

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Paul H. Moessner, Associate Pastor
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

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

December 3, 2017

9:00 & 11:00 AM

FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT



Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

PRELUDE

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who comes to wake us from sleep,
who leads us into the light of grace.

G Amen.

P Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P God of all time,

G we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us.

**We ignore our neighbors in need
and fail in the labor of justice and peace.**

In your mercy forgive us.

**Grant us wisdom to welcome your light
and to seek the things that will endure
until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.**

P Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

In † Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new.

Rejoice in this good news!

G Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

ELW 241

Verse 1: All

Verse 2: Men

Verse 3: **Women**

Verse 4: All

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

- P** Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
- C** **You call all nations to walk in your light
and to seek your ways of justice and peace,
for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near.**
- P** Bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath.
- C** **Rouse us from sleep,
that we will be ready to greet our Lord when he comes
and welcome him into our hearts and homes,
for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.**

We light the first candle.

HYMN

*“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”
Verse 1*

ELW 240



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

- P** 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.**

THE KYRIE



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.
1, 3 Lord, . . . have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
2 Christ, . . . have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.
Chris - te e - le - i - son.
Lord, . . . have mer - cy.
Christ, . . . have mer - cy.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.
- ☑ **By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—²as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.⁵You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.⁶We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.⁷There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.⁸Yet, Lord, you are our Father; we

are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. ⁹Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God!

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19 (*read responsively*)

¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**⁴O Lord God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**⁶You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

**¹⁹Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

As the Christians in Corinth await the advent of Jesus, Paul reminds them how the Lord has already enriched them through spiritual gifts and will continue to strengthen them until the coming day of the Lord.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, ⁵for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—⁶just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—⁷so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁸He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

A The word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

Text and music © 1984 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638.

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☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

☑ Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 13:24-37

In today's reading, Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

Jesus says] ²⁴“In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, ²⁵and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. ²⁶Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. ²⁷Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

²⁸“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. ³⁰Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. ³¹Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³²“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³³Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work,

and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. ³⁵Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, ³⁶or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. ³⁷And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

☐ The Gospel of our Lord

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING (9:00 AM)

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either follow the teacher upstairs for an extended children’s sermon (joining us again later in time for Communion) or they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon.

SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Lost in the Night”

ELW 243

THE NICENE CREED

☑ We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;

by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **P** Lord, in your mercy,
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)

Illness: Leo Berk (cousin of Donald & Søren Johnson), Evelyn Christensen, Jr Green (husband of Marvel), Eunice Grunberg, Virginia Jensen

Sympathy: To the family and friends of Beverly Bauermeister

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, and Joel Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Krystle Moraska & Ignacio Madrussan, Argentina; Lindsay Mack, Mexico; Our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

THE PEACE IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
C And also with you.

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Today is the first Sunday of Advent – a time of preparation for Christmas. The world around us prepares for Christ’s birth by saying, “Buy! Buy! Buy!” In Advent we are reminded that showing love is more important than buying what is not really needed. Your offering gifts each week show your appreciation for God’s love.



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying”

Philipp Nicolai

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“All Earth is Hopeful”



1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé

Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

OFFERING PRAYER

- P** Savior of the nations, come,
- C** **Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light. 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.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and homophonic, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff contains two measures, the second and third staves each contain two measures, and the fourth staff contains two measures. The lyrics are: "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 ADVENT

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.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and homophonic, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff contains two measures, the second and third staves each contain two measures, and the fourth staff contains two measures. The lyrics are: "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."

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- ☩ **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

- ☩ Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.
☩ **Share in the feast of salvation.**

(sit)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”
“Savior of the Nations, Come”

ELW 488
ELW 263

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE *“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”* *Verses 1 & 4*

ELW 244

**Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**

**Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!**

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** God for whom we wait:
- C** **You come to us in the broken bread and the cup we share.
Make us ready always to welcome Christ into our hearts,
and send us forth to be your people in the world,
announcing your coming among us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- P** May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Soon and Very Soon”

ELW 439

DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

† † †

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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 nearly 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.



KOUNTZE STAFF

- Pr. Olaf Roynesdal Senior Pastor
Pr. Paul Moessner Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe Christian Education Coordinator
Debbie Bogue Office Manager
Amanda Zasada Administrative Assistant
Lauri Askew Staff Treasurer
Sheri Rose Financial Secretary
Søren Johnson Assist. Bldg. Superintendent
Barbara Carlsen Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Donna Moessner Director of Children's Music
Danny Bos Handbell Director/Assist. to the Bldg. Superintendent
Mark Jones Organist
David Gerard Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer Urban Ministries Coordinator

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Kevin Larkowski
Lorie Groenjes
Darlene Anderson
Lector Don Darst
Ushers Bob Woodworth
Glenn Anderson
Daniel Collett
Marcy Madison
Mark Mahaffey
Gary Westerman
Ted Kaasch
Greeters Shirleen Collett
Jinette Cswercko
Karen Wolf
Sharon Anderson
Crucifer Bailey Gittler
Acolytes Madelyn Hinrichs
Carly Cameron

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Deb Hinrichs
June Anderson
Lector Donna Moessner
Ushers Linda Johnson
Ken Johnson
Lee Johnson
Julie O'Doherty
Norm Sack
Greeters Rosemary Tessin
Julie King
Crucifer Torin Edwards
Acolytes Abby Rigas
Lily O'Kane

WORSHIP + GROW + SERVE

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 not yet communing will receive a blessing. Instructions will be provided during worship. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Quiet activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a Quiet 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 is available from 9 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 plate.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS AND LISTENING DEVICES Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

NEW MEMBER CLASS If you are interested in joining our congregation, the next class will be held January 14 & 21 from 12—2 PM. Please plan to attend both sessions. Lunch will be served and childcare is provided. Please indicate your attendance plans on your attendance card or call the church office and let us know if you will need childcare.

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 card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828.

TODAY AT KOUNTZE

KOUNTZE CAFÉ Sunday is the Advent Fair, so we'll have chili, dessert and, of course, cookies—no breakfast. Next Sunday we'll have a hot breakfast. If you're able to help set up, prep/cook, and/or clean up after breakfast on Sunday mornings, please talk to Jim West, or let the church office know. We would appreciate your help! Thanks.

ADULT FORUM Join us Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM.

THIS WEEK: Advent Fair **NEXT WEEK:** "Family Ministry and the Whole Household of Faith"

ADVENT FAIR Join us in the Fellowship Hall on 12/3 to enjoy crafts, chili, cocoa, and community starting at 10:00 AM. All are welcome.

ALTERNATIVE GIFTS What's underneath your Christmas tree? Share the true meaning of Christmas by giving an Alternative Gift this year. On December 3, 10, 17 & 24, you will be able to purchase alternative gifts of hope for families in Omaha and abroad. Some of the items on the list are "a week of food for an orphaned child," \$6, "ten chicks," \$10, "medicine for the Healing Gift Free Clinic," \$25 or, "a bag of food for a family in Omaha," \$10. A sign-up sheet is in your bulletin.

POINSETTIAS We are taking orders for poinsettias to beautify the church. Christmas poinsettias are a special way to honor or remember loved ones. The cost of the poinsettias is \$7.00 each. If you would like to order a poinsettia, please fill out a bulletin insert and either mail it to the church office with your payment (cash or check made out to Kountze Memorial) or drop it in the offering plate during Worship.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL This Sunday join us in the Fellowship Hall for the Advent Fair. Next week, join us on the 2nd floor for children 2 years—8th grade. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9—10 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery). Sunday School (2 yrs—8th grade) is held from 10:10—10:50 AM.

HIGH SCHOOL FORUM Join us each Sunday in the Youth Center for Forum at 10:10 AM. Come to the Fellowship Hall this weekend for the Advent Fair.

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CHOIR rehearsal in the Adult Choir room each Sunday from 11—11:40 AM. Come and sing!

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY Wednesdays, 10:30 AM, *Christmas: The Prequel*, led by Pastor Moessner. Each of the 4 Gospels begins differently. Only two tell of Jesus' birth. Yet each helps us know why the story we celebrate at Christmas has such importance for us,

indeed for all creation. Please join us.

TV BROADCAST SPONSORSHIPS Beginning this month, we will be welcoming sponsorships for the weekly televised broadcast of our worship service. You can sponsor a broadcast in memory of loved ones, in honor of someone's birthday or anniversary, etc. The cost for sponsoring one broadcast is currently \$175 (it may increase in the new year). Six services are available for sponsorship in December (5 Sundays + Christmas Eve). Sponsorship forms are available at the Welcome Desk and in the church office. You can go to our website and donate there as well.

YESTERDAY'S YOUTH Please join us for a Christmas celebration, on Tuesday, 12/5, at noon. If you wish to participate, please bring a wrapped, \$5 Christmas item or ornament for our exchange game. Lunch will be festive Christmas finger foods and Christmas cookies!! Please RSVP to the church office. Any questions call Sheri Tipton at 402-415-6033. See you there!!

ADVENT MEALS/WORSHIP In this season of preparation for Christ's coming, a place has been prepared for you, to hear the promise, see the signs of the times in Christ's light, and share your hopes and dreams one with another. We are invited to make the Wednesdays in Advent a place apart for our minds and souls. Join us on Wednesdays, 12/6, 13, & 20 at 12:15 PM or for a light meal from 6-6:45 PM and Holden

(continued on page 2)

Advent is a time to be alert for the coming of Christ.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Table with 3 columns: Day, Bible Reference, and Description. Rows include Sunday through Saturday with references like Mark 13:24-37 and Isaiah 64:1-9.

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. Mark 13:33 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we thank you for your love that reaches out to us through Christ our Savior. Give us joy and gladness as we wait for his coming again. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord God, thank you for giving us hope for the heart and food for the plate. For Jesus our Savior we watch and we wait. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of grace and peace and the Lord Jesus Christ keep you strong in your faith until Jesus comes again. (1 Corinthians 1:8)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about a time when you were waiting for something or someone.
• Advent begins with a focus on Christ's second coming. How does your Christian faith help you keep alert for Christ's return?
• Jesus said, "my words will never pass away" (Mark 13:31). What words or stories of Jesus are especially important to you?

DEVOTIONS

December 3 is the first Sunday in Advent. Using four blue or purple candles and a white center candle, set up a home Advent Wreath. Light the first candle, and use the following words:

Say: The first candle on our Advent wreath is the hope candle. Long ago, God promised to send a Savior. God used prophets like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to give people hope for the future. [Light the first candle.]

Read: Isaiah 9:6. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Pray: Lord God, thank you for keeping the promises you made through the prophets and sending us a Savior. Fill us with hope as we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth. Amen.

SERVICE

Part of Christian waiting for Christ's coming again is to care for others with loving service. Purchase nonperishable grocery items this week to donate to a local food shelf. Pray for the people who will receive this food.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

With the beginning of the new church year in Advent, we hear a new set of readings from the Bible. Most of the Gospel readings used this year will be from Mark. We remember that Jesus tells us that his words will never pass away (Mark 13:31). In honor of Jesus' message kept for us in the Bible, gather the Bibles and storybook Bibles in your home and say this prayer of blessing for their use:

Dear God, we thank you for the Bible, and especially for the good news of Jesus our Savior. As we read, listen to and think about what the Bible says to us, make us into people who are strong in our faith and full of love. Amen.

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Written by Pr. Greg Priebbenow and edited by Vibrant Faith Ministries.
Go to www.vibrantfaithathome.org for more faith-forming activities.

reflection. A reception will follow. Nursery care will be provided.

HATS & GLOVES FOR PANTRY GUESTS If you would like to help keep our pantry guests warm this winter, you can donate hats and/or gloves for our pantry guests. We will be collecting them in the box behind the Welcome Center through Sunday, 12/17 and they will be distributed during pantry on Monday, 12/18. Thanks!

USHERS & GREETERS NEEDED! We need ushers for the large special services we have in December! Saturday, 12/16, 5 PM. Candlelight Carol Sing. Sunday, 12/24 (Christmas Eve): 4, 7, and 11 PM. Duties will be explained! If you can help, please speak with Pastor Olaf.

CAMPUS MINISTRY All high school graduates from the last few years (not just those currently in college) who are going to be in the Omaha area are invited to share some FREE PIZZA and visit with other young adults from your church and other Lutheran churches in Omaha at Godfather's Pizza on 67th in Aksarben Village on Thursday evening, 12/28 from 7 - 9 PM. Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry from the Omaha Metro is sponsoring this event and buying the pizza. This is a chance to meet some other students and make some connections with young adults from other campuses and campus ministries.

THIS WEEK AT KOUNTZE

December 3 Sunday

- Homebound Communion
Advent Fair
7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
11:00 AM MS/HS Choir Rehearsal
12:00 PM Youth Ministry Task Force
8:30 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

December 4 Monday

- 10:00 AM Pantry

December 5 Tuesday

- 9:00 AM Staff Meeting
12:00 PM Yesterday's Youth
5:30 PM Marketing Task Force

December 6 Wednesday

- 10:30 AM Bible Study
12:15 PM Worship
6:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal
6:00 PM Advent Dinner
7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer

December 7 Thursday

- 4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
5:30 PM Personnel Committee

December 9 Saturday

- 9:00 AM Christmas Program Rehearsal
5:00 PM Worship

December 10 Sunday

- 7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
11:00 AM MS/HS Choir Rehearsal
8:30 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

Table with 2 columns: Lesson, Reference. Next Weekend's Lessons: Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

Saturday Attendance: 46
Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 206 11:00: 122
Midweek - Noon: 12 Evening: 20
Total: 406
Pantry Guests Served: 388
Medical Clinic Guests Served: 0 (Thanksgiving)
Offering: (11/12)
\$11,616.59 (Regular) \$5,099.70 (Specials)
\$7,572.00 (In the City for Good)

(continued from page 1)

Evening Prayer at 7 PM.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM The Christmas Program Rehearsal will be held on Saturday, 12/16 from 9-11 AM. The Christmas Program will be on Sunday, 12/17, at the 9 AM service. Please note—The program will not take place at 11 AM.

CANDLELIGHT CAROL SING Be sure to attend our annual Candlelight Carol Sing on Saturday, 12/16 at 5 PM (prelude begins at 4:40 PM). Come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with singing and worshipful

Worship US With US logo and schedule for Sunday, December 24 (4th Sunday of Advent, 9 AM Worship only, Christmas Eve, 4, 7, & 11 PM Worship) and Monday, December 25 (Christmas Day, 10 AM Worship).