

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

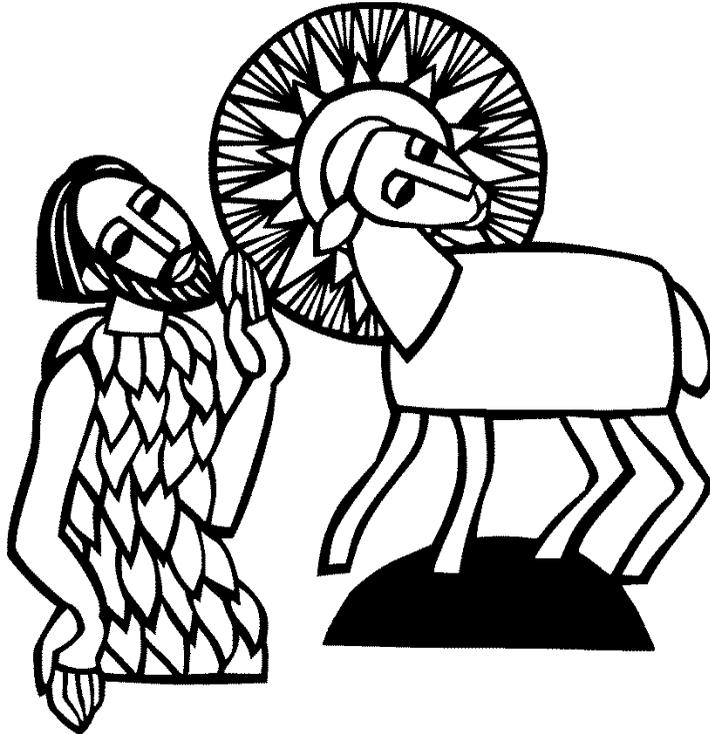
Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Paul H. Moessner, Associate Pastor
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

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

December 17, 2017

9:00 & 11:00 AM

THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT



“Rejoice always,” begins the reading from First Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. “All God’s children got a robe,” go the words of the spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes that make us feel happy just to put on. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

PRELUDE

“Gloria”

Frances Legge Callahan, Arr.
Kountze Handbell Choir

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P God of all time,

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

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

In your mercy forgive us.

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

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

In † Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new.
Rejoice in this good news!

C Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

ELW 257

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

- P** Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.
- C** **Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness.**
- P** Bless us as we light the third candle of this wreath.
- C** **Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord.
May he give water to all who thirst,
for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.**

We light three candles.

HYMN

*“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”
Verses 1-3*

ELW 240



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



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

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

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

THE KYRIE



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



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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☞ Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God,
☞ and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING

“Pat-a-Pan”

Gary Meredith, Arr.
Kountze Handbell Choir

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of the Lord, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; ²to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; ³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory. ⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their

recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed. ¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

▣ The word of the Lord.

▣ Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Luke 1:46b–55 (*read responsively*)

^{46b}My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

^{48c}**for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.**

From this day all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great things for me, and holy is your name.

⁵⁰**You have mercy on those who fear you,**

from generation to generation.

⁵¹You have shown strength with your arm; and scattered the proud in their conceit,

⁵²**casting down the mighty from their thrones**

and lifting up the lowly.

⁵³You have filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴**You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,**

To remember the promise of mercy.

⁵⁵the promise made to our forebears,

to Abraham and his children forever.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

▣ The word of the Lord.

▣ Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *(sung three times)*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Taizé Community

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

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

www.giamusic.com, 800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³John said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked John, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after

me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

P The Gospel of our Lord

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM (9:00 AM)

See Insert

SERMON (11:00 AM)

Pastor Inbarasu

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY (11:00 AM)

"Joy to the World"

ELW 267

THE NICENE CREED

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

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

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit

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

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response: **P** Lord, in your mercy,
 C hear our prayer.

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

Thanksgiving: For the birth of Theo Olaf Pignatore, son of Nick & Amy

Illness: Marvin Andersen, Donna Crouse, Jr Green (husband of Marvel), Eunice Grunberg, Virginia Jensen

Sympathy: To the family and friends of Evelyn Christensen

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

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

THE PEACE IS SHARED

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

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Advent is an annual reminder that God is patient with us – patiently forgiving us again and again; while giving us – again and again – all we need to live as his disciples. In response, Sunday after Sunday – again and again – we give our offerings in thankfulness to God. Thank you for your faithful giving!



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“All Earth is Hopeful”

ELW 266



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



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



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



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

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

Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé

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

OFFERING PRAYER

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

The image shows a musical score for 'The Great Thanksgiving' in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a mix of quarter and eighth notes.

PREFACE FOR ADVENT

SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The image shows a musical score for 'Sanctus' in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are: 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might, heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.' The melody is more complex than the Thanksgiving hymn, featuring some eighth and sixteenth notes.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

☩ Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

(sit)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Let Us Break Bread Together”
“Blessed Assurance”

ELW 471
ELW 638

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

ELW 244

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

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

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

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

SENDING

BLESSING

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

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

ELW 289

DISMISSAL

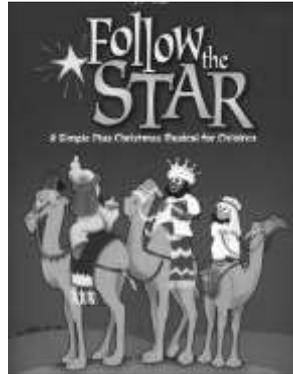
- ☞ Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
- ☞ **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

† † †

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“Follow the Star”
Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church
Sunday School Program
December 17, 2017 – 9 a.m.



PROCESSIONAL HYMN: Creator of the Stars of Night, ELW 245

FOLLOW THE STAR

Scene 1 – The court of King Herod

WE THREE KINGS (*Congregation on verses, children on chorus*)

**1. We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we traverse afar—
Field and fountain, moor and mountain—
Following yonder star.**
(Children sing Chorus)

**2. Born a King on Bethlehem's plain;
Gold I bring to crown Him again.
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign.**
(Children sing Chorus)

**3. Frankincense to offer have I.
Incense owns a Deity nigh.
Prayer and praising, all men raising,
Worship Him, God Most High.**
(Children sing Chorus)

**4. Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume
Breathes of life, of gathering gloom-
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone cold tomb.**
(Children sing Chorus)

Scene 2 - Bethlehem

OUT OF THE BETHLEHEM SKY

Scene 3 – The Stable

OH COME ALL YE FAITHFUL (*Congregation and children*)

**Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him,
Born the King of angels;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him;
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ, the Lord.**

Scene 4 – The Stable

MEDLEY: Joy to the world!/Hark! The Herald Angels Sing/Angels We Have Heard on High

Children:

Joy to the World! The Lord has come. Let earth receive her King.
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

He rules the world! With truth and grace and makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness and wonders of his love.
And wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.

All:

**Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King,
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled.”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies,
With th’ angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”
Hark! The herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”**

Glo---ria in excelsis Deo!

Glo---ria in ecelsis Deo!

RECESSIONAL HYMN: Angels We Have Heard on High, ELW 289

Cast:

Three Wise Women: Alise Willson, Lilly Kassal, Violet Fannin
Page: Henry Schwieger Joseph: Ryan Gardner
Priest One: Barrett Hinrichs Mary: Sophia DiLorenzo
Priest Two: Lillian Willson Reader: Lillian Willson
King Herod: John Groenjes Duet: Alise and Lillian Willson
Angels and Shepherds and Caravan: Our KMLC Sunday School Children

Accompanist: Jean Johnson
Christian Education Coordinator: Kristin Boe
Director of Children's Music: Donna Moessner
Assistant: Anita Morse

A huge thank you to all the parents and others who supported our children in numerous ways.

*Follow the Star: A Simple Plus Christmas Musical for Children
Created by Susie Williams, Luke Gambill and David Ebensberger
Brentwood-Benson Music Publishing, Copyright 2010*



Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a "City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry" and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for nearly 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.



WORSHIP + GROW + SERVE

KOUNTZE STAFF

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

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Scott Henneman, Jeff Perkins
Lector Karen Fannin
Ushers Bob Woodworth, Glenn Anderson, Daniel Collett, Marcy Madison, Mark Mahaffey, Gary Westerman, Ted Kaasch
Greeters Shirleen Collett, Jinette Cswercko, Karen Wolf, Sharon Anderson
Crucifer Keelan Edwards
Acolytes Clara Kidder, Anthony Bonacci

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Deb Hinrichs
Lector Steve Hinrichs
Ushers Linda Johnson, Ken Johnson, Lee Johnson, Julie O'Doherty, Norm Sack
Greeters Rosemary Tessin, Julie King
Crucifer Nicole Campbell
Acolytes Charlie Campbell, Grace Penrod

HOLY COMMUNION All who

are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. Instructions will be provided during worship. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Quiet activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a Quiet Room, just off the west side of the main sanctuary, that includes a TV and a variety of toys, games, and books for young children.

NURSERY is available from 9 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it.

ATTENDANCE CARDS All those attending worship are encouraged to fill out the card included in your bulletin and place in the offering plate.

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

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

E-NEWS & SOCIAL MEDIA If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828.

TODAY AT KOUNTZE

KOUNTZE CAFÉ Join us on Sundays for a hot breakfast buffet served from 8-11 AM prepared by Jim West and the kitchen crew. The suggested donation for the hot breakfast is, \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger. If you're able to help set up, prep/cook, and/or clean up after breakfast on Sunday mornings, please talk to Jim, or let the church office know. We would appreciate your help! Thanks.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM The Children's Christmas Program is this Sunday, 12/17, at 9 AM.

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

THIS WEEK: Dealing with Holiday Stress, with guest speaker from Lutheran Family Services NEXT WEEK: No Forum

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

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

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

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God in honor of Bill's birthday on the 19th by Madaline Christensen

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL Join us each Sunday on the 2nd floor for children 2 years—8th grade. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9—10 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery). Sunday School (2 yrs—8th grade) is held from 10:10—10:50 AM.

HIGH SCHOOL FORUM Join us each Sunday in the Youth Center for Forum at 10:10 AM.

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

ADVENT BIBLE STUDY Wednesdays, 10:30 AM, Christmas: The Prequel, led by Pastor Moessner. Each of the 4 Gospels begins differently. Only two tell of Jesus' birth. Yet each helps us know why the story we celebrate at Christmas has such importance for us, indeed for all creation. Please join us on Wednesday, 12/20 at 10:30 AM.

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

(continued on page 2)

Worship With Us
Sunday, December 24
4th Sunday of Advent
9 AM Worship only
Christmas Eve
4, 7, & 11 PM Worship
Monday, December 25
Christmas Day
10 AM Worship

Advent is a time for joy as we look to the birth of Jesus.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Table with 3 columns: Day, Bible Reference, and Description. Rows include Sunday (John 1:6-8, 19-28), Monday (Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11), Tuesday (1 Thessalonians 5:16-24), Wednesday (Luke 1:46b-55), Thursday (Psalm 63:1-8), Friday (Acts 16:25-34), Saturday (Psalm 126), and Sunday (Luke 1:26-38).

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, we are joyful because of you. Help us to be thankful no matter what happens each day. Amen. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord God, you fill the hungry with good things. With all my heart I praise the Lord, and I am glad because of God my Savior. Amen. (Luke 1:46-47, 51)

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of peace make you completely holy; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- What does it mean to be joyful? Tell about a time you were filled with joy.
• How does the birth of Jesus bring joy to the world?
• Which image in Isaiah 61:1-4 helps you to understand the feeling of joy?

DEVOTIONS

December 17 is the third Sunday in Advent. Continue to use an Advent wreath with four blue or purple candles and a white center candle. Light the first, second, and third candles, and use the following words:

Say: The third candle on our Advent wreath is the joy candle because "the Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced" (Psalm 126:3). The coming of Jesus our Savior and Lord gives us joy. [Light the first, second, and third candles.]

Read: Psalm 126:1-3. When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

Pray: Dear God, in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ you have done great things for us and we rejoice. Lead us to give thanks in all circumstances, believing this is your will for us in Christ Jesus. Amen.

SERVICE

John 1:7 describes John the Baptist this way: "He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him." As followers of Christ, we too are to serve others by being a witness and directing our attention to Jesus. How can you be a witness to Jesus in your thoughts, words, and actions as you prepare for Christmas?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Advent is a time to slow down, savor, and see things in the light of Christ. In many homes setting up a nativity set is a memorable tradition. Hold or imagine one piece of your nativity set each day. Think what it was like to be that character in Bethlehem. What did that character see? Experience? Hear? How was that person changed? How are you changed? Talk about your thoughts with family and friends. Conclude by singing this traditional hymn, Away in the Manger.

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donate there as well.

ADVENT MEALS/WORSHIP In this season of preparation for Christ's coming, a place has been prepared for you, to hear the promise, see the signs of the times in Christ's light, and share your hopes and dreams one with another. We are invited to make the Wednesdays in Advent a place apart for our minds and souls. Join us next Wednesday, 12/20 at 12:15 PM, or for a light meal from 6-6:45 PM and Holden Evening Prayer at 7 PM.

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

STEPHEN MINISTRIES Are you adjusting to the death of a loved one, serious illness, changed marital status, or loss of a job? Would you like to have someone in your life who really cares? Maybe a Stephen Minister can help. Contact our Stephen Ministry leader, Donna Reinig—558-6352, or one of our pastors.

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

For additional information about upcoming calendar events, please visit our website, www.kmlchurch.org

THIS WEEK AT KOUNTZE

December 17 Sunday

- 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Children's Christmas Program
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
10:00 AM Blood Pressure Checks
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
10:30 AM Executive Committee
11:00 AM MS/HS Choir Rehearsal
8:30 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

December 18 Monday

- 10:00 AM Pantry

December 19 Tuesday

- 9:00 AM Staff Meeting
1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group
6:30 PM Church Council

December 20 Wednesday

- 10:30 AM Advent Bible Study
12:15 PM Worship
5:00 PM Communion @ deFreese Manor
6:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal
6:00 PM Advent Dinner
7:00 PM Holden Evening Prayer

December 21 Thursday

- 4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
5:30 PM KETV Management Board

December 22 Friday

OFFICE CLOSED @ NOON

December 23 Saturday

- 5:00 PM Worship

December 24 Sunday

- No Sunday School
9:00 AM Worship
4:00 PM Worship
7:00 PM Worship
11:00 PM Worship

Table with 2 columns: Next Weekend's Lessons and Bible References. Row 1: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55. Row 2: Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38.

Saturday Attendance: 44
Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 248 11:00: 138
Midweek - Noon: 8 Evening: 67
Total: 505
Pantry Guests Served: 418
Medical Clinic Guests Served: 39
Offering: 11/19
\$16753.5 (Regular) \$565 (Specials)
\$1299.5 (In the City for Good)
Offering: 11/26
\$12708.4 (Regular) \$322 (Specials)
\$4997 (In the City for Good)