phelps, 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 Jansen Piening & Collin Piening, Laura Jansen, (grandchildren of Keith 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.
C 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

Deep River

arr. by Harry T Burleigh
Marcel Romo, *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

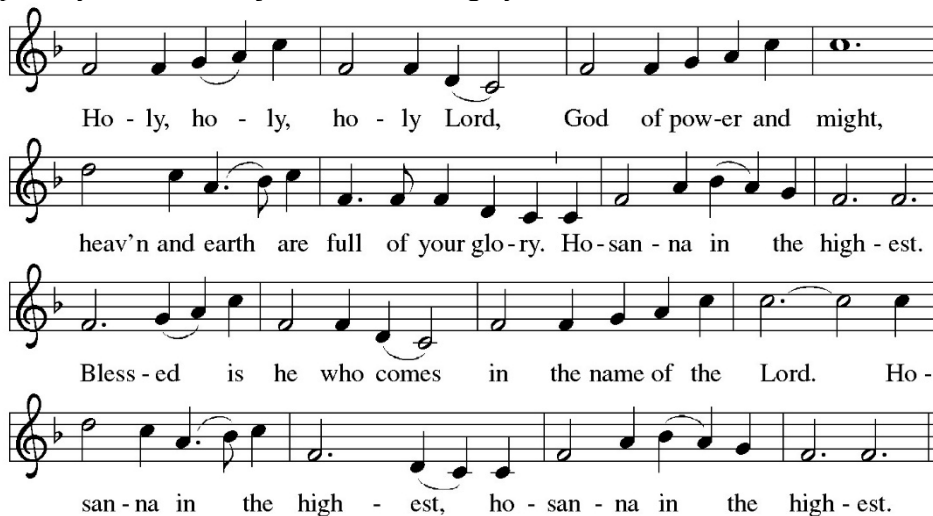
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OFFERING PRAYER

- ☒ 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

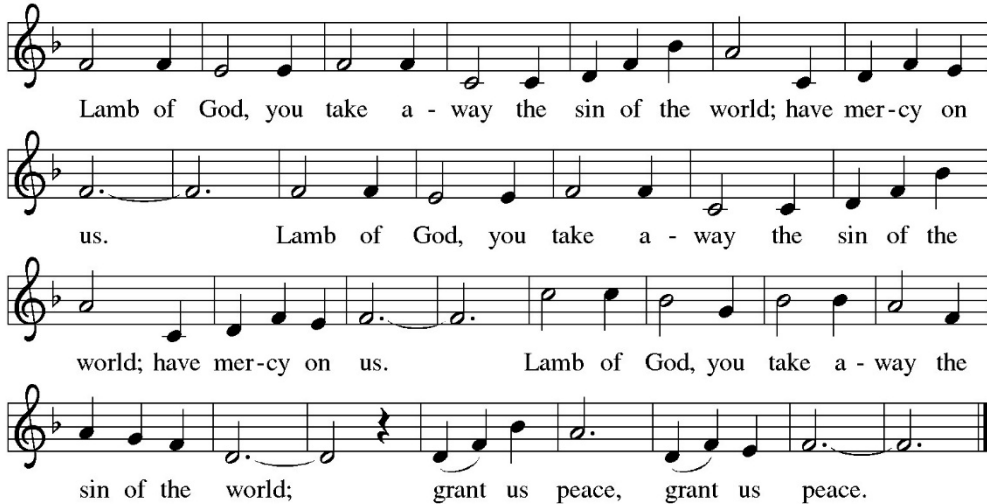
☐ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:

☑ **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.*

**1 By your hand you feed your people,
food of angels, heaven's bread.
For these gifts we did not labor,
by your grace have we been fed:**

Refrain

**Christ's own body, blessed and broken,
cup o'er flowing, life outpoured,
given as a living token
of your world redeemed, restored.**

**2 In this meal we taste your sweetness,
bread for hunger, wine of peace.
Holy word and holy wisdom
satisfy our deepest needs. *Refrain***

**3 Send us now with faith and courage
to the hungry, lost, bereaved.
In our living and our dying,
we become what we receive: *Refrain***

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On What Has Now Been Sown

ELW 550

**1 On what has now been sown
your blessing, Lord, bestow;
the pow'r is yours alone
to make it sprout and grow.
O Lord, in grace the harvest raise,
and yours alone shall be the praise!**

**2 To you our wants are known,
from you are all our pow'rs;
accept what is your own
and pardon what is ours.
Our praises, Lord, and prayers receive
and to your word a blessing give.**

**3 Oh, grant that each of us,
now met before you here,
may meet together thus
when you and yours appear,
and follow you to heav'n, our home.
E'en so, Amen! Lord Jesus, come!**

Text: John Newton, 1725-1807, alt.

(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

Sent Forth by God's Blessing

ELW 547

- 1 Sent forth by God's blessing,
our true faith confessing,
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.
The supper is ended.
Oh, now be extended
the fruits of this service in all who believe.
The seed of Christ's teaching,
receptive souls reaching,
shall blossom in action for God and for all.
Your grace shall incite us,
your love shall unite us
to work for your kingdom and answer your call.

- 2 With praise and thanksgiving
to God ever-living,
the tasks of our ev'ryday life we will face—
our faith ever sharing,
in love ever caring,
embracing God's children, the whole human race.
With your feast you feed us,
with your light now lead us;
unite us as one in this life that we share.
Then may all the living
with praise and thanksgiving
give honor to Christ and his name that we bear.

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Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.

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

July 11 & 12 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

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in celebration of Jean Johnson's birthday

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by Amanda Plantz in memory of David Penning

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 Labeledz.

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 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

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>



Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

Join us Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall.

July 12: Rev. Bridget Gautieri, ELCA Wittenberg Center, Global Missions

July 19: Pr Hall in Bretten and Strasbourg

This Week at Kountze Memorial

July 12 Sunday

Pentecost 7

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

12:15 PM Book Group

July 13 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

July 14 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

6:00 PM Congregational Council
(please note date change)

July 15 Wednesday

Good News Deadline

12:15 PM Worship

July 16 Thursday

11:30 AM Men's Lunch

4:00 PM Healing Gift Clinic

6:00 PM Circle 5

July 17 Friday

Wedding Rehearsal

9:00 AM Service Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

July 18 Saturday

Grundman & Reinken Wedding

5:00 PM Worship

6:00 PM Family Pizza Party

July 19 Sunday

Jul 19 - Jul 22 VBS @ St. Timothy's

Pentecost 8

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

Kountze Care Companions

Do you have a few hours to share each month? We are forming a team of volunteers to assist some of our older members with simple tasks such as sorting and organizing around the house, light cleaning, carrying or putting away groceries, and spending time in conversation and companionship. No special skills are required—just a willing heart and a desire to serve. Whether you can help occasionally or on a regular basis, we would love to have you join us as we care for one another and live out Christ's call to bear one another's burdens. If you are interested in volunteering, please sign up at the welcome desk, or contact the church office for more information.

Service Fridays Continue

Through July 31

9 AM - 4 PM

Grades 7 - 9

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 other local non-profits. 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/3sjzfpnk>



Service Fridays

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!

<https://tinyurl.com/yv88e79r>



Pride Festival

It's a Pizza Party!

Saturday, July 18

6 PM (after 5 PM Worship)

Kountze Families with Children through Grade 12

Worship with us Saturday evening, and then stay for pizza afterwards. You can also just come for the pizza. Outdoor activities provided in the green space. Please RSVP at the Welcome Desk, use the QR code, or call the church office (402-341-7761) to let us know you'll be attending.



info@kmlchurch

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 Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

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 by using the QR code to the right or go to:



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

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 use the QR code to the right or go to:



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

VBS "Noisy" Offering

Our kids will be collecting coins for the San Andrés Food Pantry to help them buy a refrigerator/freezer and other needed supplies. San Andrés is one of our Mission Field Nebraska congregations just south of us here in Omaha. You can support our youth AND one of our mission partners in Omaha by collecting your own coins this July and donating them. Let's see if our adults can beat our kids in this friendly competition?! We'll have a Noisy Offering on Sunday, July 19 (but we'll accept quiet paper donation as well). Join the fun and let's help our neighbors.

**KMLC Young Adults Coffee Talk
Urban Abbey (1026 Jackson St.)
College Age - 30's
Sunday, July 26
12:30 PM**

We'll gather with Pastor Debra McKnight to learn about the ministry of Urban Abbey, explore its unique presence as a coffee shop, bookstore, and United Methodist congregation, and enjoy conversation together over coffee and non-coffee drinks. All are welcome. Bring a friend and join the conversation.

Halloween Costume Collection

Please bring 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).

School Supply Drive

The youth are 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.

Carol Joy Holling 38th Annual Quilt Auction Saturday, July 25

Just a reminder that the funds raised from the CJH Quilt Auction helps to provide a great camp experience for the more than 1,600 campers that are arriving this summer. Quilts may be delivered to the camp anytime between now and July 15. If you're not able to donate a quilt, plan to attend the auction and bid on one or two... or six. Quilts in the past have gone for anywhere between \$25 and \$20,000.

There's something for every budget, and it's a very good cause. For more information or a donation form, use the QR code or go to:

<https://www.nlom.org/quilt-auction/>



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.

<https://tinyurl.com/uausddd>



Attendance & Giving Thursday, July 2—Wednesday, July 8

Saturday: 29

Sunday: 9:00: 86 **11:00:** 47

Wednesday: 12:15: 9

Total: 171

Streaming: 73

Pantry Guests Served: 262 (inc. 74 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 13

Offering:

\$10,096.68 (Regular)

\$1,827.00 (Specials)

\$57.00 (Debt Reduction)

God's word brings new life and growth.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23	Parable of the sower
Monday	Romans 8:1-11	Life in the Spirit
Tuesday	Isaiah 55:10-13	God's word is powerful
Wednesday	Psalms 119:105-112	Light from the Lord's law
Thursday	Genesis 25:19-34	Esau and Jacob
Friday	Leviticus 26:1-13	Rewards for obedience
Saturday	Psalms 65:1-13	Thanksgiving for earth's bounty
Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. Psalm 65:5 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of abundant grace and mercy, help us to receive your word of life that we may be your good soil to grow in faith and share your word with others. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of abundant harvests, we thank you for your eternal care that blesses us with daily food through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God lead you out in joy and back in peace. (Isaiah 55:12)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What is needed for a garden to be productive?
- When and where do you receive God's word?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 55:10-13 and Romans 8:1-11.

Yes, we have an awesome God, as noted in Psalm 65:5. In Isaiah 55 that awesomeness is expressed through God's word that is powerful. It does what God intends. It is productive. Isaiah 55 announces the return from exile for God's people. God's word, God's will shall accomplish it. This text is often used at the ordination of a pastor or a deacon. However, could we not also use it at weddings, baptisms, and any other occasion that celebrates God's people living together in faith, hope, and love? God's word is given for all of us to speak aloud to one another for our encouragement and growth in life and faith. God's word at a meal creates thankful hearts for the abundance of God's love with daily food. God's word in the morning, evening, or at bedtime reminds us of the eternal care of God and that we are those in whom the Spirit of Christ dwells and for whom there is no condemnation (Romans 8:1 and 11). Let's cast God's word into all the corners of the earth, landing on all kinds of soil where it may sprout up and produce an abundant harvest.

Discuss: When are times during the week that you use and speak God's word?

Pray: **Creative God, may the Spirit of Christ create in me the good soil to receive your word and grow in grace. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, what can you do to help plant the seeds of God's word with those around you?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

*"But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit" (Matthew 13:23a). Take a sheet of paper and write "Good Soil" across the bottom. Draw a fruit tree with a trunk, leaves, and fruit. On each drawing of fruit, write different ways you show God's love to others. Read what you have written and think or talk about how your "fruits" help you and others grow in their faith. Then pray: **Dear God, give us the faith to bear good fruit. Amen.***

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 44:6-8; Psalm 86:11-17
Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43