

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 19, 2026

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

EIGHTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



It is an age-old question: why is there evil in the world? In the parable of the wheat and the weeds Jesus suggests that both grow together until the harvest. With Paul, we long for the day that all creation will be set free from bondage and suffering. Having both weeds and wheat within us, we humbly place our hope in the promises of God, and from the Lord's table we go forth to bear the fruit of justice and mercy.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Bruce Nissen, *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.

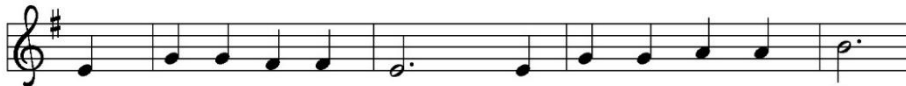
- 1 Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
in light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise!
- 2 Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
thy justice like mountains high soaring above
thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.
- 3 To all, life thou givest, to both great and small;
in all life thou livest, the true life of all;
we blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
and wither and perish, but naught changeth thee.
- 4 Thou reignest in glory; thou dwellest in light;
thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
all laud we would render; oh, help us to see
'tis only the splendor of light hideth thee!

Text: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1824-1908, 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

- ☐ Faithful God, most merciful judge,
- ☑ you care for your children with firmness and compassion. By your Spirit nurture us who live in your kingdom, that we may be rooted in the way of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 44:6-8

There are no other gods besides God: the word of the Lord does not fail to come to pass. We can trust in God, through whom Israel—and we—are redeemed.

Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel,
and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts:
I am the first, and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
⁷ Who is like me? Let them proclaim it;
let them declare and set it forth before me.
Who has announced from of old the things to come?
Let them tell us what is yet to be.
⁸ Do not fear or be afraid;
have I not told you from of old and declared it?
You are my witnesses!
Is there any god besides me?
There is no other rock; I know not one.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

PSALM 86:11-17 (read responsively)

- ¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth;
give me an undivided heart to revere your name.
¹² **I will thank you, O Lord my God, with all my heart,
and glorify your name forevermore.**
¹³ For great is your love toward me;
you have delivered me from the pit of death.
¹⁴ **The arrogant rise up against me, O God, and a band of violent people seeks my life;
they have not set you before their eyes.**
¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are gracious and full of compassion,
slow to anger, and full of kindness and truth.
¹⁶ **Turn to me and have mercy on me;
give your strength to your servant, and save the child of your handmaid.**
¹⁷ Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame;
because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

SECOND READING

Romans 8:12-25

For Paul, true spirituality means that we experience the reality of the Spirit, which enables us to pray as God's children, keeps us in solidarity with creation, and gives us unseen hope that God will liberate us and creation from bondage to death and decay.

So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—¹³ for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶ it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if

children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, ²⁰ for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

℟ 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 13:24-30, 36-43

Jesus tells a parable about the coexistence of good and evil in this world. God's judgment will remove all evildoers and causes of sin, but not until the end of human history.

Jesus put before the crowds another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field,²⁵ but while everybody was asleep an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and then went away. ²⁶ So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. ²⁷ And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?' ²⁸ He answered, 'An enemy has done this.' The slaves said to him, 'Then do you want us to go and gather them?' ²⁹ But he replied, 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. ³⁰ Let both of them grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.' "

³⁶ Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples approached him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." ³⁷ He answered, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man; ³⁸ the field is the world, and the good seed are the children of the kingdom; the weeds are the children of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels. ⁴⁰ Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, ⁴² and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!"

℟ 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

Pastor Hall

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Holy Spirit, Root of Life

ELW 399

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 O Holy Spirit, root of life,
creator, cleanser of all things:
anoint our wounds, awaken us
with lustrous movement of your wings.</p> | <p>2 Eternal vigor, Saving One,
you free us by your living Word,
becoming flesh to wear our pain,
and all creation is restored.</p> |
| <p>3 O holy Wisdom, soaring pow'r,
encompass us with wings unfurled,
and carry us, encircling all
above, below, and through the world.</p> | |

Text: Jean Janzen, b. 1933; based on Hildegard of Bingen, 1098-1179
Text © 1991 Jean Janzen, admin. 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)

Prayers this week: Sandy Fonda, Wayne Hardesty

On-going Care: Judi Boe, Carol Carlson, Rod Carlson, Warren Cooke, Mike & Candace Edris, Kathy Englert, Lucy Etherton, Bob Fonda, Wanda Frykberg, Judith Hamaker, 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, Wittenberg Center, Germany; Rev. Robert & Kathy Moore, Leipzig, Germany; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

Other Prayers: *Seminarists* – 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

In This Very Room

by Ron & Carol Harris
Kai Johnson, *violin*

(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.

The musical score is written on five staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below each staff. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

Text: Handt Hanson, b. 1950

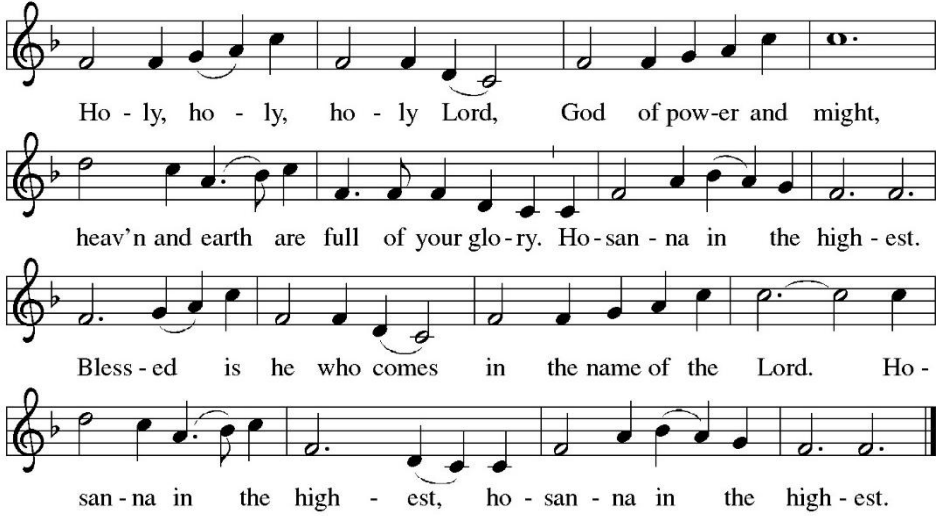
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OFFERING PRAYER

- L** Loving God,
- C** 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

- L** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- L** Lift up your hearts.
- C** **We lift them to the Lord.**
- L** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**
- L** 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

- L** 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.

- C** **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

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

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

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

AGNUS DEI

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

L Come, share in the feast!

C 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

**As the grains of wheat once scattered on the hill
were gathered into one to become our bread;
so may all your people from all the ends of earth
be gathered into one in you.**

- 1 As this cup of blessing is shared within our midst,
may we share the presence of your love. *Refrain***
- 2 Let this be a foretaste of all that is to come
when all creation shares this feast with you. *Refrain***

Text: Didache, 2nd cent.; Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

ELW 693 vs. 1-3

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Come, ye thankful people, come;
raise the song of harvest home.
All be safely gathered in
ere the winter storms begin.
God, our maker, doth provide
for our wants to be supplied.
Come to God's own temple, come,
raise the song of harvest home.</p> | <p>2 All the world is God's own field,
fruit unto his praise to yield;
wheat and tares together sown,
unto joy or sorrow grown.
First the blade, and then the ear,
then the full corn shall appear.
Lord of harvest, grant that we
wholesome grain and pure may be.</p> |
|---|--|
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come
and shall take his harvest home;
from his field shall in that day
all offenses purge away;
give his angels charge at last
in the fire the tares to cast,
but the fruitful ears to store
in his garner evermore.**

Text: Henry Alford, 1810-1871, alt.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- ☞ Compassionate God,**
- ☞ 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

Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good

ELW 871 vs. 1-3

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Sing praise to God, the highest good,
the author of creation!
O God of love, you understood
our need for your salvation.
With healing balm our souls you fill;
all our lament with peace you still.
To God all praise and glory!</p> | <p>2 What your almighty pow'r has made,
in mercy you are keeping;
by morning glow or evening shade,
your eye is never sleeping;
in the dominion of your might
all things are just and good and right.
To God all praise and glory!</p> |
| <p>3 We sought the Lord in our distress;
O God, in mercy hear us.
Our Savior saw our helplessness
and came with peace to cheer us.
For this we thank and praise the Lord,
who is by one and all adored.
To God all praise and glory!</p> | |

Text: Johann J. Schütz, 1640-1690; tr. Frances E. Cox, 1812-1897, adapt.

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!
- ☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Bruce Nissen, *organ*

☩ ☩ ☩

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 18 & 19 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 Bruce & Barb Nissen's wedding anniversary.

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 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 our 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>

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

Join us Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall.

July 19: Pr. Hall in Bretten and Strasbourg

July 26: Rev. Robert Moore, PhD, Global Missions in Leipzig, Germany



Summer Reading

VBS "Noisy" Offering

Our kids collected coins during VBS 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

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>



Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

mission partners in Omaha by donating to the noisy offering (quiet paper donations are also welcome). Let's

see if our adults can beat our kids in this friendly competition?! Join the fun and let's help our neighbors.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

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

July 20 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
6:00 PM HGFC Clinic Board

July 21 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group

July 22 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship
3:00 PM Finance Committee

July 23 Thursday

12:00 PM Circle 4 Potluck (note time change)
4:00 PM Healing Gift Clinic

July 24 Friday

9:00 AM Service Friday
5:00 PM Pantry

July 25 Saturday

9:00 AM CJH Quilt Auction
200 PM Katie Larson Ordination
5:00 PM Worship

July 26 Sunday

Pentecost 9
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/3sjzfpmk>

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 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>



Service Fridays



VBS Registration



VBS Volunteers

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

Kaitlynn Larson's Ordination Held at Kountze Memorial Saturday, July 25 2:00 PM

Katie, one of the missionaries Kountze memorial helps support, serves as a Community Organizer and Human Rights Educator with ELCA Global Mission in Bogotá, Colombia. She is remembered each week in our prayers under "Those Serving in Mission." Katie served as our Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry from May, 2014 through January, 2017. She graduated from the Iliff School of Theology in Denver in May, 2021 and has served in Bogotá for the past five years. We are invited to Katie's ordination and reception here at Kountze Memorial. Please join us as we celebrate Katie's call and welcome her as a newly ordained pastor in the ELCA.

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

You won't want to miss this beloved tradition filled with colorful creativity, community spirit, and faith impact. Nearly 400 handcrafted quilts made by talented quilters will be on display and up for bid. Each stitch tells a story, and every dollar ensures no one misses out on the joy of camp because of financial need. For more information or to browse the quilts, use the QR code or go to:

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



Quilt Auction Info



View the Quilts



Blessing of the Backpacks

August 8 & 9

Saturday, 5 PM

Sunday, 9 & 11 AM

Bring your school or work bag to church to receive prayers for a safe, productive, and exciting educational year. Following the 9 AM worship service, students are invited to the Fellowship Lounge to stuff backpacks with school supplies. Bags and supplies are generously donated throughout the summer by congregation members and are given to pantry guests at our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry.

Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is in need of your gifts and service. The current needs for the pantry are cereal, deodorant, and soup. 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/uasdddp>



Pantry

Attendance & Giving Thursday, July 9—Wednesday, July 15

Saturday: 40

Sunday: 9:00: 98 11:00: 56

Wednesday: 12:15: 10

Total: 204

Streaming: 37

Pantry Guests Served: 489 (inc. 162 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 21

Offering:

\$12,443.92 (Regular)

\$1,166.02 (Specials)

\$172.00 (Debt Reduction)

Christians are people of hope.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43	Parable of the weeds
Monday	Isaiah 44:6-8	The Lord's promise to Israel
Tuesday	Romans 8:12-25	Future glory for God's people
Wednesday	Genesis 28:10-22	Jacob's dream at Bethel
Thursday	Psalms 139:1-24	The inescapable God
Friday	1 Peter 1:3-9	A living hope
Saturday	Psalms 86:11-17	Save me, Lord
Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. **Romans 8:24-25 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, may the hope you have given us take away our fear and strengthen us for each new day through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord God, we thank you for your goodness and for the good seed that falls into the soil to give us bread. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord be gracious to you.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- Where do you find hope when you read or hear something bad in the news?
- How does the power of the Holy Spirit in your life give you hope?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Romans 8:12-25.

The Apostle Paul speaks about our death *"by the Spirit"* that we may live (v. 13). It is a baptismal theme he mentioned in Romans 6:4: *"... we have been buried with [Christ] by baptism into death ... so we too might walk in newness of life."* Paul speaks of living *"according to the flesh"* (v. 13). It is the life lived without hope in God. We live by the power of the Holy Spirit and are adopted as children of God. That life-giving Spirit kills the *"deeds of the body"* (v. 13), our life in the flesh (life without God). Life in Christ is a death and life experience, one that leads to hope. As children who can say, *"Abba! Father!"* (v. 15), we are heirs of God's future in Christ. Being an heir does not mean we avoid disappointments and hurts. In fact, Paul reminds us that we *"suffer with [Christ] so that we may also be glorified with him"* (v. 17). We are people of hope as we suffer—just as Christ suffered and died—that we may rise with Christ to a new life. In faith, we wait for Christ's final victory with hope and patience.

Discuss: How does being an heir of God's future in Christ give you patience and hope?

Pray: **Lord Jesus Christ, you give us a living hope; through the ups and downs of life, help us to have faith in you and trust in your saving work now and always. 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 support and encourage someone going through a tough time?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships – often in our own homes. Think or talk about the Christian rituals and traditions you do in your home, like prayer and scripture reading. Who taught them to you? Have you taught some of these rituals and traditions to a family member or someone else? If not, think about who you can teach them to. *Pray: "Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name." Amen.* (Psalm 86:11)

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: 1 Kings 3:5-12; Psalm 119:129-136
Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52