

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

September 20, 2026

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY after PENTECOST



Matthew narrates one of Jesus' controversial parables in which Jesus says that the reign of God is like that of a landowner who pays his workers the same wage no matter what time of day they began to work. When God changes God's mind about punishing Nineveh for their evil ways, Jonah is angry. Yet God is gracious and merciful, abounding in steadfast love. In baptism we receive the grace of God that is freely given to all. As Martin Luther wrote, in the presence of God's mercy we are all beggars.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

☞ Blessed be the holy Trinity ☩ one God, who pours love into our hearts and healing upon the earth.

☞ **Amen.**

☞ Confident that God justifies us by grace through faith,
let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

☞ Compassionate God,

☞ **we confess that we struggle to embody your goodness
in the world and in our own hearts.
Creation groans from overuse.
Jealousy and bitterness strain our relationships.
Indifference keeps us from seeking justice.
Divisions disrupt your call to show genuine love to others.**

**Turn our hearts back to you.
Restore our world and reconcile us to one another.
Renew us to live as your holy people,
following the way of Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

☞ Hear this good news:
We have peace with God through ☩ Jesus Christ,
in whom there is no condemnation,
only forgiveness and the promise of eternal life.
Receive freely this healing gift of grace.

☞ **Amen.**

1 Lord of light, your name outshining
all the stars and suns of space,
use our talents in your kingdom
as the servants of your grace;
use us to fulfill your purpose
in the gift of Christ your Son:

Refrain

Father, as in highest heaven,
so on earth your will be done.

2 By the toil of faithful workers
in some far outlying field,
by the courage where the radiance
of the cross is still revealed,
by the victories of meekness,
through reproach and suffering won: *Refrain*

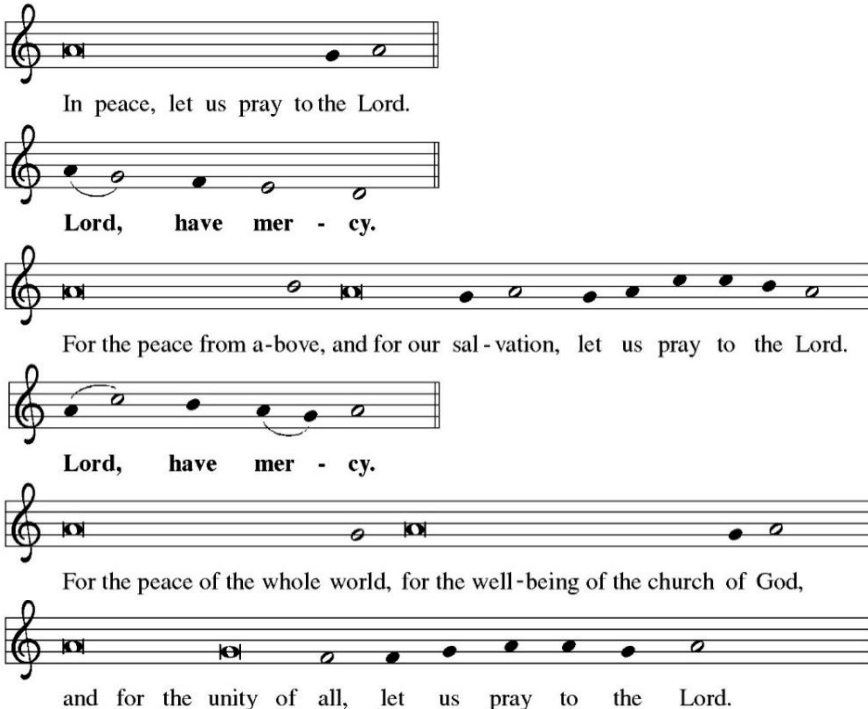
4 By the prayers of faithful watchers,
never silent day or night;
by the cross of Jesus, bringing
peace to all and healing light;
by the love that passes knowledge,
making all your children one: *Refrain*

Text: Howell E. Lewis, 1860-1953, alt.
Text © Union of Welsh Independents

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



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

THIS IS THE FEAST

Refrain
Assisting minister

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All

1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us

free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and

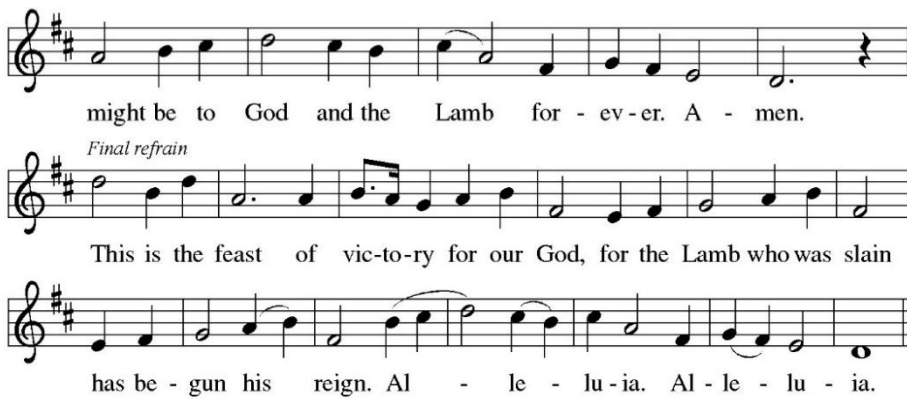
strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the

hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



PRAYER OF THE DAY

☐ Generous God,

☐ whose gifts defy any balance sheet or scorecard: free our hearts and minds from the fear, envy, and shame which enslave us, and shape our lives to reflect your self-giving love; through Jesus Christ, the free gift of grace. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Jonah 3:10—4:11

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 190

After Jonah's short sermon in 3:4, the Ninevites all repented and God decided to spare the city. Jonah objected to this and became even more angry when God ordered a worm to destroy a plant that was providing shade. The book ends with a question that challenges any who are not ready to forgive: You, Jonah, are all worked up about a bush, but shouldn't I be concerned about a hundred and twenty thousand Ninevites?

When God saw what the people of Ninevah did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

^{4:1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, “O Lord! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning, for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. ³ And now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.” ⁴ And the Lord said, “Is it right for you to be angry?” ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city.

⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort, so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, “It is better for me to die than to live.”

⁹ But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?” And he said, “Yes, angry

enough to die.” ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, “You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labor and which you did not grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not know their right hand from their left and also many animals?”

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 145:1-8 (*choir or cantor sing verses / congregation sings refrain*)



The LORD is slow to an-ger and a - bound-ing in stead-fast love.

¹ I will exalt you, my | God and king,
and bless your name forev- | er and ever.

² Every day | will I bless you
and praise your name forev- | er and ever.

³ Great is the Lord and greatly | to be praised!
There is no end | to your greatness.

⁴ One generation shall praise your works | to another
and shall de- | clare your power. *Refrain*

⁵ I will speak of the glorious splendor | of your majesty
and all your | marvelous works.

⁶ They shall tell of the might of your | wondrous acts,
and I will re- | count your greatness.

⁷ They shall publish the remembrance of | your great goodness;
they shall sing joyfully | of your righteousness.

⁸ The Lord is gracious and full | of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love. *Refrain*

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:21-30

Paul writes to the Philippians from prison. Though he is uncertain about the outcome of his imprisonment, he is committed to the ministry of the gospel and calls on the Philippians to live lives that reflect and enhance the gospel mission.

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better, ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me.

²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God’s doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



℣ The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

☩ Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 20:1-16

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 298

Jesus tells a parable about God's generosity, challenging the common assumption that God rewards people according to what they have earned or deserve.

Jesus said to the disciples: ¹“The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received a denarius. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

℣ 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 Wynard

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 As saints of old their firstfruits brought
of orchard, flock, and field
to God, the giver of all good,
the source of bounteous yield;
so we today firstfruits would bring,
the wealth of this good land,
of farm and market, shop and home,
of mind and heart and hand.</p> | <p>2 A world in need now summons us
to labor, love, and give;
to make our life an offering
to God, that all may live.
The church of Christ is calling us
to make the dream come true:
a world redeemed by Christ-like love;
all life in Christ made new.</p> |
| <p>3 In gratitude and humble trust
we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love
with all along life's way.
O God, who gave yourself to us
in Jesus Christ your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day
until life's work is done.</p> | |

Text: Frank von Christiernson, 1900-1996, alt.

Text © 1961, ren. 1989 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

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: ☐ Hear us, O God.

☒ **Your mercy is great.**

(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)

Prayers this week: Jinette Cswercko, Barb Zinn (mother of Joseph Daffer), Debbie (friend of Leigh and Vicki Freeman)

On-going Care: Bruce Anderson, Ryan Anderson, Nakoma Baker, Judi Boe, Carol Carlson, Ellie Carlson, Rod Carlson, Warren Cooke, Mike & Candace Edris, Kathy Englert, Lucy Etherton, Bob & Sandy Fonda, Judith Hamaker, Janice & Len Hansen, Linda Hoagland, Chris Jensen, Linda Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Kate McCoy, Lynn Meyer, Ralph Morse, Lynnette Olson, Noelle Phelps, Theresa & Shawn Powell, John Rayno, 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; Brayden Renken, son of Lenny & Aundrea Renken; Joel Woosley, nephew of Steph Stephens

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Rev. Katie Larson, Colombia; Rev. Bridget Gautieri, Wittenberg 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

☐ The peace of Christ be with you always.

☒ **And also with you.**

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this church possible. 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

Wherever the Wind Blows

words & music by Depp Britt
arr. by Lura Foster

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

For the Fruit of All Creation

ELW 679 vs. 1 & 3



1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.

For these gifts to ev - 'ry na - tion, thanks be to God.
For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.

For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are sleep - ing,
For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con - found us,

fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1903-2000

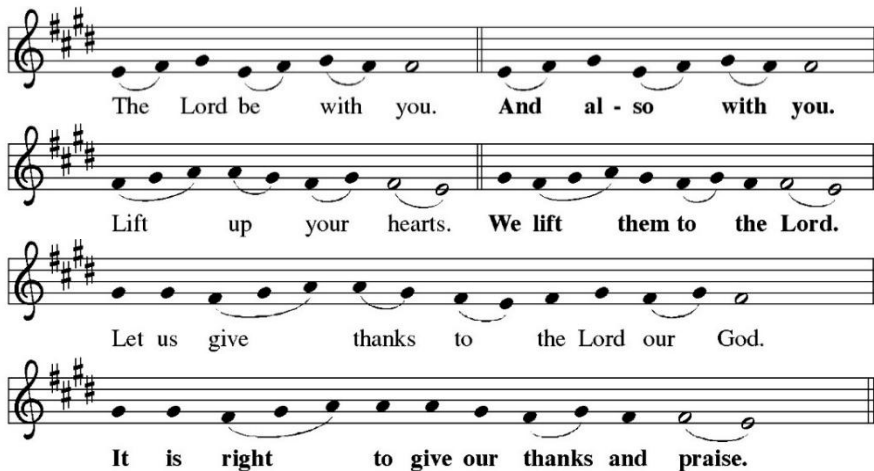
Text © 1970 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

OFFERING PRAYER

 God of creation,

 you send rain and the earth springs forth abundantly. All blessings are from you; make us generous with what we have. Use our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts in service to you and in love to our neighbors, today and always. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

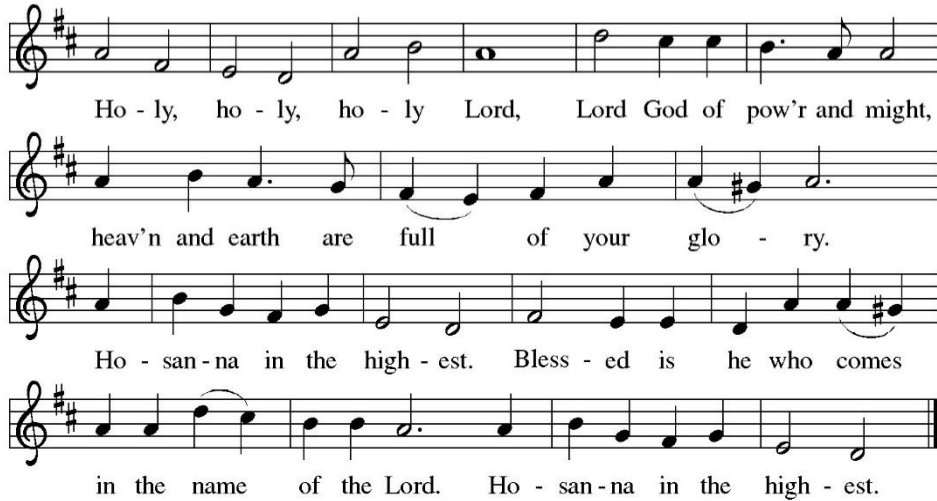
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r 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.

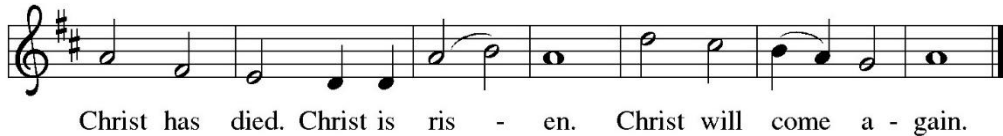
EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- ☐ You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. ...
... and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

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.

For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

- ☐ Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, ...
... be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



A - men, a - men, a - men.

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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☐ All who are thirsty, all who are hungry, come!

☑ **Christ invites us to this table.**

(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.*

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God

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.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Great God, your love has called us here
as we, by love, for love were made.
Your living likeness still we bear,
though marred, dishonored, disobeyed.
We come, with all our heart and mind
your call to hear, your love to find.</p> <p>2 We come with self-inflicted pains
of broken trust and chosen wrong,
half-free, half-bound by inner chains,
by social forces swept along,
by powers and systems close confined
yet seeking hope for humankind.</p> | <p>3 Great God, in Christ you call our name
and then receive us as your own
not through some merit, right, or claim,
but by your gracious love alone.
We strain to glimpse your mercy seat
and find you kneeling at our feet.</p> <p>4 Then take the towel, and break the bread,
and humble us, and call us friends.
Suffer and serve till all are fed,
and show how grandly love intends
to work till all creation sings,
to fill all worlds, to crown all things.</p> |
| <p>5 Great God, in Christ you set us free
your life to live, your joy to share.
Give us your Spirit's liberty
to turn from guilt and dull despair,
and offer all that faith can do
while love is making all things new.</p> | |

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Text © 1977, rev. 1995 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission

Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

ELW 659

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.</p> <p>2 We are pilgrims on a journey,
we are trav'lers on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.</p> | <p>3 I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the nighttime of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.</p> <p>4 I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.</p> |
| <p>5 Will you let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant, too.</p> | |

Text: Richard Gillard, b. 1953

Text © 1977 Scripture In Song (c/o Integrity's Hosanna Music) /ASCAP, c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☐ Sustaining God,
- ☐ **with this bread and cup, you nourish us with mercy and abundant life. By your Spirit, send us from this table to serve a needy world. Make us living signs of your liberation, healing, and love, following the way of Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

☞ The God of love draw you into community, in the body of Christ Jesus.

The God of hope grant you strength and joy in all circumstances through the interceding of the Spirit.

The God of grace ✙ bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Voices Raised to You

ELW 845

1 Voices raised to you we offer;
tune them, God, for songs of praise.
Hearts and hands we bring in tribute
for your gifts through all our days.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Triune God, to you we sing!

2 All creation joins to praise you;
earth and sky your works display.
Art and music, gifts you lend us,
we return to you today.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
God, creator, source of life!

3 Christ, the song of love incarnate,
touching earth with heaven's grace,
for your living, suffering, dying,
for your rising, hear our praise!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ, redeemer, Lord of life!

4 Spirit, flaming through creation,
kindle faith within each heart.
Lift our voices high in chorus;
through our hands your love impart.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Spirit, helper, breath of life!

5 How can any praise we offer
measure all the thanks we owe?
Take our hearts and hands and voices—
gifts of love we can bestow.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Triune God, to you we sing!

Text © 1997 GIA Publications Inc. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

DISMISSAL

☞ Go out in joy. Be led forth in peace.

☛ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

✙ ✙ ✙

From Sundays and Seasons.com. ©2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006828. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-705181. New Revised Standard Version Bible, ©1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Evangelical Lutheran Worship ©2006 Augsburg Fortress. All Creations Sings ©2020 Augsburg Fortress, an imprint of 1517 Media. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #26828. CCLI License # 2347179.

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	Exec. Dir. 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
September 19 & 20, 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 by Tracey and Thomas Gehringer-Steffen in celebration of their first wedding anniversary.

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of Maxine Jensen given by Tom Jensen

Television Broadcast is sponsored to the glory of God by Donald & Arlene Hirsh in honor of their 70th wedding anniversary

Kountze Café

9:30—11:00 AM

Join us each Sunday for breakfast. The suggested donation is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger for the hot breakfast and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Children's Choir & Children's Sermon

9:15 AM

Grades K-6

Children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen following the 9 AM Children's Blessing. Children in grades K-4 not wanting to participate in Choir may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper Rooms. All the children will return to their seats in time to receive communion.

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

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

September 20: Fellowship

September 27: Fellowship

Sunday School Leaders Needed

The Faith Formation program is looking for enthusiastic volunteers for the Sunday School students. All lessons are scripted and materials provided. The children start with breakfast upstairs, providing time for fellowship with the youngest members of Kountze. They then split into their classrooms for a lesson that follows the lectionary of the day.

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*

Please contact Kristin at kristin@kmlchurch.org with questions. You can sign up at:
<https://tinyurl.com/wwjk3zut>

Church Picnic Potluck and Dedication of the Schneider Link Sunday, September 20

Buffet line will open at 11:30 AM

Dedication of the Link at 12:15 PM

Pr. Carlos and Jan Schneider will be joining us on Sunday September 20th for a picnic potluck and a dedication ceremony in the Link. An anonymous individual has secured the naming rights for the Link and it will be named in their honor that day. Join us for a German themed event complete with brats for the entree and a kid's option. Activities for the kids include

bounce houses, face painting and balloons. Octoberfest games for the adults. Did you know that in Germany, Octoberfest is celebrated in September? Join us in the Fellowship Hall following the 9 AM service for coffee and pastries.

Help Our Lost and Found Find Its Way Home!

Our Lost and Found is overflowing with items looking for their owners! Stop by the counter in the Fellowship Hall near the office's back door and see if anything belongs to you. Items will remain on display for the next couple of weeks. After that, anything still left behind will have to find a new home. Hope you find your missing items.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

September 20 Sunday

Pentecost 17
Church Picnic Potluck
Dedication of the Schneider Link
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
Rehearsal
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-6)
9:30 AM Fellowship, coffee, & pastries
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour
10:30 Bounce Houses Open
10:45 AM Trivia & Bingo
11:30 AM Picnic Buffet
12:15 PM Dedication of the Schneider Link
12:30 PM Stein Holding, Nail Driving Competitions
1:00 PM Bingo & Trivia

September 21 Monday

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM Free Community Health Fair
10:00 AM Pantry
4:30 PM Personnel Committee
6:00 PM HGFC Clinic Board

September 22 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
12:30 PM Circle 3
6:00 PM Global Mission

September 23 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship
5:00 PM Stewardship Committee
5:45 PM Confirmation @ St. Timothy

September 24 Thursday

1:00 PM Circle 4
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

September 25 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

September 26 Saturday

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM "Boo"tique
5:00 PM Worship
5:00 - 8:00 PM Youth S'more Fun Around the Fire Pit

September 27 Sunday

Pentecost 18
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
Rehearsal
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-6)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour
10:15 AM New Member Class

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Free Community Health Fair

Monday, September 29

9 AM - 12:30 PM

Methodist Community Health Clinic and Kountze Commons will host their annual Community Health Fair. The event will include free health screenings, blood pressure, A1C and glucose checks, flu shots, lung cancer screening, skin checks and more! The event is free and open to all.

Halloween "Boo-tique"

September 26

9 AM - 12 PM

Kountze Commons is going to host its first "Boo-tique" and we need your help to make it successful. This event will allow families in need to come shop at Kountze Commons for Halloween costumes. How can you help? Please donate your new or gently used costumes. Costumes can be placed in the donation box under the coat rack on the west side of Fellowship Hall. If you have questions or would like to

volunteer to prepare for the "Boo-tique" or the day of the event, please reach out to Toby Rees at 402-979-1425 or toby@kountzecommons.org.

S'more Fun Around the Fire Pit

Youth Bonfire Night

Saturday, September 26

5 - 8 PM

Life is s'more fun around the fire pit! Join together for s'mores and pizza with Youth Director, Sheila Valquier at her home. Food, games, and connections. Please RSVP to sheila@kmlchurch.org

New Member Classes

Sunday, September 27 & October 4

10:15 AM

If you are considering membership at Kountze Memorial, please join us for our New Member classes and learn more

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

about becoming part of our church family. Both sessions are important, so please plan to attend each one. New members will be received during worship on Sunday, October 11. If you have questions or would like to sign up, contact the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org. We're excited to get to know you! In the meantime, you're invited to worship with us and join in any activities that interest you.

Blessing of the Animals **St. Cecilia Cathedral** **700 N 40th Street** **Saturday, October 3** **10:30 AM**

St. Cecilia Cathedral will host an outdoor celebration of the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. We celebrate this day with prayer for our pets, in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures. Please bring your pets on a leash or in a carrier for everyone's safety, or feel free to bring a photo if you prefer! Pr. Hall will represent Kountze Memorial in leadership of this event.

St. Francis of Assisi, Peacemaker Service **Sunday, October 4** **7 PM**

Held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral **113 N 18th St**

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral and Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church have, for several years, celebrated St. Francis of Assisi, Peacemaker, with a communion service focused on prayers for peace. We hope this service can be an invigorating moment of prayer and song. Choir members from several churches will participate. The preacher will be Abby Ybay, Dean of Community Life at The Benedictine Way, an Episcopal monastic community in North Omaha. A cookie reception will follow. Join us!

First Communion Class **Sunday, October 11** **11:15 AM - 12:30 PM**

If your child is around second grade, or has been showing signs of curiosity surrounding Communion, they would be ready for this class. A light lunch will be served. First Communion will be held on Reformation Sunday, October 25. Sign up by emailing Kristin Boe at kristin@kmlchurch.org or use the sign up sheet at the Welcome Desk if your child/ren will be attending. Contact Kristin if you have questions.

2026 Strike out Diabetes Bowling Bash **Maplewood Lanes** **3030 N 101st St, Omaha** **Sunday, October 11** **3 to 5 PM (check in at 2:15)**

Do you love to bowl and fight food insecurity in our community? Join Dear Diabetes and Kountze Commons for a Bowling Bash to bring awareness to diabetes and food insecurity. Registration for a team of 4 is \$125.00, other options are also available. If you don't want to bowl, but would like to provide support you can also sponsor a team from

Kountze. You can register at

<https://givebutter.com/deardiabetes2026bowling>

If you have questions you can reach out to Toby at 402-979-1425. Register by September 30th! Bring 4 canned goods or a bag of flour or Maseca and you will get a ticket for the raffle drawing.

Trunk-or-Treat **Saturday, October 17** **5 - 7 PM**

Kountze Commons is hosting its first community Trunk-or-Treat event which will take place in our parking lot and include trunks, games, and family fun. You can help with the event by decorating the trunk of your vehicle for children to visit, or by donating decorations, game prizes, candy, or your time. If you are interested please reach out to Toby at toby@kountzecommons.org or 402-979-1425. Join us for this fun event!

Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is in need of your gifts and service. The current needs for the pantry are granola bars, peanut butter, and bar soap. We are always in need of gently used grocery bags. 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 as it fits your schedule. We have options for volunteers of all abilities. Please use the QR code or the following link to sign up and join our mission.



Pantry

<https://tinyurl.com/uau5dddp>

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.

Attendance & Giving **Thursday, Sept. 10—Wednesday, Sept. 16**

Saturday: 20

Sunday: 9:00: 152 11:00: 63

Wednesday: 12:15: 8

Total: 243

Streaming: 65

Pantry Guests Served: 633 (inc. 217 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 18

Offering:

\$28,380.79 (Regular) \$2,839.93 (Specials)

\$222.00 (Debt Reduction)

God's generosity is amazing!

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Matthew 20:1-16	Parable of the vineyard workers
Monday	Jonah 3:10-4:11	Jonah goes to Nineveh
Tuesday	Philippians 1:21-30	What life means to Paul
Wednesday	Exodus 16:9-21	Bread from heaven
Thursday	Psalms 105:37-45	God's faithfulness to Israel
Friday	Romans 2:1-11	God's judgment is fair
Saturday	Psalms 145:1-8	The Lord is kind and merciful
Sunday	Matthew 21:23-32	Parable of the two sons



SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. Psalm 145:8 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we thank you that you care for all, especially those who feel judged or ignored, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of grace and mercy, we thank you for your care for us that gives us food from your fruitful creation. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God's grace be a blessing to you each day.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- When has someone surprised you with an act of kindness?
- In Matthew 20:1-16, Jesus told a parable about some vineyard workers. The ones hired last were paid the same as the ones hired first. Do you think this is fair? Why or why not?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Jonah 3:10-4:11 and Matthew 20:1-16.

Frankly, we don't really like God's justice. It's too supportive of people unlike us! Like Jonah, we don't want a God who is slow to anger and full of steadfast love for people we don't think deserve it, especially those we would consider our enemies. That is why Jonah ran away from God. Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrians who had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. God told Jonah to preach repentance to the Ninevites. Jonah was afraid to do this because he knew of God's love and mercy, something he did not want showered upon his enemies. Jonah was right; it happened, and it angered him. It is like Jesus' parable of the generous landowner where it seems so wrong for people who work in the fields all day to get the same wage as those who started at the end of the day. We tend to think that we deserve God's grace more than others, but God's grace is truly undeserved.

Discuss: How do you respond when someone you believe is undeserving but treated the same as someone who works hard and deserves recognition?

Pray: **Gracious and merciful God, give me faith to love your generosity for all people, especially those who are different from me. In Jesus' name, 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 show kindness to someone you feel has not been treated fairly?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

September 21st is the day when the Christian church remembers the Apostle Matthew, one of Jesus' original twelve disciples (most of the Gospel readings for this year are from Matthew's Gospel). One day, while seated at his table of books and money, Jesus looked at Matthew and said two words: *"Follow me."* This was all that was needed to make Matthew, a tax collector, rise and leave behind his pieces of silver to follow Christ. What does it take for someone to follow Jesus? Write a list of words that describe someone who follows Jesus. Take a moment to read through the list. *Pray:* **Lord, we give thanks for Matthew, the tax collector and disciple; help me to open my heart and mind to understand what it means to follow you. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32; Psalm 25:1-9
Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32**