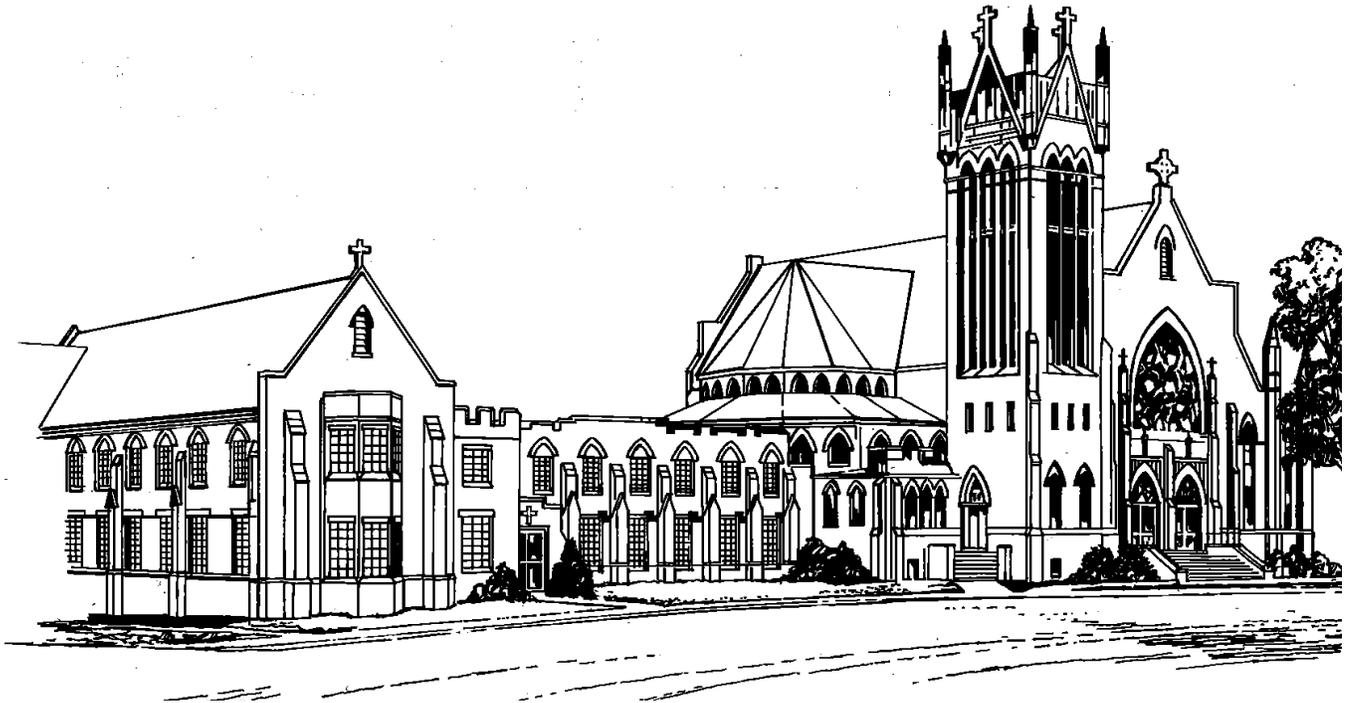


**KOUNTZE**  
Memorial Lutheran Church

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016



**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
January 29, 2017**

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## **AGENDA**

- Call to Order..... Pastor Bard
- Prayer..... Pastor Moessner
- Adoption of the Agenda
- Approval of the Minutes of the August 2016 Meeting
- Presentation of Reports..... Pastor Bard
- Presentation of the Proposed Budget for 2017 ..... Terrie Larkowski
- Adoption of the Proposed Budget ..... Pastor Bard
- Adjournment

# MINUTES

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Aug. 28, 2016

### I. **Call to Order and Prayer**

Interim Senior Pastor Dean Bard called the August 2016 Congregational Meeting to order at 10:11 a.m., offering an opening prayer and laying out an agenda for the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to elect or re-elect members of the Church Council, the KMLC Endowment Board, and the deFreese Manor Board.

### II. **Approval of Minutes**

Pr. Bard entertained a motion to accept the minutes of the two previous Congregational Meetings, the regular annual meeting held on Jan. 31, 2016, and a special meeting held Feb. 28, 2016. A motion was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous acclamation to accept the minutes from both meetings.

### III. **Report of the Nominating Committee**

The Nominating Committee met on two previous Sundays to create a slate of candidates for the open or incumbent positions on the Church Council, Endowment Board, and DeFreese Manor Board. The Committees recommendations were widely available.

### IV. **Election of Church Council Members**

The reading of the nominees for Church Council went as follows:  
Four members elected for three-year terms expiring August 2019:

**Steve Jacobson**  
**Adam Klinker (incumbent)**  
**Robin Perkins**  
**Ashley Sum (incumbent)**

Completing the unexpired term of a resigned member and standing again for election in 2017:

**Jeff Senn**

Pr. Bard called for nominees from the floor. There being none, the slate was unanimously approved by acclamation.

### V. **Election of KMLC Endowment Board Members**

The reading of the nominees for KMLC Endowment Board went as follows:  
Two members elected for four-year terms expiring August 2020:

**Gary Clatterbuck**  
**Sarah Penn**

Pr. Bard called for nominees from the floor. There being none, the slate was unanimously approved by acclamation.

### VI. **Vote to approve nominees for deFreese Manor Board**

The reading of the nominees for deFreese Manor Board went as follows:  
Three members elected for four-year terms:

**Scott Henneman**  
**Marvin Olson**  
**Jeff Perkins**

Pr. Bard called for nominees from the floor. There being none, the slate was unanimously approved by acclamation.

**VII. Closing Prayer**

In a closing prayer, Pr. Bard thanked all outgoing Church lay leaders for their service and asked God's guidance for those continuing to serve in leadership roles.

**VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the congregation, it was moved, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

Faithfully submitted,

Adam Klinker, Church Council Secretary

# PASTORAL REPORTS

## INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

### PASTOR DEAN W. BARD

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

*I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 1:2-6

My membership at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church took an unexpected turn in March 2016, when I was asked to assist with pastoral leadership. This assignment became an appointment as interim senior pastor on June 1 following the resignation of Pastor Jeffery Alvestad. At that time, the congregational leadership, the staff and I made a collective commitment to do our best to keep the ministry moving forward faithfully and effectively.

The challenges were not small. We were in the midst of planning for the Kountze Commons project. There were staff positions to fill or which soon would be vacant. Holy Week and Easter were upon us. There were a host of ministries, described in this bulletin of reports, to encourage, nurture and oversee. By God's grace and with your steady partnership, we have moved forward and kept that commitment. My thanks go to our leadership, our staff and to each of you who have rallied for the sake of the gospel and for the mission.

Four areas of congregational life have been priorities for me: a vibrant spiritual life, staff for the mission, Kountze Commons and financial support.

#### **Spiritual Life**

It is difficult to measure spiritual life and health but there are indicators. My sense is that our ministries in worship, education and service reflect a high degree of faithfulness and strength. Worship and music offerings are excellent in quality and the response to our services and preaching is positive. The inspiration of special services is particularly noteworthy. Bible studies and other adult education offerings are well attended and well received. The Sunday school is vibrant and our youth programs and mission trips are first-rate. The service component of our mission is remarkable: two hundred fifty quilts for Lutheran World Relief, the refurbishing of the kitchen at the Omaha Street School, the collections for refugees with Lutheran Family Services, the dozens of volunteers involved weekly in the Kountze Pantry and the Healing Gift Free Clinic, the Global Missions Committee Alternative Gifts program in Advent all are clear examples of faith in action. I am grateful to everyone who contributes to our strong spiritual life in response to the call of Jesus Christ!

#### **Staff for the Mission**

Vicar Suzanne How completed her pastoral internship May 31 with distinction. Perhaps her finest contribution was coordinating the Kountze Pantry and the Healing Gift Free Clinic. In April, we appointed Joyce Palmer to that post and she has continued to manage these ministries in an exemplary way.

In summer, John Bogue, building superintendent, was diagnosed with a serious illness and assistance was required. Søren Johnson, a high school member, was engaged part-time for custodial work. Also in August, Ashley Ford completed her tenure and Amanda Zasada was appointed as office assistant. Both Søren and Amanda have performed their duties admirably.

On August 16, Pastor Paul Moessner became interim associate pastor, and the blessings of his ministry are apparent. Pastor Moessner is a "people person" of the first rank. He made it a point to learn names and something about all of us from the start. His preaching and worship leadership, pastoral care and management skills are exceptional. The pastoral staff particularly is grateful for his partnership. His wife Donna also is a delightful addition to our church family.

In early autumn, we welcomed Sheri Rose, formerly KMLC office manager, as part-time financial secretary. Sheri records the gifts of members and friends and prepares individual financial statements. Previous experience with the congregation is helpful for her current responsibilities. In December, Lori Askew, CPA, a member of KMLC, was

hired as part-time staff treasurer. She is responsible for bookkeeping, paying bills, managing payroll and assisting with endowment fund accounting. For most of 2016, Terrie Larkowski performed these essential functions on a voluntary basis. She deserves great thanks for excellent financial management both for the church and the Kountze Commons project.

In October, Chef Tim Walker agreed to assume extra duties to assist John Bogue and Søren Johnson with maintenance. Tim and his wife Melissa also prepared excellent meals for stewardship campaign events and Tim assisted with Advent suppers in addition to providing delicious Sunday breakfasts. At the end of December, Tim decided to seek full-time employment in his chosen field. He will continue with breakfasts as long as possible and will assist John and Søren through January. We will miss Tim and Melissa in the kitchen, but they will remain church members. The breakfasts will continue when they no longer can provide them.

### **Kountze Commons**

There are three leadership teams which oversee the project. The Kountze Endowment True Vision, LLC (KETV) Management Board oversees construction and management of the facility. This five-member board has engaged Paul Sum as project manager and owner's representative, and Terrie Larkowski, CPA to provide financial management services. The Building Committee assists with design questions and procurement of furniture, fixtures and equipment. The Community Outreach Committee prepares grant proposals for foundations and individual donors. In addition, the Church Council and the Endowment Fund Board provide guidance and support for the project generally. Major developments in recent months are listed below.

May and June: After reviewing revised design proposals submitted by the Management Board and the Building Committee, the Church Council approved the final project design at its May meeting. In May and June, the existing building was demolished and on June 19 ground was broken in Sunday ceremonies which included many guests and partners from Methodist Health System.

July and August: Studies related to financial sustainability were revised and refined, and ongoing funding streams were identified. The Community Outreach Committee finalized the project narrative and other documentation for grant proposals and submitted several requests. This work will continue in 2017.

September: A loan agreement was reached with the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The Church Council and the Endowment Fund Board gave full backing and support for the project and for the decisions and directives of the Management Board. Amendment #2 with Kiewit Building Group was signed so that site preparation work could begin.

October: A grant from a major foundation for \$1 million was received.

November and December: The Management Board made the final commitment to build the entire project by signing Amendment #3 with Kiewit Building Group. Construction continues apace. Diagonal parking in the front of the church was completed. Progress was made on procuring furniture and equipment. A final round of negotiations on the lease agreement with Lutheran Family Services began. Final plans for minor renovations on the second floor in the education wing were made so that the Methodist Community Clinic could be housed there from February until August when their new facilities are completed. In the first year of the three-year capital campaign, the church received approximately \$1 million of the total campaign pledge of \$2 million. Additionally, grant awards and commitments exceeded \$1.3 million.

Through the summer, each of the three primary oversight groups often met weekly on project issues. Countless volunteer hours and very significant pro bono legal, management and financial expertise were contributed. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the talented teams that launched this project with great skill and diligence. I frankly stand in awe of what they are accomplishing for Christ's mission in this place. They deserve our full backing and support.

### **Financial Support and Statistics**

On the next page is a comparison of stewardship campaign results from 2010 to 2016. This year we received the most pledges in many years and the highest dollar amount pledged since 2011, almost 2% over last year.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Pledges</b>	<b>Amount Pledged</b>
2010	312	\$756,727
2011	303	\$794,298
2012	272	\$708,741
2013	282	\$753,453
2014	281	\$756,287
2015	302	\$764,285
2016	328	\$778,100

Hearty thanks to Rev. Dennis A. Anderson who served as guest stewardship campaign leader and to the many volunteers who contributed to an excellent program. The results are encouraging. As I have written elsewhere, the calling of a new senior pastor and the completion of the Kountze Commons project in 2017 give urgency to faithful and generous financial support.

Worship attendance declined slightly in 2016, averaging 501 weekly worshipers compared to 529 in 2015. In a transition year, some decline in attendance is to be expected. At year-end, attendance was especially strong, however. We added 54 new members during the year and two important indicators of our trajectory were up significantly. Loose offerings were higher than expected and the number of financial pledges increased more than 8%. We continue to welcome many visitors and prospective members at worship services. Engaging new members fully in our common life and mission is a continuing priority.

We conducted 28 baptisms, 20 marriages and 21 funerals in 2016.

### **Other Accomplishments and Occasions**

In June and July, a new format for the monthly Good News was introduced and a new website was launched. Great thanks to Debbie Bogue and Ian Hartfield for these accomplishments.

In August, the Church Council appointed the Call Committee for a new senior pastor. By the end of the year, the ministry site profile and an accompanying view book describing the mission had been prepared and submitted. These documents were approved by the Nebraska Synod. The Call Committee now is prepared to receive the names of candidates from the synod.

In September, new members began service on the Church Council, the Endowment Fund Board and the deFreese Manor Board, having been elected at the August congregational meeting.

September 24 and 25 we welcomed former Pastor Carlos and Jan Schneider to Kountze Memorial to re-dedicate our newly refurbished organ in honor of members of the congregation who have served and have given their lives in military service.

Finally, allow me a personal note. This journey with you has been one of the most remarkable and rewarding experiences of my vocational life. I am exceedingly grateful to God, to my colleagues Pastors Hall, Moessner and Inbarasu, to our dedicated staff and leadership, and to all of you for your support and responsiveness. May God continue to bless us with guidance and gifts of grace and joy as we move together into 2017.

## **ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR ADULT FAITH FORMATION**

### **PASTOR H. ASHLEY HALL, PH.D.**

2016 was a challenging but constructive and healthy year of ministry for me. The following are some highlights from the past year and short(er) term goals for the future of my call among you, broken down into the main areas of my portfolio.

#### **Word and Sacrament**

I continue to preside on a regular basis on Sundays and Wednesdays, which I enjoy greatly and consider a profound privilege. I preach about once a month, which fits in well in light of other responsibilities as a full-time Associate Professor of Theology at Creighton University and the other aspects of my call portfolio. Baptisms, pastoral care, weddings, and funerals remain an active but limited part of my ministry among you.

### *Good Friday Speakers*

It is an honor and joy to coordinate the preachers for our Ecumenical Good Friday liturgy. We continue our diversity of denominations and I am grateful for the generosity of time given by our speakers. In 2016 we welcomed: Fr. Larry Gillick, S.J. (Creighton University), Portia Cavitt (Clair Memorial United Methodist Church), Fr. Peter J. Pappas (St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church), The Rev. Megan Morrow (Nebraska Synod), the Rev. Robert A. Keefer, Presbyterian Church of the Master, the Rev. Sarah Miller (Trinity Episcopal Cathedral), and the Rev. Dr. Selwyn Q. Bachus (Salem Baptist Church).

### *Ecumenical Ascension Day Liturgy*

I think we can speak of a new tradition of a joint Eucharist with Trinity Episcopal Cathedral on the Feast of the Ascension (May 5) – this is our third year of collaboration! This year, the worship was hosted at the cathedral and, for the first time, our choirs joined together for an anthem. It was a lovely day. In 2017, the liturgy will be hosted by KMLC (May 25).

### *Altar Guild*

Last year, I took on the duty of being the pastor and staff person who relates to the Altar Guild. It is an honor to serve with such dedicated individuals. In 2016, we held two retreats for the Altar Guild and developed a revised *Altar Guild Handbook* with photos for easier set up (my thanks to *Ian Hartfield* for formatting the new handbook). Our goal remains recruiting new members to the essential work of enriching our worship life.

### *Worship Training*

This year (November), we added a worship-training event for communion assistants, lectors, ushers, and greeters. The goal is educate and equip our worship assistants for excellence in the first pillar of our communal life: worship. It also allows participants to offer feedback, insight, and encouragement to one another and the pastors in a collegial and supportive atmosphere. We will have another in the late spring.

## **Adult Education**

The main and most visible aspect of my call for Adult Education remains the scheduling and direction of the Adult Forum and other adult education opportunities. My goal is to ensure that KMLC is seen as a sponsor and partner in bringing engaging, substantial, and inspired educational opportunities in service to Christ and his Church in the Omaha area.

I would like to thank the Adult Education Sub-Committee for their service (though we met very rarely this year): *Richard Bock, Prof. Dulcinea Boesenberg, Prof. Steven Hinrichs, Adam Klinker, and Richard Sieling, Ph.D.*

### *Adult Forum*

Our Forum topics have highlighted the liturgy as a “theme” for 2016. While the need to dedicate Forum time to important matters related to the pastoral transition and the new building, we did have a few multiple week studies, viz., “Liturgy as Bible Study,” “On the Incarnation,” and “Are Icons Idols?” We also welcomed some guest speakers: Jane Tan Credi (The Process and Theology of Making an Icon), James Chol Bol (Lutheran Refugee Services), Justin Perkins (Young Adult Global Missions), Rev. Dr. Adam White (The Lutheran Center, UNL), and three guests from the Nebraska Synod’s prison ministry.

### *Heritage Series*

The series also focused on our theme for this year, using Frank Senn’s *An Introduction to Christian Liturgy*. In 2017, we will mark the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary by studying the works of Luther and the Lutheran tradition, using multiple resources and the Luther Reading Challenge of the Ecumenical Institute of Strasbourg, France (which KMLC’s Endowment helped to support).

### *Bible Study*

This year, Bible Studies were led by two very gifted members: *Prof. Dulcinea Boesenberg* led a six-week series on the gospels (summer evenings) and *Dr. Richard Sieling* led two studies that met on Monday evenings and Wednesday mornings. I am grateful for their leadership in continuing this essential aspect of congregational life.

### *New Member Class*

We continue to welcome many new members to Kountze Memorial. I do wonder about how we are integrating them into the Christian faith and to our congregation, as more and more are coming to us without a deep background in faith formation; they are looking to us to help them in their search for meaning and purpose rooted in Christian life. In 2017 and in consultation with the new pastor, I would like to explore ways that dynamic congregations are responding to this new reality.

### *New Member Follow Up Task Force*

We are also concerned with helping new members become integrated in congregational life. To that end, we began a new member follow up task force. For now, I am the pastor who related to that group. Members of the task force are assigned new members and follow up with them for a year with cards, calls, and personal greeting/conversation. We are off to a good start, due to the dedicated leadership of *Gloria Erickson* and members: *Adam Klinker, Sandy Fonda, Kimberly Grassmeyer, Laura Knochel, Deb Henrichs, Liz Herrington, Pam Johnson, Barb Nissen, Julie O'Dougherty, Anne Ozar, Jeff and Lori Senn.*

### *Christian Education*

I continue to serve on the Christian Education Committee and coordinate the *New Member Class, the Baptism Seminar, and First Communion Seminar.* With *Katie Larson,* we continued our seminar with parents and guardians the week before Bible Sunday with "How to Introduce the Bible to Your Children." We also added a six-week conversation for parents and guardians on how to address human development and sexuality from a faithful perspective, using resources from the ELCA and noted scholar of sexual ethics, Prof. *Todd Salzman* of Creighton University.

### **Lutheran Campus Ministry (NeLCM) at Creighton University**

Our weekly worship on campus (9 p.m. in the lower chapel of St. John's church) remains the cornerstone of our ministry. Due to graduation of active seniors, the average attendance fell again slightly this year; averaging 8-10 students each week. While we continue to use Holden Evening Prayer (in which student musicians lead us) with Holy Communion, our loss of cantors (i.e., students to help lead the singing) necessitated the introduction of a spoken Eucharistic liturgy. I edited a copy for our purposes from the World Council of Churches, using the Lima Document as a basis. This document allows for the greatest flexibility when we have guest preachers (about once a month): Pr. Scott Jones of First Central Congregational UCC, The Rev. Chris Jorgensen of the Urban Abbey, and the Rev. Sarah Miller of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral remain regular volunteers.

I continue to work in a collaborative way with Pr. Mike Ostrom of NeLCM-Omaha who serves the professional students at Creighton (i.e., Law School, Dental School, Medical School, etc.).

Our support from the Office of Campus Ministry at Creighton University remains strong. We are now welcomed as part of the "ministry team" on campus, and this is demonstrated by: the Welcome Week Protestant Worship service, Ash Wednesday service, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and regular Taizé worship that have been given to us or in which we collaborate to benefit the University community.

### **Healing Gift Free Medical Clinic, LLC**

I continue to serve as the Chairman of the Board of the Healing Gift Free Clinic, LLC. Though this is not part of my letter of call, it is an essential element of the congregation's work and my honor to cooperate with so many skilled, dedicated, and passionate volunteers to care for the working poor of our city. I am very grateful for the warm, determined, and resourceful presence of our new Urban Ministry coordinator, *Joyce Palmer.* She is an excellent colleague! We are also grateful to the new administrative assistant, *Amanda Zasada,* who works with many of our guests to arrange appointments. We have been successful in our immediate goals to streamline expenses and soliciting grants. Please see the Healing Gift Free Clinic report for more details.

### **Going Green Task Force**

The work of the Task Force has quieted down after 2015 renovations to the building. As in 2015, this year's annual Rogation Week events were hampered by bad weather. We limited the scope of our clean up efforts to the church grounds.

## **Synodical and Church-Wide Service**

I continue to serve as an official delegate of the ELCA to Round XII of our bilateral dialogue with the U.S. Conference of Roman Catholic Bishops. I also serve Bishop Brian Maas as the Ecumenical Officer of the Nebraska Synod. My priority as Ecumenical Officer is to highlight our cooperation with the Tri-Faith Initiative and prepare for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

## **Conclusion**

As you can see, my schedule keeps me busy; but I cannot imagine doing anything else! It has been my vision to serve the people of God at the lectern, pulpit, and altar. I am enriched and inspired by my work among you. Thank you for the opportunity.

## **INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR**

### **PASTOR PAUL MOESSNER**

*After this, the Lord...sent them on ... in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go.* These words formed the basis of my ministry during the past fifteen-plus years. In leadership meetings and group discussions we read and reread Luke 10:1-12. We continually discovered new insights and new applications, which expanded a couple of foundational realities. 1) We don't work alone – there are always partners known and/or to be discovered. 2) We don't "take Jesus out there" – Jesus is already out there. We are always being sent out in partnership to help the world know that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is already present and we get to share in the work he has for the sake of the world.

Unexpectedly, this year Jesus sent me to discover new partnerships here at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. And, in these partnerships I get to see how Jesus is working. In these partnerships I get to explore what God wants to do, in the city and in the world through KMLC. As *interim*, I am a partner during a time of transition. Much is happening, both routine and advancing. My basic role is to ask what God wants me to be doing *with* you. Sometimes that means I just say, *Keep it up!* Sometimes that means you say, *Help us do this.* There have been a few places where the partnership has meant I offer a different perspective based on my experience of God's working in the world.

As *associate*, I am especially honored to be a partner with Pastor Bard. I appreciate his knowledge, experience, and approach. I have learned much about the way an organizational leader and head of staff must work. Pastor Bard always balances the needs of the congregation with the strengths and limitations of his partners on staff. I am grateful he has guided me to be at work in a way that seems beneficial to the congregation and, certainly, is edifying for me.

The partnership with your staff is a lot of fun. Debbie and John Bogue, Amanda Zasada, and Sheri Tipton, with the assistance of part-time staff including Tim Walker, Sheri Rose, Norma Pafford, Søren Johnson, (and others mentioned in the following), faithfully keep this place working. Thus I could get going with my work. It is a privilege to encourage each of your staff-servants to use their faith in faithful commitment to our Lord and to his Body at KMLC. And John Bogue shows me the meaning of Psalm 84:10 and Proverbs 17:22.

Among my responsibilities...

Confirmation ministry:

I enjoy this work in partnership with Katie Larson and volunteers. We are continually seeking how best to stimulate growth in faith, for the confirmands and their families.

Pastoral Support for the Food Pantry and Healing Clinic:

I am glad to work again with Joyce Palmer, continuing the partnership we shared in stewardship work in central Missouri. I am continually being made aware of the limitations of any one person or group to address the tremendous needs of the world. In the Pantry, I get to see the tremendous dedication of Kountze's members. I get to see partnerships with other congregations and food producers as we hear Jesus say, I was hungry and you gave me... In the clinic, I enjoy seeing medical professionals, from students to retired, from different faith groups, all working to continue Christ's healing touch.

#### Pastoral Care:

Partners here include Pastor Inbarasu, Ian Hartfield, Linda Johnson and Debbie Robinson. The many conversations I have enjoyed in homes, hospitals, and the halls of the church building help me know how Jesus has been working in the congregation and its people.

#### Preaching and Worship Leadership:

In partnership with the music staff – Mark Jones, David Gerard, Barb Carlson, Danny Bos – and pastor-colleagues I get to hear familiar Bible passages in a new context. I appreciate my conversations with Pastor Hall, giving me new insights from his knowledge and experience. I am particularly grateful for the partnership with the technical crew that sends the word out through cable and internet.

For those of us who find numbers helpful... Pastoral acts include: 1 baptism; 3 weddings; 4 funerals; 10 sermons for weekend worship; 3 for special services. I try to keep track of work hours. As many also experience, the line between being at work and leaving work (completely) is not easy to draw. Over the four months I have been here, I have averaged fifty hours per week, a bit more than originally anticipated. When we first developed my role as *interim associate*, we envisioned I would be returning to my home in Columbia at least a couple of times a month. That plan evolved as you have welcomed both me and Donna, my wife/partner of now 41 years. We are grateful we can enjoy Kountze Memorial as a faith-family and church-home.

We share with you prayers that, in the coming months, our Lord will develop the new partnerships so faithful ministry will continue to thrive in this city-wide church with a world-wide mission – *every town and place where [our Lord] himself [intends] to go.*

## VISITATION PASTOR

### PASTOR INBA JOSHUA INBARASU, PH.D.

Dear members of the Kountze Congregation,

I send greetings to you in the wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for extending me the call to continue to serve as your visitation pastor in 2016. I consider this as the greater opportunity and privilege to be a part of our city-wide church with a world-wide ministry.

#### **Pastoral care Visitation and Calls**

I made various visits and calls in the hospitals, nursing homes, hospice centers, care centers, Rehab centers, Retirement centers, including members who are home bound. Pastoral care support and Eucharist ministry were provided to the members during these visits.

#### **Funeral and Pastoral Support**

Our members received pastoral support during the time of death of their family members. I have conducted as well as assisted in funeral services at the grave site, funeral homes, including Church, followed by grief support and follow-up visit to the family and friends.

#### **Grief support Seminars**

Grief support seminars were offered to the members who have recently experienced the death of their loved ones, especially during the holiday times to cope up with the loss and grief. In addition to the general support, the participants received resources, including the book, "Good Grief" which was written by Rev. Granger Westberg, Lutheran Pastor and founder of Parish Nurse Movement.

#### **deFreese Manor**

deFreese Manor's residents had the privilege of worshipping in a special communion service regularly every month. In addition to the Eucharistic services, residents were engaged in quality pastoral conversation and support.

#### **Pastoral Support to Friends and Family Gathering**

During the Spring and Fall seasons, pastoral support was extended to the friends and family members of the Shut-in members, who gather for Holy Communion service.

**Pastoral Support to the Ministers and Group**

Stephen ministers/ leaders were rendered consultation support for their ministries during their regular monthly meetings.

**Word and Sacrament**

I continue to assist or preside or preach on a regular basis during Wednesday's noon and evening services, Saturday, and Sunday worship services. Depending on the need, on few occasions, I assisted in helping with the Sacrament of Baptism and the Holy Communion.

**Word and Service**

Pastoral support provided to the services of social outreach Ministries and shared in the ministry of the word and service with the wider church.

**Synod Services**

I continue to serve as the Board member in the Synod's Spiritual Direction Institute (Seeking the Spirit) through an invitation from the Bishop, and also as a member in the Synod's Candidacy Committee.

It was my privilege to participate this year as delegate from our synod to the church wide assembly 2016 in New Orleans and share about this with our congregation during Adult Forum.

This year, it is my hope and prayer to continue to share in these ministries, by further enhancing our care ministries and providing support to our mission "worship, grow, and serve." It is also my prayer for you as it is expressed in the scripture, "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:3-6)

I remain grateful for your prayers and support.

God's Blessings,

Pr. Inba Joshua Inbarasu



# PROGRAM STAFF REPORTS

## DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

### KATIE LARSON

As I reflect on 2016, there are many memories that flash through my mind, but there are two in particular that bring a smile to my face. They happened during or as a part of the Children's Message time with two of our students who we see each week. These stories show the impact and importance of ministry with children and youth.

The first took place on Reformation Sunday. I remember it so vividly. The children and I gathered upstairs for our usual time together, and on this particular day we were talking about baptism. Now, most of the children cannot remember their own baptisms, and the stories that have been shared with them about their baptisms usually involve tears. Apparently, the water makes them all cry. So I shared with them my own experience of baptism, as I was old enough to remember mine. We went on to discuss the importance of baptism and how it means we are joining into a larger family. Then I shared with them that one of our friends was going to be baptized this morning and we would get to watch and be a part of this wonderful experience. We then cut our time short and rejoined the congregation to watch the baptism. I stood at the back of the church and watched for the children's reaction. They were all stretching and peering over the adults to see what was happening. I could see on their faces two things: first, was a true sense of wonder and confusion of what was happening. Second, was a sense of excitement in their eyes. It was obvious they were happy for and proud of their friend. That moment watching their reactions brought pure joy to my heart.

The second memory as well took place in fall. One Sunday, one of our friends shared with us that they were going to have to spend some time in the hospital. This worried a lot of the other children, and so to help both support our friend and to help the children understand the experience we spent the next Sunday's children message time making "Get Well" cards. The children loved putting the cards together. They were colorful and bright, and shared their love through markers, stickers, and sequins. We finished with the cards and returned to sanctuary then like normal, we continued our morning with Sunday School. When we were wrapping up Sunday School I was in the hallway saying goodbye to everyone, and one child came up to me and asked if she could add a few more stickers and sequins to her card. She said, "I want it to be really exciting so it makes him feel better when he sees it." Of course, I told her yes. So we went back to the room and were attaching a few more sparkly items to her card, when one of the high school students walked in to chat. She asked what we were working on and I told her about our friend having to spend some time in the hospital. She knows this young person well, and expressed her worry as well. We all talked for a few minutes then went on our way. The next day I was picking up the cards to take them to the hospital when I noticed something. The high school student had made one extra card from her. She even included a large puppy sticker, as she knows our friend loves dogs. Now, I did not think I could feel more joy in my heart than from the last memory, but this moment almost brought tears to my eyes.

In Baptism, parents/guardians are entrusted to take responsibility for the following:

*to live with them among God's faithful people,  
bring them to the word of God and the holy supper,  
teach them the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,  
place in their hands the holy scriptures,  
and nurture them in faith and prayer,  
**so that** your children may learn to trust God,  
proclaim Christ through word and deed,  
care for others and the world God made,  
and work for justice and peace. (ELW, p. 228)*

Through these small, but extraordinary ministry moments that I shared the 'why' or 'so that' of baptism becomes so clear. These moments did not happen by accident, but were a cause of strong faith and dedication to all who worship at Kountze Memorial regardless of their income, size or age. I hope these memories from the past year allow one to see what I get to experience each week with the wonderful young people and their families. It has truly been a pleasure to serve the children and youth, their families, and this congregation this past year.

Katie Larson  
Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

## DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

### IAN HARTFIELD

“We always give thanks to God for all of you and mention you in our prayers, constantly remembering before God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ”.

- 1 Thessalonians 1:2

As we celebrate Epiphany, a season in which we recognize the revelation of Christ to all the world represented by the Magi who travel from the east to worship the baby Jesus, I encourage you and your family to ponder what new beginnings and experiences might occur in your life in the coming year and how the church might be a part of them – a baptism, attending worship, volunteering your time at the pantry, as a Sunday School teacher, or as an usher, involvement in Bible studies, Sunday school or youth group, participating in devotions and prayer around the dinner table, or supporting the “In the City for Good” campaign. There is wonderful ministry taking place at Kountze Memorial, ministry that is only possible through the grace of God and the faithfulness of so many in our faith community, from our children and youth to those who are retired. As I look back on 2016 and anticipate what God has in store for us in 2017, I *give thanks to God for all of you; for your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ*. It is a blessing to serve this glorious congregation and with those who make it so as demonstrated through the following highlights of our past year in ministry and mission.

**Church Picnic:** For the third year in a row, this annual event was held at Danish Vennelyst Park. Approx. 350 people of all ages attended and which featured clowns, face painting, inflatables, food, picnic games, and new this year, trivia for the adults! The event was jointly sponsored by the Social Ministry, Outreach, Congregational Activities, and Youth Ministries Committees. What a blessing it was to see two of our oldest members present, as well as a brand new baby!

**Omaha Street School:** The KMLC Social Ministry Committee, through the leadership of Vicar Suzanne How and a generous grant from the Endowment, recently completed a kitchen remodel at the Omaha Street School, an accredited educational institution that empowers the lives of at risk youth through personalized education, life skills training, and a moral code in a Christ-centered environment. This important project, which included new flooring, countertops and backsplash, electrical, cabinet hardware, a disposal, new paint, and a refrigerator, will allow the school to better serve the nutritional needs of their students. We hope that this will be the beginning of a new partnership with this organization in the years to come. Thanks to the volunteers who worked on this project: Paul and Dotty Sum, Pat Studts, Bob Johnson and Tiffany Stouffer.

**Scholarship Committee:** The KMLC Scholarship Committee awarded 16 college scholarships totaling \$13,250. Two of those students are attending a Lutheran college and three others are attending other religiously affiliated schools. Thanks to Jeff Perkins, Diane Rasmussen, and Bob Siffring for their leadership and long-time service on this committee.

**Altar Flowers:** I am grateful to Pastor Paul Moessner and members of the Social Ministry Committee, as well as altar flower delivery volunteers who worked together to develop new procedures to continue this vital ministry. So far, it seems to be working well and those who receive flowers are very grateful. Thanks to all those who volunteer to deliver flowers each week.

**Altarware:** In 2016, all of the offering plates, including the two large plates on the altar, which are nearly 100 years old, were refinished, two of the altar flower vases were replaced, and the aisle candles, which are used for Christmas Eve and Easter services, as well as weddings, were also replaced due to them being worn out. Thanks to the Worship and Music Committee who approved this project.

**Hospitality Ministry:** Many thanks to our dedicated ushers (51) and greeters (17) who faithfully served over the past year. Several new ushers and greeters joined the groups and helped provide a high level of hospitality and order to our many worship services. Thank you also to our welcome desk volunteers. We also continue to utilize an online scheduler and reminder system that assists our volunteers in their serving.

**Men's Lunch:** Working and retired men of Kountze Memorial, continue to gather each month on the Third Thursday for a catered lunch and presentation. Speakers often come from among our congregation and community and in 2016 we welcomed KMLC members Bryon Line and Steve Sieberson who spoke about their personal and professional lives, Omaha City Councilmember Chris Jerram, Rev. Paul Moessner, and Linda Reimer, Development Director of the Omaha Street School, to name a few. All are invited to attend and we thank all those who joined us in 2016!

**Library:** The library, open regularly on Sundays from 10-11AM, remains a wonderful resource for members and guests alike. Hundreds of books were checked out over the past year and our dedicated volunteers continue to catalogue books currently in the collection and new books are added nearly every month. We also wish to thank those who have donated books recently. In addition, the library has become a gathering place for church groups and meetings, including the monthly book group and archives committee. Further, it was fun hosting a Reformation Bookstore during October in celebration of the upcoming 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. We hope our members and families will continue to visit the library when at church! The library is managed by Kim Vawter, Diana Wendt, Mary Jane Petersen, and Carole Woodworth.

**Lent, Holy Week, and Easter:** Many thanks to all those who helped make our Lenten journey, Holy Week, and Easter a faith-filled season! During Lent, we served an average of 38 for lunch and 77 for dinner each week. We served 70 for lunch and 130 for dinner on Ash Wednesday and 50 for lunch and 125 for dinner on Maundy Thursday. We welcomed 25 to our annual Good Friday Passion Walk, which continues to grow each year. I also want to affirm the work of our youth this Lent and Easter. Youth served as acolytes, readers on Palm Sunday, assistants at the Good Friday Passion Walk, cooked the Easter Breakfast, helped with the Easter Egg Hunt, and much more. I also wish to thank the ushers and greeters who faithfully served during so many special worship services.

**New Members and Visitors:** During 2016, we welcomed 82 new members to our congregation, in addition to 500 guests to worship. It is always refreshing to hear the high praise from new members for this congregation. People in our community continue to be drawn here for the exceptional worship, wonderful music, meaningful service, and unique faith formation opportunities for all ages. We are planning 3-4 new member classes in 2017. I especially appreciate the work of Outreach Committee Members Ann Miller, Alissa Fial, Dan and Shirleen Collett, Sarah Willson, and Adam Klinker for cooking for and hosting the new member lunches. I also wish to thank Mary Ann Johnson who goes through and sorts attendance cards and prayer requests, as well as sending thank you's to guests each week. She is a saint! ☺

**Young Mother's Group:** This fellowship group continues to meet most Sundays at 10AM in the Fellowship Lounge for coffee and conversation. This summer, they organized a handful of fun outings for their children as well. All women of Kountze with children are welcome to attend.

**Order of Saint John (Acolytes):** In honor of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Order of Saint John over 100 acolytes, OSJ alumni, and their families gathered for a special luncheon in Fellowship Hall in April! After being commissioned at the altar at the 11AM worship service, everyone gathered for a catered lunch and we honored each acolyte for their past year of service, as well as graduating seniors, and announced the 2016-2017 OSJ Officers (President: Bailey Gittler, Vice President: Angie Arispe, Secretary: Carter Wachholtz, and Underclassmen Representatives: Madelyn Hinirchs and Kolbey Burns) and the 2016 Outstanding Acolyte Award to Naomi Kirkvold. In addition, we were honored to welcome Tami Maxwell, the granddaughter of Russ Johnston, the founder of OSJ and Paul Lindahl and his wife Virginia. Paul was an acolyte in the 1940's and travelled all the way from Wichita, KS to be with us. Overall, I continue to be impressed by the faithfulness and enthusiasm of our 35 acolytes in OSJ who continue to serve with distinction at our two worship services on Sunday morning and at special services throughout the year including Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and more. I thank Jeff and Robin Perkins who serve as our 9 AM OSJ adult leaders and OSJ alums, Tom Steffen and Matt Coufal who serve as adult leaders for 11 AM.

**Neighborhood Gathering:** The 18<sup>th</sup> annual Neighborhood Gathering was a great success! We had beautiful weather and hundreds turned out. Thanks to the Omaha Street Railway Jazz Band for again sharing their gift of music during worship and the afternoon event. I thank the many volunteers who helped with set-up, cooking, serving, clean-up, carnival games, making sno cones and popcorn, greeting and more, especially the Social Ministry, Outreach, and Congregational Activities Committees.

**Advent/Christmas:** Thank you to dinner volunteers Marlys Duin, Dean Winther, Jill Gittler, Sara Worm, Richard Bock, and Sandy Fonda and Chef Tim Walker for their help in cooking and serving our Advent Dinners this year. We served an average of 50 for dinner. We also thank our confirmation students who served refreshments. In addition, our ushers, greeters, and acolytes, as well as other worship volunteers, helped make our Advent and Christmas services meaningful. Thank you!

**Sewing Circle:** As a part of the Nebraska Lutheran World Relief (LWR) Ingathering held Nov 7-10, 2016, our sewing group completed 259 quilts, which will be sent overseas to refugees in need. Many of the quilts were beautifully displayed throughout the sanctuary, rotunda, and balconies on All Saints Sunday. We are grateful for the dozens of dedicated volunteer sewers who meet each month on the second Wednesday at 9:30AM to quilt.

**Home-bound Communion/Shut-in Luncheons –** I wish to thank all of our faithful volunteers who provide communion to our sick and home-bound, as well as the Social Ministry Committee for providing the lunches again this year for our Family and Friends Lunch. Currently, our volunteers visit 35 shut-ins each month. I also thank Carole Woodworth who sends out monthly postcard reminders and puts the packets together each month for our volunteers. She is a blessing!

**Archives:** The Archives Committee continues its efforts to preserve our congregation's rich history. Projects completed or undertaken in 2016 include copying and scanning of historic church newsletters (1914-1940's), completing an inventory of over 4,000 slides and videotapes, creating a plaque to honor each of our associate pastors, framing and hanging Pastor Carlos Schneider's portrait, sorting through archival material from Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer, one of our mission churches that recently closed, placing all of our historic architecture renderings in archive safe containers, setting up new historical displays in the Fellowship Hall, installing a new dedication plaque on our church organ, and receiving a framed 1916 Confirmation Photograph from a gentleman in Vancouver, Canada who found it in a second hand store and shipped it to us for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary! The committee also held three works days and appreciated receiving quite a number of research requests from all over the country as well as donations in gratefulness for their work. In May, we were also were privileged to participate in a rededication ceremony of a new headstone at Prospect Hill Cemetery honoring Daniel, Eliza, and Joseph Redman (and their family), who were founding members of Kountze Memorial. In 2017, the committee will be determining what items shall be placed in the cornerstone of the new building and decide on preliminary plans for the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation in 2018.

**Media and Tech:** After a big year in terms of a/v upgrades around the building, 2016 included some smaller projects including new mics for our pastors, replacement of the defective piano mics, and new belt packs and headsets for our TV ministry volunteers. In addition, we installed Wi-Fi internet in the Fellowship Lounge as well as a conference phone for meetings. Moreover, we were excited to launch a redesigned church website in July. Featuring a fresh, yet traditional look, our new site makes it easier to find information on church events and activities, live stream our worship services, contact our pastors and staff, download worship bulletins and monthly newsletters, and learn more about our many faith formation and outreach ministries. When you visit the new site on your computer, tablet, or smartphone, you will be able to quickly connect with us on social media, take a 3D tour of the church building, donate online, learn more about our capital campaign, and much more! Our new site incorporates professional photography of our building architecture, stained glass windows, and many congregational ministries and events. Thanks to the many TV ministry volunteers and the Media and Tech Committee, Ron Brown, Chad Picha, Brent Rasmussen, and Mike and Julie Bratcher, for their leadership on these needed projects.

**Thanksgiving Dinner:** Many thanks to those who helped with the annual Thanksgiving Day Dinner jointly hosted by Kountze Memorial and St. Peter Catholic Church. We were able to serve between 400-500 guests in need from the community. Over the course of three days, nearly 50 volunteers helped cook, set-up, iron table cloths, serve, ride along on Ollie the Trolley, and clean-up from the wonderful meal hosted at St. Peter's. 25 turkeys were cooked in the Kountze kitchen and hundreds of pounds of mashed potatoes were prepared, along with stuffing, green beans, gravy, corn, cranberries, and rolls. In addition, members of Kountze Memorial donated dozens of pies in a variety of delicious flavors. We are blessed and we can be a blessing to so many because of this important partnership.

**Youth Forum:** Attendance at High School Youth Forum, which I coordinate and lead, declined somewhat in 2016, especially in the fall. Nonetheless, it is a blessing to journey beside our high school youth through this weekly faith formation opportunity. High School Youth Forum is a centerpiece to our youth ministries program and an essential part of our mission statement as a congregation. In 2016, topics covered our Christian vocation and Lutheran Heritage, among others. I am continually inspired by the youth and their faithfulness, eagerness to learn and serve others, and their love of this congregation. It is unmatched among their peers.

Thank you to all who touched my life and shared in the ministries of this exceptional congregation. May we continue to be “In the City for Good”!

Ian Hartfield  
Director of Congregational Life



# COMMITTEE REPORTS

## ARCHIVES

During the past year, members of the Archives Committee continued to work on several projects. Among these were:

- An inventory of our slide and video tape collection, numbering over 4,000
- The preservation of our earliest newsletters by digitally scan
- the continuation of maintaining the display case in the Fellowship Hall
- An inspection and scanning of materials from our former satellite church, Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer
- The installation of a plaque commemorating our Associate Pastors.
- Framing and hanging Pastor Carlos Schneider's portrait
- Placing all of our historic architecture renderings in archive safe containers
- Installing a new dedication plaque on our church organ
- Receiving a framed 1916 Confirmation Photograph from a gentleman in Vancouver, Canada who found it in a second hand store and shipped it to us for its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary!
- In May, we were also were privileged to participate in a rededication ceremony of a new headstone at Prospect Hill Cemetery honoring Daniel, Eliza, and Joseph Redman (and their family), who were founding members of Kountze Memorial.
- A video taped interview with KMLC members Paul and Virginia Lindahl. Paul served as an acolyte in the 1940's during the early days of the Order of Saint John.
- The committee also held three works days and appreciated receiving quite a number of research requests from all over the country as well as donations in gratefulness for our work.

In 2017, the committee will be determining what items shall be placed in the cornerstone of the new building and decide on preliminary plans for the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our congregation in 2018.

Thanks should be given to committee members Chet and Sara Worm, Bob Woodworth, Terri Nesselrote, and volunteers Pat Studts, Shirleen Collett, Gloria Erickson, Lowell Harms, Linda Ackerson, and Ellie Lowderman for their help during the year.

Respectfully Submitted,

John K. Davis, Archives Committee Chair  
Ian Hartfield, Director of Congregational Life and Staff Liaison

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Christian Education Committee consists of: Marie Barrett, Kara DiLorenzo, Pastor Ashley Hall, Dylan Henneman, JoDee Horacek, Katie Larson, Julie O'Doherty, and Ashley Sum.

For the last three years the Christian Education Committee focused on how to create a space for children in worship. They have done this with the implementation of a lectionary based Sunday School curriculum and an extended children's message time. As a result of these changes, more parents/guardians are having their child(ren) participate in worship. Also, during the extended children's message time, there is more time for the children to form stronger connections and relationship with one another.

The Christian Education Committee hosted several activities throughout the year.

- Rally Day was held on Sunday, September 11th. There were about 70 Sunday School registrations received.
- On Bible Sunday was held on Sunday, October 30th, and over 50 bibles were given out. Bible Sunday is made possible by generous donations from the congregation.
- Family Day at Vala's Pumpkin Patch, Sunday, October 2nd, is always a fun and delightful fellowship event for children, youth, and members of congregation. There were around 75 people in attendance.
- Advent Gathering, Sunday, November 27th, was a wonderful intergenerational event held in the fellowship hall. The morning is spent making Christmas ornaments and Advent Wreaths. We are grateful for the volunteers who made the event possible.

- The Christmas Program, Sunday, December 11th, was a success again this year. We used a traditional musical offering, which included readings of the Christmas story and hymns. A huge thank you to the confirmands, families, and Barb Carlsen for their dedication and creating such a meaningful experience.

#### Sunday School (Pre-K - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade)

- Whirl Lectionary is being used for Sunday School. Sunday School teachers are able to see the children making connections between the lessons, and the Gospel reading in worship. This curriculum will continue to be used into 2017. The average Sunday School attendance is about 50 children Pre-K through 8th grade.

#### Confirmation (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

- There are about 15 students in the confirmation program. Six of whom will be confirmed in 2017.
- Pastor Paul Moessner leads the large group lesson for the Confirmands. They then break up into small groups for high/low and reflection on the weekly lesson. Thank you to Marie Clymer, Gregg and Karen Loucks, Katie Larson and Pastor Paul for leading small groups and working with the Confirmands.
- Confirmands are participating in service nights this year. On these evenings, the group meets at a local non-profit and serves for about an hour and a half. Following, they gather for debriefing and devotion.
- Confirmands attended Confirmation Camp at Carol Joy Holling the week July 17<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>. There were ten students who attended. The theme for Confirmation Camp this year was "Upside Down", and the bible study time focused on stories from the New Testament. The stories challenged the student's to dig deeper into the life of Jesus and his disciples, and how they interacted with others and lived out their faith daily. A huge thank you to Pastor Paula Lawhead for her amazing reflection and teachings on the stories.

#### Adult Education

- For Adult Education opportunities, see Pastor Hall's Annual Report.

#### Katie Larson

Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

## CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

2016 was indeed a blessed and enriching year for our congregation, as witnessed through the work of the Congregational Activities Committee, which coordinated several events and activities centered on fun and fellowship. We wish to thank all those who volunteered or participated in any number of activities. You are a blessing to our faith community!

#### Highlights of the past year include:

- 18th Annual Neighborhood Gathering – A cross-generational annual event welcoming hundreds from our congregation and the community for free food, jazz music, carriage rides, inflatables, clowns, games, prizes, sno cones, and more!
- Thanksgiving Dinner at St. Peter Catholic Church – This meaningful and unique partnership between our two congregations continues to grow. Thanks to so many volunteers, we are able to serve a full meal to hundreds in need and missing family at Thanksgiving.
- Advent/Lenten Meals – During Advent we averaged 80 for dinner and through Lent we averaged 38 for lunch and 77 for dinner. Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday had slightly higher numbers from the average. Many Thanks to the Social Ministry Committee and Marlys Duin for their help putting together the meals in Lent and Chef Tim Walker, Marlys Duin for their leadership during Advent. We also thank all those who helped in the kitchen or with serving the meals, including the confirmands.
- Church Picnic at Vennelyst Park – We welcomed approx. 350 people to Vennelyst Park for our annual church picnic. There were inflatables, face painting, balloons, and field games for the kids and new this year, trivia for the adults, plus lots of great food! Many thanks to the dozens of volunteers who helped make this event a wonderful success.
- Family Day at Vala's – approximately 100 people (of all ages) participated in this fun fall event again this year.
- Intergenerational Game Night – For the 2nd year in a row, this event was a big hit with families. There were approx. 60 people of all ages in attendance and the tables were full with games of all kinds!

- In April, Kountze hosted a concert by the Bethany Lutheran College Choir together with the Grace University Choir. 200 attended and the free-will offering was approx. \$1000 benefitting the choirs. We thank everyone, especially Marlys Duin, for coordinating the meal beforehand, Deb Hinrichs for securing volunteers, and Debbie Bogue for providing her famous sauce. In May, Kountze hosted a concert by the Central College Choir with approx. 125 in attendance. \$650 was collected through the free-will offering. We thank Deb Hinrichs, who helped coordinate volunteers for the meal yet again, as well as Debbie Bogue for her sauce. Most importantly, we are grateful to the dozens of Kountze members who opened their homes up to house this choir during their stop in Omaha.

In 2017, the Congregational Activities Committee will continue to support our church's mission to worship, grow, and serve while being a "city-wide church with a world-wide ministry". It is our hope that through annual and new fellowship opportunities, we can enrich the faith lives of our members cross-generationally.

We extend a heartfelt "thank you" to all Congregational Activities Committee Members for your time and dedication: Darlene Anderson, Chad Brown, Ron & Pam Brown, Terri Gogetap, Linda Johnson, Sherri Labeledz, Madeline O'Kane, Mark and Marylin Oldaker, Wayne Simmonds, and Rhonda Wachholtz.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Steve Jacobson, Church Council Liaison  
 Ian Hartfield, Director of Congregational Life and Staff Liaison

## FINANCE

### 2016 Results

Sources of Funds	\$ 996,681	\$ 1,039,293
Uses of Funds	<u>\$ (996,681)</u>	<u>\$ (1,039,293)</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ -	\$ -
Designated and Restricted Funds, 1/1/16		\$ 1,187,800
Restricted and Designated Donations		\$ 1,158,903
Expenditures for Designated and Restricted Purposes		<u>\$ (1,414,855)</u>
Designated and Restricted Funds, 12/31/16		\$ 931,848

During 2016, the Church utilized designated and restricted gifts for the following:

2016 General Expenditures as Budgeted	\$ 68,051
Christian Education	\$ 23,508
Worship and Music	\$ 14,959
Youth	\$ 20,535
Congregational Life	\$ 49,417
Kountze Pantry	\$ 71,122
Clinic	\$ 56,365
ELCA and other Global and Social Missions	\$ 32,667
KETV, LLC	\$ 848,684
Capital Improvements/Equipment	\$ 110,853
Other Property	\$ 70,711
Office Equipment and Other	<u>\$ 47,983</u>
	\$1,414,855

The 2017 budget is the result of hours of work on the part of pastoral staff, staff, and committee personnel who reviewed and scrutinized the planned expenditures for many hours before submitting to the council for approval. It includes compensation sufficient for us to call an experienced senior pastor, fund planned youth and children's ministries, continue the fine work of our worship and music programs, and keep the church facilities operating sufficiently to support our mission to Worship, Grow, and Serve. We have been conservative in our expectation of

receipts and are not budgeting the use of any extraordinary gifts at this time. While that option remains one of several contingencies should our receipts not exceed expectations, the timing of staff transitions and planned property repairs and maintenance projects will greatly influence whether and to what extent a deficit may arise.

## FOOD PANTRY

Mission statement: Feeding the hungry in Christ's name.

This mission was accomplished in 2016 through serving 15,719 guests on 44 Mondays. The average number of weekly guests was 357; this is a 17% decrease from the previous year. On average, the pantry serves 230 households. We are now weekly gather data on the first time guests to this food pantry. Because of the decreased numbers, the pantry volunteers ponder why and one possible answer may be that low-cost housing has changed, or is vanishing, in the area surrounding the congregation. Follow-up question then is, "Where do these displaced residents find affordable house?" – This requires research.

In mid-December holiday singing and appearances of Santa Lucia and Santa Claus made the distribution of the holiday meal bags (with a 3-pound fully-cooked ham) pleasant for the pantry guests. The meal items were packed in reusable totes; these totes and the food items were generously provided by Kountze Memorial and Saint Michael Lutheran congregations. Gratitude is expressed to Hy-Vee (108<sup>th</sup> & Fort Streets) for helping secure, deliver and store the hams.

### Financial Review – 2016

Beginning Balance	\$ 71,427.37
Donations	\$ 47,927.65
Endowment Grant for Vicar Stipend	\$ 8,000.00
Memorials Designated for Pantry	\$ 3,660.00
Expenses	<u>\$ (75,529.92)</u>
Ending Balance	\$ 55,485.10

Report submitted on behalf of the Food Panty Task Force: Rev. Dean Bard, Myrna Carter, Myrna Esluer, Penny & Duane Hovendick, Lynn Meyer, Jane Rauch, Sherri Tipton and Sara Worm.

Appreciation is expressed for the Task Force members' service as well as the dedicated volunteers who serve the Food Pantry guests.

Respectfully submitted,  
Joyce "JP" Palmer, Urban Ministry Coordinator

## GLOBAL MISSION

This past year proved to be a year of continued global mission support in the form of prayer, communication, and financial support for our missionaries and also for people in need in Omaha and various parts of the world.

Thanks to the generosity of Kountze members, the Global Missions Committee was able to achieve the following projects in 2016:

- Support of four missionaries: Rev. Chandran Paul Martin in India, Lindsay Mack in Mexico, Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson in Tanzania, Krystle Moraska & Ignacio Madrussan in Argentina.
- Support for Justin Perkins with Young Adults in Global Mission in Argentina/Uruguay.
- An on-going Sister Congregation relationship with the American Church in Berlin that will last until the end of the Luther Decade in 2017.
- Another generous year for alternative gifts for local and worldwide needs at \$14,290.45 which provided support as follows:
  - Kountze Pantry \$3,930.00
  - Kountze Free Clinic \$4,125.00

#### Summary of Checks to be sent:

- |                                  |            |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| ○ ELCA                           | \$4,385.45 |
| ○ USA for UNHCR                  | \$1,350.00 |
| ○ Benson Area Refugee Task Force | \$500.00   |

Our overall goal for the coming year is to increase the awareness and participation of the congregation in our mission of being a Worldwide Church. Specifically we will be working to accomplish the following:

1. Continuing our support for four missionaries around the world.
2. Continuing to strengthen our sister congregation relationship with the American Church in Berlin.
3. Continuing the Alternative Gift program.

Submitted by Carol Stoltenberg, Committee Chairperson  
Scott Henneman, Church Council Liaison

## **MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY**

The Kountze Media and Tech Committee oversees our TV ministry, audio-visual systems, church website and social media pages, church computers, internet streaming and more.

Since 1962, our Sunday worship telecasts have been a meaningful and vital ministry to those in our community who cannot worship with us in person. We continue to broadcast live each Sunday on Cox Cable Channel 13. We also televise our 7PM Christmas Eve service.

2016 also marked the first full year of our live streaming service which allows anyone to worship with us on their laptop, tablet, or smart phone wherever there is an internet connection, even internationally. Over the past year, we had a total of 2,118 views, 904 from a desktop and 1214 from a tablet, smartphone, or other device.

The single day highest total of views (144) was recorded on January 17, when we lived streamed the KETV informational forum. We also saw large numbers of viewers on September 25 for Pastor Schneider's visit and the organ dedication, as well as for the Candlelight Carol Sing on December 17.

Archived videos of every worship service are now available to watch on the live streaming page on our website, including special services such as Christmas Eve, Holy Week, and more. This is a great resource for those who miss a worship service or for potential new members to learn more about us.

We were excited to launch our completely redesigned church website in July 2016 after nearly a year of preparation. The new website has a fresh look and is much more user-friendly. It features professional photography, a virtual tour of our building, a history timeline, information on all of our ministries, archived newsletters and bulletins, a church calendar, online giving, and much more. Indeed the website is a wonderful place to share our story and connect with members and guests alike.

Similarly, our weekly e-news and social media pages, which includes Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, continue to be important resources for sharing information and connecting with the congregation and community. The Kountze Facebook page currently has 638 "likes", of which 66% are women and 33% are men.

Our Christmas Eve worship post received the highest interaction of any post over the last year, with over 8,000 people engaged, including 407 post likes, 237 photo views, and dozens of website clicks. Our Twitter page has 186 followers and our Instagram has 217 followers. Our weekly e-news blast, which was started in November of 2011 as a weekly children and youth ministries email, and expanded to a congregation-wide email in September of 2013, sent out a total of over 52,000 emails with a 35% "open" rate, far better than the national average.

Other projects included new mics for the pastors, replacement of the defective piano mics and new belt packs and headsets for the TV camera volunteers. In addition, Wi-Fi was installed in the Fellowship Lounge as well as a conference phone for meetings. Moreover, we improved the internet speed to better accommodate our live streaming service.

Our goals for 2017 include:

- Continue to enhance the church website and further develop a social media strategy
- In partnership with the Outreach Committee, develop and implement a digital ad campaign
- Expand the live internet streaming of our church worship services to include special services and possibly Adult Forums, bible studies, and more.
- Recruit additional sound and TV ministry volunteers.
- Purchase an HD DVD burner so that high quality recordings of our services can be archived and shared.
- Install a wireless Internet system throughout the entire church building.

Our thanks to the members of the Media and Technology Committee: Chad Picha, Brent Rasmussen, and Mike and Julie Bratcher, as well as the TV ministry volunteers.

We look forward to continuing to use media and technology to enhance our worship, growth and service at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.

Ron Brown, Media and Tech Committee Chair  
Ian Hartfield, Director of Congregational Life and Staff Liaison

## OUTREACH

The Outreach Committee exists to deepen the spiritual life of our members, to invite and welcome guests, visitors, and neighbors with authentic and compassionate hospitality, and to gather us into an enriching faith community, so that our congregation can continue to grow and make lifelong disciples of Christ.

In 2016, Kountze Memorial experienced another year of growth and flourishing, receiving 82 new members, 28 by baptism. We welcomed nearly 500 known guests in worship, accounting for 1,009 guest visits, with hundreds more received during such special programs as the Bethany Lutheran and Central College choirs which performed during the year. We also saw a number of inactive families and individuals return to Kountze for worship and to help with the church's many programs.

Perhaps the most visible work of the committee in 2016 was the unveiling of a new church website abounding with information about the church and its programs. The site's new, smart look and interface has driven a lot of traffic online and the streaming worship options have garnered many positive comments.

Complementing the website in 2016 was a redesigned and streamlined version of the Good News newsletter. A full redesign took place, with an emphasis on highlighting more church programming in a more digestible format. We also worked with a graphic designer to develop a new church logo, which modernized the "look" of KMLC's logo while retaining some of the elements inherent to the existing identity. The arched window image is a simplified design, drawing inspiration from the shapes and forms found in KMLC's very unique and recognizable architecture.

The committee has also embarked upon a project to reach out to inactive members and visitors. The early efforts seem to be going well, thanks largely to the work of Gloria Erickson.

The committee hosted three new member sessions over the course of the year. The sessions are two classes, the first led by the Rev. Ashley Hall, which covers the history of the Lutheran church and the second session, led by Rev. Dean Bard, covers the history and current ministries of Kountze Memorial. A welcome packet is provided to every new member that includes a ministry handbook, information on our children, youth, and family ministries, as well as stewardship, and a current Good News newsletter. Photographs are taken and included in a special insert in the monthly newsletter and added to the church directory.

During these classes, many shared that they were drawn to Kountze Memorial for a variety of reasons, including the traditional worship, music, hospitality, the church building, outreach ministries, children and youth ministries, and breakfasts. Most heard about Kountze Memorial through family or friends, our church website, and by driving by. Many new members also shared that they visited other Lutheran churches before Kountze and there were very few negatives when they visited us.

We thank committee members Ann Miller, Alissa Fial, Dan and Shirleen Collet, and Sarah Willson for their hard work and support in helping organize and serve lunch for the new member sessions.

The Outreach Committee also coordinated our print ads and assisted with Lenten meals, the Neighborhood Gathering and Church Picnic.

Goals for 2017 include:

- Continue to connect with and encourage participation of our inactive members
- Manage the church website and social media so that it best meets our needs
- Help with church-wide events, including some special activities related to the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation
- Develop a hospitality task force to help grow our hospitality efforts
- Further utilize the Welcome Center (Fellowship Hall) & Guest Info Center (Narthex)
- Design print and social media ads for Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, and more

If you are interested in helping with the Outreach Committee, please contact us. Committee members are needed to help with various projects and events.

Faithfully submitted,

Adam Klinker, Church Council Representative  
Ian Hartfield, Director of Congregational Life and Staff Liaison

## **PROPERTY**

The Property Committee's mission is to prepare and maintain long lasting, healthy, and environmentally friendly facilities that meet the needs of current and future congregation members. To that end, the property committee has been working hard to establish more formal processes and procedures relative to the ongoing maintenance and planned upgrades to the facility. Specifically, the committee has implemented a work order request and approval procedure, a written preventive maintenance schedule, and identified building performance metrics to monitor.

The committee re-solicited for system maintenance service providers during the fourth quarter of 2016. It is our intent to implement a renewal program that ensures regular evaluation of these contracts. Current providers for 2017 include:

Ahern Fire Protection (Fire Suppression Systems)  
Darrow Pipe Organ (Organ Maintenance)  
Engineered Controls (HVAC Automation Systems)  
Forest Green Lawn & Landscaping (Mowing, Landscaping Maintenance, Snow Removal)  
J&J Lawn Sprinkler Co. (Lawn Irrigation System)  
Prairie Mechanical (HVAC Equipment)  
Schindler Elevator Corp. (Elevators)  
Security Equipment Inc. (Security and Alarm System)  
Waterlink, Inc. (Water Chemical Treatment)

In support of the committee mission, we are pleased to report the following accomplishments in 2016:

## **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

1. West Building Tuck-pointing and Window Sealants
2. AHU5 Replacement

## **REPAIR MAINTENANCE**

1. Boiler Condensate Tank Replacement
2. Fire Water Service Line Repairs in Farnam Street
3. West Parking Misc. Patching/Repair

The goals for 2017 include continued focus on preservation of the main sanctuary with structural repairs and stained glass window frame repair and painting. Additionally, we will be planning on a minor refresh to the classrooms and apartment spaces after the new building is completed and pesky leaks have been addressed.

Paul Sum  
Chair, Property Committee

## **SOCIAL MINISTRY**

The Social Ministry Committee had a very busy year in 2016.

- 1) We had two Family Friends Luncheons – one on April 10 and the other on September 18.
- 2) Coordinated the kitchen remodeling at the Omaha Street School during the summer.
- 3) Assisted with the Neighborhood Gathering on June 26.
- 4) Assisted and planned the Congregational Picnic on August 28.
- 5) Helped with the packing and shipment of the Lutheran World Relief quilts in November.
- 6) Coordinated the collection of household items for Lutheran Family Service for the new refugees between the months of May through November.
- 7) Cooked and served two Lenten lunches in March.
- 8) Prepared and sent Gift Certificates in December.
- 9) Delivered flowers to members of the Congregation every Sunday.

As usual we are anticipating another busy year in 2017. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone from the congregation for their support in the above activities. Without your assistance, it would not have been possible. If you are interested in assisting the Social Ministry Committee, please contact Shirley Dietrich. Thank you again.

Shirley Dietrich  
Chair, Social Ministry Committee

## **STEPHEN MINISTRY**

Through visits, phone calls, written communication, and prayer, Stephen Ministers provide confidential, one-on-one Christian care to those in the KMLC congregation and the community who are experiencing death of a loved one, health or aging issues, relationship changes, a time of crisis, or other difficulty.

Stephen Ministers have received instruction in listening, maintaining confidentially, praying with and for others, and reflecting Christ's love and caring. They meet regularly for additional training and guidance, and are devoted to our Christian care giving mission and to the people who share their journeys with us.

Those who want to find out more about having a Stephen Minister themselves or for someone they know can contact one of the leaders or the church office.

Donna Reinig and Diana Wendt—Leaders  
Pastor Inbarasu—Advisor

## **STEWARDSHIP**

Chairman – Terri Larkowski; Committee Members – Darlene Anderson, Myrna Carter, Mary Ann Johnson, Ian Hartfield, and Bob Fonda.

Our Stewardship campaign for 2016 was combined with our "In the City for Good" campaign. We had 302 pledges with a total of \$764,285.00. This was the largest number of pledges and dollar total since 2011.

Our Stewardship campaign for 2017 was led by Bishop Dennis Anderson. Our theme for this year was "Why?" "Cause We're Thankful." This theme was very appropriate because Christian giving is based on our gratitude to God

for his many blessings and our spiritual growth. The Stewardship committee had help from many members of the congregation. Michele Eakins made the banner. There were four wonderful bulletin inserts, three moving testimonials to stewardship and our food committee prepared several wonderful meals.

This year we had 328 pledges with a dollar amount of \$778,100.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bob Fonda

## **WOMEN OF THE ELCA**

**Purpose** – “A community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.”

### **Kountze Women of the ELCA activities included:**

- 10 funeral lunches served by the circle members.
- Monetary given to the following: Lutheran Campus Ministries at Creighton University and the University of NE in Omaha and in Lincoln, Youth Emergency Services, Omaha Street School, Lutheran Family Services, Hygiene and School kits for LWR, the Kountze Sewing Group, and the Kountze Heat Fund.
- Support is also given to the KMLC Food Pantry and the Healing Gift Free Clinic.
- The Kountze Sewing Group made 259 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. They also made quilts for the graduating seniors and 3 quilts for Camp Carol Joy Holling. 14 health kits and 8 school kits were also sent to Lutheran World Relief.
- Kountze Family Friends (shut-ins) were sent cards and were visited.
- More 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cookbooks were sold and they were, also, given to new members.
- Kountze members belong to Lutheran Women of Omaha, and participate in the Nebraska Synodical Women’s Organization’s Metro East Spring Gathering.
- Church Women United disbanded due to lack of participation.
- An April Salad Brunch and a Christmas Tea were held for the women of the church.
- The kitchen is cleaned by a professional.

There are three circles that meet on various days and times of the month for Bible Study, hospitality and service. All women of KMLC are invited to participate. If interested, call Carole Woodworth (402-339-2056.)

Carole Woodworth, Coordinator  
Peggy Johnson, Treasurer

## **WORSHIP AND MUSIC**

Committee Members: Senior Pastor Jeff Alvestad (January – March), Interim Senior Pastor, Dean Bard (March through December), Director of Music and Fine Arts, Barb Carlsen, Jon Natvig, June Anderson, Jeff and Robin Perkins, Linda Johnson, Janet Campbell, Danny Bos, and Debbie Hinrichs

The 2016 Worship and Music Committee (the committee), under the leadership of Interim Senior Pastor, Dean Bard, focused on their goal to provide spiritual and meaningful worship to the congregation and guests of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. Primary efforts included the scheduling and planning of weekly worship services.

Each service requires the combined commitment and participation of the Altar Guild, Order of St. John, ushers, greeters, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, bell choir members, youth choir members, and Kountze adult choir members. The committee would like to thank the members of each of these groups for their time and commitment, special gifts, and contributions to the Kountze Memorial worship experience.

In addition to the traditional Saturday evening and Sunday morning services, the Committee planned and implemented mid-week services during the Lenten and Advent seasons, Holy Week services, as well as special services for Easter, a Candlelight Christmas Carol Sing, Christmas Eve, Christmas, and other church holidays. Guest pastors spoke at the mid-week Lenten services. Pastor Bard, Pastor Hall, Pastor Moessner, and Pastor Inbarasu each spoke at one of the mid-week Advent services. The worship theme, "Continuing in the Covenant of our Baptism" along with a liturgy of "Evening Prayers" was used for our mid-week Lenten services. The Holden Evening Prayer worship format was used for Advent services highlighting our theme, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." The mid-week Eucharist continues at 12:15 PM each Wednesday.

We hosted the Bethany and Grace University Choirs on April 1st as they presented a 100-voice joint choral concert. A spaghetti dinner was provided for all students prior to the concert. On May 16th we welcomed the 60-voice Central College A Cappella Choir. Dinner was provided prior to the concert, and a combination of host families from the congregation and available dormitory space at Creighton University were sufficient for their lodging needs. Bagels, donuts, and beverages were offered at Kountze before their morning departure.

On May 5th Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church once again participated in the joint celebration of Ascension Day with Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. Our adult choir joined their adult choir in the singing of the evening's anthem.

On May 29th our Youth Choir presented us with "We Are Called." This presentation was an afternoon of hymns, spiritual songs, scripture readings, and poetry, followed by a dessert reception.

One high point of the year was the opportunity to observe in September the final celebratory Sunday marking the refurbishment of our Aeolian-Skinner Organ. Former Pastor Carlos Schneider and wife, Jan, were able to be with us for the entire weekend emphasizing the theme, "Built on a Rock," and Pastor Schneider preached at all services.

Bell choir and youth choir rehearsals continue to be held on Wednesday evenings. It is our hope that this scheduling will strengthen our worship and music ministry, as well as expand an all-congregation Wednesday "Worship, Grow, and Serve" evening to go along with Confirmation, Pastor Ashley Hall's Heritage Series, and youth/middle school/high school choir and adult choir rehearsals. Janet Campbell will continue to lead the youth choir. Danny Bos will lead the bell choir. The search continues for a children's choir leader.

December 17th marked our 4th Christmas Carol Sing. This outstanding evening, organized by Janet Campbell along with the leaders of our other music groups and youth leaders, and special musical artists, provided us with an additional opportunity to experience all of the beauty of Advent and Christmas music and message. The continued success of that service can be measured by the strong attendance, enthusiastic participation of all music choirs and youth, and positive feedback from all who attended. A dessert and cheese reception followed this beautiful service.

During 2016, the Committee continued to support a third communion station when larger attendance was anticipated. In November a one half-day retreat was held for Lectors, Communion Assistants, and Ushers. Pastor Hall introduced Communion Assistants and Lectors to new guidelines. A Lectionary was purchased and Lectors began using it during Advent. An individually printed version of the Psalm will be provided on those Sundays when the Psalm is read responsively and at every Saturday evening worship service. The Altar Guild members and OSJ members participated in their own retreat/training sessions.

The committee continues to endorse the printing of the liturgy and lessons in each week's bulletin in order to provide smooth and meaningful worship guidelines for members and guests. This format was considered to offer clear transition through all of the essential components of worship.

The Committee would like to recognize the outstanding contributions of Barb Carlsen, Mark Jones, and David Gerard for the ongoing dedication and talent they share weekly with our parish community.

We remain committed to providing a traditional-style worship service. Exploring ways to offer a more extensive and vibrant worship life will continue to be our primary goal as we continue to provide a worship atmosphere at each service that is spiritual, liturgical, and meaningful for all who attend.

Deb Hinrichs, Church Council Liaison

## YOUTH MINISTRIES

The Youth Ministries Committee is excited to report that 2016 was another great year for the youth. The Order of Saint John, Youth Forum, and 2016 Summer Mission Trip are a few key areas that have been of great value and have allowed the youth to grow in their faith with God and in relationship to one another. As we transition into 2017, our focus will be on a few main areas that will greatly aid not only the youth program, but also the church as a whole.

Reflecting on the past year, we highlight some of the ministries and facts that contribute to a strong faith formation experience for the youth.

- The Senior High Summer Mission Trip had 29 participants as they traveled to Oaks Indian Mission in Oaks, Oklahoma. While at Oaks Indian Mission, the trip participants had the privilege of living in community with the youth that stay at the mission. They also had the privilege of immersing themselves in the Cherokee culture and experiencing traditional storytelling, games such as stickball, as well as basket making. Following their time at the mission, the youth traveled to Oklahoma City and spent three days serving in the inner city at organizations that focused on food insecurity, urban gardening, and senior care.
- Lutheran Youth Serve Omaha (LYSO) was a huge success again this past year. Thank you to the following congregations for partnering with us and participating in LYSO - it would not be a possibility without them: Lord of Love (Omaha), St. Matthew (Omaha), Morningstar (Omaha), St. Paul's (Millard), and Resurrection (Omaha). We had about 125 participants each day and served at over 30 services sites. This year we partnered with Apostle Vanessa Ward and Neighborhood Works to do a neighborhood clean-up of the Central Park Neighborhood in North Omaha where Apostle and her congregation hold their Annual Block Party. A huge thank you to Apostle and their youth for their partnership.
- Order of Saint John (OSJ) continues to be a wonderful ministry and provides valuable leadership opportunities for the youth. We are continuing to train and equip new acolytes throughout the year.
- Girls Bible Study is a highlight of each month for the Middle and High School girls. The time is spent really working through difficult texts of the bible, as well checking with each other on a monthly basis. The community built around this bible study is a true testament to how the youth can participate in church outside of worship.
- Middle and High School Choir is an extraordinary ministry as it allows the youth to be leaders in worship, share God's message through song, and highlights the many musical gifts and talents they have. A huge thank you to Janet Campbell, the youth and their parents/guardians for making this ministry a possibility.
- Elevate Youth Retreat was held at Camp Rivercrest in Fremont, Nebraska in partnership with three other ELCA Congregations from Omaha. Kountze Memorial had 18 youth participate in the event. Throughout the weekend there are four workshops and each workshop is followed by small group discussion. During small group time, the speaker, Dave Walker, challenged the youth to think use the strength their faith gives them to be vulnerable within their youth group community. And he challenged the community to help build each other up when one of us is not feeling so strong. Elevate is a cherished experience for all who attend.

As Kountze Memorial continues to worship, grow and serve, we remain committed to being a "city-wide church with a world-wide ministry" by looking for new ways for our youth to serve our community and bring together youth from across our church. We continue to look for new partners for LYSO and Elevate to strengthen the ministry and fellowship shared during those wonderful events.

Katie Larson  
Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries



## BOARD REPORTS

### ENDOWMENT FUND

The Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church Endowment Fund (the Endowment) was established to extend and enhance the mission outreach of the church beyond and apart from the programs, ministries and work of the congregation normally supported through regular offerings and pledges. Capital improvements, community and Synodical ministries, national and global ministries, and Kountze media ministries are specific benevolence and outreach purposes of the Endowment.

The Board of Directors (the Board) is charged with the supervision, management, investment and administration of the Endowment and Scholarship Funds. In pursuit of those duties, the Board has established an investment policy for the Endowment and Scholarship Funds which is implemented by Cambridge Advisors, Inc.

During 2016 the Kountze Endowment True Vision, LLC (the LLC) was established as the legal entity for holding real estate investments and is wholly owned by the Endowment. The Board is responsible for appointing the five member Management Board that is responsible for managing day to day operations of the property.

As of December 31, 2016, the market value of the Endowment, exclusive of the investment in the LLC, was \$4,039,613, which includes the checking account balance of \$21,044. The listed value of the investment in the LLC (which holds the real estate acquired from KETV) is \$3,310,816 as of December 31, 2016. The total assets of the Endowment as of December 31, 2016, including the scholarship funds administered by the Board, was \$7,589,313. This is an increase in the total reported assets from year-end 2015 of \$1,009,979.

The Board met eleven times in 2016 and reviewed and approved funding for the following grants:

#### Endowment Board Grants

##### 2016 Recipients

	<u>Amounts</u>	
American Church in Berlin	\$ 10,000	
Global Mission Missionary Support	\$ 10,000	
Quilt Fabric for Lutheran World Relief	\$ 2,000	
Rural Ministry Task Force	\$ 2,500	
Justin Perkins	\$ 1,500	
Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church	\$ 166,648	
- Lenten Ads and Speaker Honorariums		\$ 2,500
- Kountze Breakfast Program Support		\$ 3,000
- Capital Improvements – Air Handler		\$ 80,738
- Capital Improvements – Tuck-pointing South & East		\$ 24,550
- Capital Improvements – Tuck-pointing West		\$ 34,510
- Omaha Street School Kitchen		\$ 7,500
- Lutheran Youth Serve Omaha (LYSO)		\$ 5,850
- Vicar Internship (2016)		<u>\$ 8,000</u>
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 192,648</b>	

Given the illiquid nature of the KETV property, the Board determined that it would be prudent to exclude the value of the LLC from the assets used to calculate the annual funds available for distribution. Therefore, for 2017, the Endowment will have \$271,274 available for distribution while there will be \$7,972 available for scholarships.

The following were elected to serve as officers for 2017:

Chair: Micah Fannin

Vice-Chair: Gary Clatterbuck

Treasurer: Dale Broekemeier

Secretary: Sarah Penn

## DEFREESE MANOR

deFreese Manor's mission has been providing safe, secure, affordable housing for seniors since 1982. The Manor's 51 apartments remain full with 17 qualified applicants on our wait list who are over age 62 with limited incomes. Our average income is \$13,601.

- The average age is 72.
- Men make up 37% of our community.
- 16% of our current population is over 80 years old;
- 51% between the ages of 70 to 80;

This year we have:

- Replaced the emergency backup generator
- Replaced rusted pipes in our Heating and cooling system.
- Replaced the insulation on the pipes.
- Repainted halls and updated lobby

In 2017 we plan to replace the sound system and upgrade the entertainment equipment in the community room now that the leaks have been repaired in that area from the rusted heating and cooling system. We are also starting to plan kitchen upgrades for the apartments.

Many thanks go out to our Kountze members who continue to support our mission working with seniors. Financial figures from 2016 were:

<b>INCOME:</b>	
Rent	\$ 527,063
Interest & other revenue	5,015
SC Grant	<u>25,779</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$ 557,857</u></b>
<b>INCREASE IN NET ASSETS:</b>	<b><u>\$ 26,455</u></b>

<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Administrative	\$ 92,184
Utilities	47,337
Operating & Maintenance	147,090
Taxes & Insurance	54,681
Mortgage, Principle, Int. & Ins	60,080
Service Coordinator	24,456
Depreciation	<u>105,574</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$ 531,402</u></b>

<b>ASSETS:</b>	
Cash	\$ 59,426
Other Assets	36,618
Reserves	218,569
<b>FIXED ASSETS:</b>	
Land	120,900
Building	2,532,461
Equipment & Vehicles	678,230
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(2,690,623)</u>
Net Property & Equip.	<u>640,968</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 955,581</u></b>

<b>LIABILITIES:</b>	
Mortgage Payable	\$ 1,793,881
Other Payables & Deposits	<u>80,852</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>1,874,733</b>
<b>NET ASSETS:</b>	
Unrestricted Net Assets	(925,684)
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	<u>6,532</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b><u>(919,152)</u></b>
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 955,581</u></b>

### STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES:

An audit report and a complete financial statement submitted to HUD will be available in the deFreese Manor office, 2669 Dodge, Omaha, NE 68131. Applications are available online or from the Manor's office upon request. Please feel free to call 402-345-0622 if you have any questions or would like to volunteer at the manor.

Respectfully Submitted:  
 Scott Henneman, President  
 Sharon West, Project Administrator

## HEALING GIFT FREE CLINIC

The Healing Gift Free Clinic, LLC is a non-profit, all volunteer organization serving those in need of medical care and empowers patients towards health of body, mind and spirit. It is a separate entity from Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, yet wholly owned by the congregation. The clinic rents space within the church building from the congregation.

The clinic is open on Thursdays, 4:00-6:00 p.m. and has two permanent exam rooms and two permanent/temporary exam rooms. All patients who are registered prior to 6:00 p.m. are seen. Staff includes MDs, NPs, Nurses, medical and nursing students, undergraduate students, pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and interns and lay persons. The clinic is open to providing learning opportunities to a variety of academic institutions including: Clarkson College, College of Saint Mary, Creighton University and UNMC.

### Statistics for 2016:

- Patient Visits -- 1,863
- Prescriptions Filled -- 12,056
- Financial Donations (grants, memorials & contributions) -- \$73,789.76
- Expenditures -- \$96,152.53

Respectfully submitted,  
Joyce "JP" Palmer, Urban Ministry Coordinator



**KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
2650 FARNAM STREET  
OMAHA, NE 68131**

Phone: 402-341-7761  
Fax: 402-341-4841  
Email: info@kmlchurch.org  
Web Page: http://www.kmlchurch.org

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**A City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry**

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**THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

**TERMS EXPIRING AUGUST 31, 2017**

Bob Fonda  
Deborah Hinrichs  
Tarna Kidder  
Jeff Senn

**TERMS EXPIRING AUGUST 31, 2018**

Scott Henneman  
Penny Hovendick  
Terrie Larkowski  
Chad Picha

**TERMS EXPIRING AUGUST 31, 2019**

Steve Jacobson  
Adam Klinker  
Robin Perkins  
Ashley Sum

**THE CHURCH STAFF**

Pastor Dean W. Bard.....	Interim Senior Pastor
Pastor Ashley Hall .....	Associate Pastor
Pastor Paul Moessner .....	Interim Associate Pastor
Pastor Inba Inbarasu .....	Visitation Pastor
Katie Larson .....	Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry
Ian Hartfield .....	Director of Congregational Life
Sheri Rose.....	Financial Secretary
Debbie Bogue.....	Office Manager
Amanda Zasada .....	Administrative Assistant
John Bogue .....	Building Superintendent
Tim Walker .....	Chef/Assist. to the Bldg. Superintendent
Søren Johnson .....	Assist. to the Bldg. Superintendent
Barbara Carlsen .....	Director of Music & Fine Arts
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

**CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS**

**THE PARISH REGISTER**

Baptisms ..... 28  
Marriages ..... 20  
Funerals..... 21

**MEMBERSHIP**

Children (Not Confirmed) ..... 427  
Confirmed ..... 1511  
Baptized..... 1938  
Average Weekly Attendance ..... 501

**FINANCES**

Total Receipts ..... \$ 1,039,293  
Total Expenditures ..... \$ 1,039,293  
ELCA/Synod Mission Support ..... \$ 140,546  
Other Benevolence ..... \$ 144,651  
In the City for Good Project ..... \$ 850,765  
Total Assets ..... \$ 16,715,390

