

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

September 9, 2018

9:00 & 11:00 AM

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



James tells us to stop showing favoritism in the assembly, treating the rich visitor with more honor than the poor one. Jesus himself seems to show partiality in his first response to the Syrophenician woman in today's gospel. Was he testing her faith in saying Gentiles don't deserve the goods meant for God's children? Or was he speaking out of his human worldview, but transcended those limits when she took him by surprise with her reply? Either way, the story tells us that God shows no partiality. Everyone who brings her or his need to Jesus is received with equal honor as a child and heir.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the ☩ holy Trinity, the one who fashions us, the one who heals us, the one who reforms us again and again.

G Amen.

P Let us confess our sin, calling for God's transforming power.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Source of all life,

G we confess that we have not allowed your grace to set us free.

We fear that we are not good enough.

We hear your word of love freely given to us, yet we expect others to earn it.

We turn the church inward, rather than moving it outward.

Forgive us. Stir us. Reform us to be a church powered by love,

willing to speak for what is right, act for what is just,

and seek the healing of your whole creation. Amen.

P God hears our cry and sends the Spirit to change us and to empower our lives in the world. Our sins are forgiven, ☩ God's love is unconditional, and we are raised up as God's people who will always be made new, in the name of Jesus Christ.

G Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"Jesus Loves Me!"

ELW 595

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** Gracious God,
- C** throughout the ages you transform sickness into health and death into life. Open us to the power of your presence, and make us a people ready to proclaim your promises to the whole world, through Jesus Christ, our healer and Lord. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:4-7a

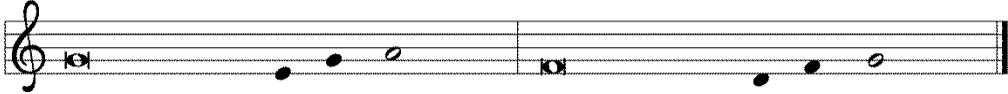
These verses are a word of hope to the exiles in Babylon. Chapter 34 portrays God's vengeance on Edom, Israel's age-old enemy, which makes the path from Babylon to Zion safe for the exiles' return. The desert itself will flow with water to give drink to the returning exiles.

Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "*Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.*" ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ^{7a}the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 146



¹Hal- | lelujah!

Praise the LORD, | O my soul!

²I will praise the LORD as long | as I live;

I will sing praises to my God while I | have my being.

³Put not your | trust in rulers,

in mortals in whom there | is no help.

⁴When they breathe their last, they re- | turn to earth,

and in that day | their thoughts perish.

⁵Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help,

whose hope is in the | LORD their God;

⁶who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;

who keeps promis- | es forever;

⁷who gives justice to those who are oppressed,

and food to | those who hunger.

The LORD sets the cap- | tive free.

⁸The LORD opens the eyes of the blind;

the LORD lifts up those who | are bowed down;

the LORD | loves the righteous.

⁹The LORD cares | for the stranger;

the LORD sustains the orphan and widow,

but frustrates the way | of the wicked.

¹⁰The LORD shall | reign forever,

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!

SECOND READING

James 2:1-17

Faithful Christians do not show partiality to the rich and powerful of the world, especially at the expense of the poor and weak. Likewise, faith does not pay mere lip-service to God's will. Instead, a living Christian faith expresses itself in acts of compassion and mercy for those in need.

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? ²For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “*Have a seat here, please,*” while to the one who is poor you say, “*Stand there,*” or, “*Sit at my feet,*” ⁴have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it

not they who drag you into court? ⁷Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you? ⁸You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*” ⁹But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it. ¹¹For the one who said, “*You shall not commit adultery,*” also said, “*You shall not murder.*” Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment. ¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, “*Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,*” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

L The word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 7:24-37

In Mark's gospel, encounters with women usually signify turning points in Jesus' ministry. Here, a conversation with a Syrophenician woman marks the beginning of his mission to the Gentiles.

Jesus set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice,²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet.²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter.²⁷ He said to her, *“Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.”*²⁸ But she answered him, *“Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs.”*²⁹ Then he said to her, *“For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.”*³⁰ So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis.³² They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him.³³ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue.³⁴ Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, *“Ephphatha,”* that is, *“Be opened.”*³⁵ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.³⁶ Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it.³⁷ They were astounded beyond measure, saying, *“He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”*

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING *(9:00 AM)*

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

SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY *“Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service”*

ELW 712

THE APOSTLES' CREED

☐ With the whole church, let us confess our faith:

☑ **I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

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 Mason Alexander Burton, son of Don and Beth Burton

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Janice Nelson; to the family and friends of Renee Kovar

Illness: Emalee Gardels, Jr. Green, Doris Kusch, Melissa Pera, Susan Ray, daughter-in-law of Betty Callies, Gary Rodene, Grant Searcey, Vinn Stephens

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, 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; Meghan Brown Saavedra, Mexico; Our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

WE SHARE GOD'S PEACE

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

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this church possible. We encourage everyone to give. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online or use the giving kiosk in the Fellowship Hall.



MUSICAL OFFERING

“You Are Holy”

arr. Text: Per Harling, b. 1948

Music: Per Harling

THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending”

ELW 678

**☐ God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store:
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door,
gifted by you, we turn to you, off'ring up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.**

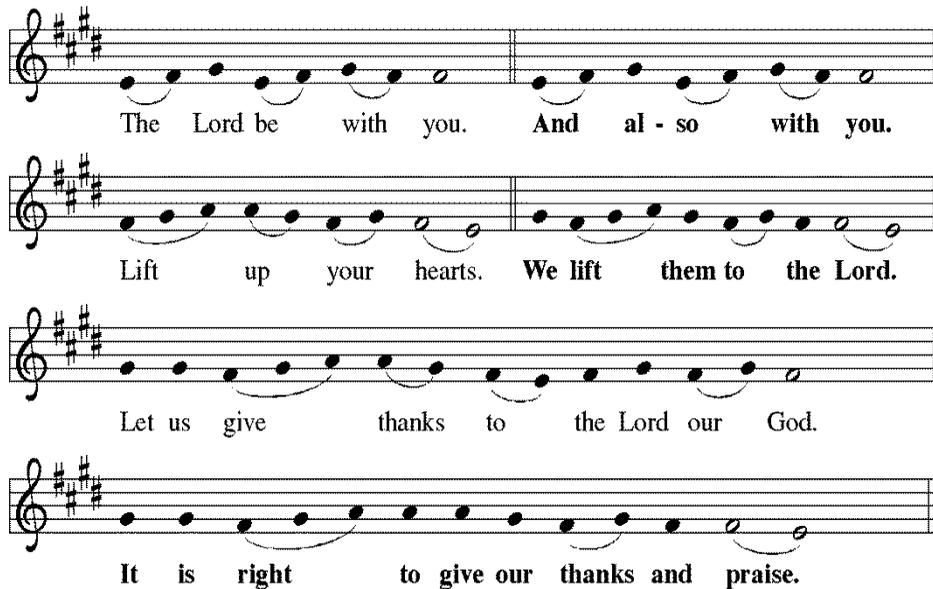
**Treasure, too, you have entrusted, gain through pow'rs your grace conferred;
ours to use for home and kindred, and to spread the gospel word.
Open wide our hands in sharing, as we heed Christ's ageless call,
healing, teaching, and reclaiming, serving you by loving all.**

Text: Robert L. Edwards, 1915-2006 Text © 1961, ren. 1989 The Hymn Society, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved. Used by permission

OFFERING PRAYER

**☐ God of life,
☑ you give us these gifts of the earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Light. Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION



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 PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

SANCTUS

**☒ Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

**Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

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

☒ Speak to us, O Lord, in the breaking of bread, and make us one with you.

THE DISTRIBUTION

*All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You who feel weak in faith, come to be strengthened. And you who feel you have no faith, come so that the God of steadfast love will touch your heart with hope and joy. The form of distribution is **intinction**, you will receive the consecrated bread and you may then dip it in the wine. Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.*

(sit)

AGNUS DEI

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

(sit)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Around You, O Lord Jesus”

ELW 468

“Dearest Jesus, At Your Word”

ELW 520

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Holy and compassionate God,

C in bread and wine you give us gifts that form us to be humble and courageous. May your words come to life in our serving and in our witness, that we might speak a living voice of healing and justice to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our rock and redeemer. Amen.

CELEBRATION AND AFFIRMATION OF THE CHRISTIAN EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES OF KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (9:00 AM)

Pastor: By the waters of Holy Baptism we are claimed as God’s own and brought into a new community. Today we gather to celebrate the nurturing and teaching of our faith community.

Parents, Grandparents, and Sunday School Leaders: In the words of the Great Commission Jesus called us to go and to teach. Do you hear the word of God and do you accept the responsibility to use your talents and gifts to nurture the faith of all God’s people? Do you intend to model a faithful lifestyle and to continue in the promises you made at baptism?

Response: I do and I ask God to guide me.

Children: Will you bring ears to listen, eyes to see, voices to praise, minds to learn and hearts to love, as you come to be with your teachers and friends and learn more about God’s Love?

Response: Yes

Congregation: It is God’s intent that we are drawn into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and that we support each other as disciples in the world. Will you remember our educational leaders and all those involved in our education ministry in your prayers and support and encourage them in their spiritual well-being?

Response: We will and we ask God to help us.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☐ The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. In the name of the Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“The Church of Christ, in Every Age”

ELW 729

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. The Spirit sends us forth to serve. We go remembering our mission:
☑ **We are disciples of Jesus, worshiping our God, growing in faith and serving our community. Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

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 Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Sarah Jewell	Administrative Assistant
Lauri Askew	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Søren Johnson	Custodian
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Donna Moessner	Dir. of Children's Music
Danny Bos	Custodian
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton	Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer	Urban Ministries Coordinator

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SATURDAY, 5:00 PM

Lector	Paul Revord
Ushers	Paul Revord Ellen Pessevento

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Lorie Groenjes Kevin Larkowski
Lector	Kevin Larkowski
Ushers	Glenn Anderson Dan Collett Ted Kaasch Mark Mahaffey Gary Westerman Bob Woodworth Marcy Madison
Greeters	Lois Sorensen Karen Wolf Sharon Anderson
Crucifer	Britten Johnson
Acolytes	Rahn Johnson Communion Assistant

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Ashley Sum Lowell Harms
Lector	Donna Moessner
Ushers	Adam Klinker Linda Hoagland Julie O'Doherty Kathy Preininger
Greeters	Julie King Rosemary Tessin
Crucifer	Charlie Campbell
Acolytes	Henry Rief Communion Assistant



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

September 8 & 9, 2018

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.

TODAY AT KOUNTZE

KOUNTZE CAFÉ Join us Sunday mornings 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.

ADULT FORUM Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **THIS WEEK: Rally Day**—Sunday School Commissioning and Blessing of Classrooms **NEXT WEEK:** Review and Study of ELCA's "Draft Statement on Women and Justice"

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God by Barb Chrisman in memory of my mom, Lois Soll, on her birthday

ETERNAL CANDLE is given to the glory of God in memory of his wife, Renee Kovar, by Marvin Kovar.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

RALLY DAY The children will gather at the front of the church during the 9:00 AM service for a blessing, before parading outside and to the Upper Rooms. Since most of the children are registered already, we will start our educational year then with a parade into the Joyful Sounds Studio where Donna Moessner, Director of Children's Choir, will lead us in song and prayer. Following this time of praise, the students will go to their classrooms to begin their lessons on "Jesus and the Children".

SUNDAY SCHOOL Join us each Sunday on the 2nd floor for Sunday School. 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.

JOYFUL SOUNDS CHILDREN'S CHOIR begins this Sunday, September 9, 9-9:30 AM. All children (K— 5th grade) who want to praise our Lord by singing, meet in the Joyful Sounds Studio on the 2nd floor. Contact Donna Moessner Director of Children's Music by e-mail or phone if you have questions (Donna@kmlchurch.org 402-341-7761).

September 9 Sunday

Rally Day

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:00 AM Joyful Sounds Children's Choir (gr K-5)

10:10 AM No Forum (Rally Day)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)

10:10 AM Finance Committee

12:00 PM Book Group

7:00 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

September 10 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

September 11 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

11:00 AM Pantry Task Force

5:30 PM Stewardship

September 12 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group

12:15 PM Worship

5:30 PM Art Committee

6:00 PM Confirmation Dinner

6:30 PM Confirmation

7:40 PM Worship

September 13 Thursday

11:30 AM Property Committee

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

September 15 Saturday

9:30 AM Women's Prayer Group

5:00 PM Worship

September 16 Sunday

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal

8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:00 AM Joyful Sounds Children's Choir (gr K-5)

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

12:15 PM New Member Class

7:00 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

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.

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.

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.

NEW MEMBER CLASS If you are interested in joining our congregation, the next class will be held September 16 & 23 from 12:15—2:00 PM. 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 when you register.

ADULT CHOIR Come and join our amazing group of musicians who sing praise to God and have fun together. The Adult Choir rehearses on the first Wednesday of each month from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. If you are interested in being a part of this important way of worshiping, we would be very glad to welcome you. Past singing experience in high school or college is recommended. The director, Barb Carlsen, would like to hear you sing before joining the choir just to make sure that this group will blend with your type of voice. If you want more information about choir or would like to reserve a time to sing for Barb Carlsen, please call the church office at 402-341-7761.

BOOK DRIVE To begin the Sunday School year, children grades Kindergarten through 5th grade are having a Children's Book Drive. Please bring your gently used books, for children ages 0 – 18 years, to church September 9 through October 14. Bins will be provided. The Book Drive is in cooperation with the Junior League of Omaha and their "A Book of My Own" initiative, which provides books for at risk youth in the Omaha area. They distribute about 20,000 books each year! Thank you for helping our children serve others in the community.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES If you weren't able to bring in school supplies for Jackson School, it's not too late. You may still bring your items and put them in the collection boxes in the Fellowship Hall and the Narthex. The items needed are: Wide-ruled notebook paper, Notebooks (wide-ruled or graph), Loose paper clips, Scotch tape, Black/blue pens, Post its, Pencils, Dry erase markers (black and blue), Pencil boxes, Markers, and Glue sticks. Thanks.

LUTHERAN WOMEN OF OMAHA will meet on Tuesday, September 11 at noon at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church at 6201 North 60th Street. For more information call Carole Woodworth (402-339-2056) before September 8.

KMLC MEN'S LUNCHEON Join us on Thursday, September 20, 11:30 AM (RSVP by September 18) at Kountze Memorial – Cost for lunch is \$10. Enjoy conversation and a meal on the third Thursday of each month, starting at 11:30 AM. Hear presentations on a variety of topics inviting us to consider how faith connects with the wider community and all of creation. The September program will be presented by Pastor Damon Laaker, of Grace and St. Luke's Lutheran Churches. He will discuss current issues of immigration, including TPS (Temporary Protected Status). Join us.

BAPTISM SEMINAR Sunday, September 23, 12:15 PM (immediately following 11:00 AM service). Meet with Pr. Hall in the Nave immediately after the liturgy, and then he will walk through the baptism liturgy with you. To register, call the church office at 402-341-7761.

FALL BIBLE STUDY—The Parables of Jesus. Wednesdays beginning September 26, 10:30 AM or 6:00 PM. Dr. Richard Sieling will begin a six-week study on the Parables of Jesus. We will look at the setting, meaning, and relevance of selected stories. The class is offered two times on Wednesdays. Please sign up for one of the sessions by calling the church office (402-341-7761) so that we arrange for adequate materials and an appropriate room to meet. Bring a Bible (NRSV is recommended).

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS GET TOGETHER FOR HAPPY HOUR Friday, September 28. Dudley's Pizza & Tavern, 2110 S 67th St (Aksarben Village) at 5:00 PM or when you can get there. All are welcome; post college to the young at heart. Join us for a casual happy hour and fellowship. For more information contact: Ashley Sum – ashleysumrealtor@gmail.com; Melissa Musick – musick.melissa@gmail.com.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS will be held on Sundays, October 7 & 14, 12:15-1:00 PM. This year, an introduction to Holy Communion for those children and youth receiving their First Communion on Reformation Sunday, will be held in a two-part session, on Sundays, October 7 & 14 from 12:15-1:00 PM. More details to follow. Please register with the church office. For more information, contact Pr. Hall or Kristin Boe.

BELLEVUE BERRY FARM (11001 South 48th Street, Papillion), October 21, 2:00 - 6:00 PM. All members of Kountze are invited to the Bellevue Berry Farm for a cookout and to explore their pumpkin patch. Hot dogs, chips, drinks, and s'mores provided.

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

Saturday Attendance: 43

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 206 11:00: 77

Midweek - Noon: 7 **Evening:** 22

Total: 355

Pantry Guests Served: Closed for Labor Day

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 29

Offering:

\$12,937.13 (Regular) \$172.00 (Specials)

\$1,676.00 (In the City for Good)



Important Dates for the Upcoming Sunday School Year

Oct 21 Bible Sunday

Dec 2 Advent Fair

Dec 16 Christmas Program

The kingdom of God breaks into our daily lives.

Sunday	Mark 7:24-37	Jesus heals the Gentiles
Monday	Isaiah 35:4-7a	The return of the exiled
Tuesday	James 2:1-17	Faith without works is dead
Wednesday	Luke 18:1-8	The widow and the unjust judge
Thursday	Hosea 12:2-6	Return to your God
Friday	Mark 9:14-29	Jesus gives a boy speech
Saturday	Psalms 146	Praise for God's help
Sunday	Mark 8:27-38	Taking up the cross



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Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert. **Isaiah 35:5-6 (NRSV)**

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who comes to bring your reign of mercy and healing for our daily lives. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord, as we thank you for much, bless those who have little. Give us hearts that care and hands that share. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord lift you up, watch over you, and uphold you now and always. (Psalm 146:8-9)

Discuss in your home or small group:

- What is something that you experience as a challenge or limitation in life?
- How do you help others who experience challenges or limitations?
- In Isaiah 35:4-7a God promises to save us and to bring healing and hope to our daily lives. How do you see God bringing healing and hope to your life and to others around you?

Read: James 6:5-17.

This text shows the character of the people of God. God's reign in our lives makes a difference on how we treat others and how we are to be treated. As God treats us with mercy, so we are to treat others in ways that show mercy instead of dishonor, or mutual care instead of a standard that shows privilege to some over others. As verse 13 makes clear, there is judgment for not showing mercy. God's justice is to be taken seriously. And at the same time the great message of the Bible holds true: mercy triumphs over judgment. Instead of letting mercy lead us to indifference, it leads us to acts of love. This shows the power of a living faith that does works of compassion. Talk about how God has shown you mercy through others. How have you shown mercy to others?

Pray: **Lord, help us to open our hearts and minds to show mercy and acts of kindness to others. Amen.**

Psalm 146:7 says that God gives food to hungry people. Caring for the hungry is an important way to show God's compassion for those in need. Help your congregation's outreach to those who are food insecure. It can be surprising how many people that includes within your own community. Make a financial contribution to an organization that helps to feed the hungry.

Mark 7:24-30 is a shocking text that shows a rougher side of Jesus' dialogue with someone in need. The woman's persistence in response to Jesus' words was itself an example of faith. Christian rituals and traditions provide disciplines that sustain us through the rocky times of life and faith. What are some rituals and traditions that have encouraged you as a follower of Jesus? Recommit yourself to these Christian practices that present God's word and Holy Spirit to keep you going day after day.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 116:1-9
James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38