

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

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

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

January 5, 2020

9:00 & 11:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS



Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, love from the beginning, word made flesh, breath of heaven.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** Let us confess our sinfulness before God and one another, trusting in God's endless mercy and love.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

- P** Merciful God,
- C** **we confess that we are not perfect. We have said and done things we regret. We have tried to earn your redeeming grace, while denying it to others. We have resisted your call to be your voice in the world. Forgive us, loving God. Give us your righteousness, the strength to put aside our failures, and the courage to try again. Amen.**
- P** Dear people of God, hear the good news:
- C** **Christ the Savior is born! You are loved and forgiven in the name of † Jesus, who has come among us. You are freed from proving that you deserve to be loved, because God's love is given to you as the most precious gift of all. Rejoice in this love and share it with the world. Amen.**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“Carol at the Manger”

**Holy Child within the manger, long ago yet ever near;
come as friend to every stranger, come as hope for every fear.
As you lived to heal the broken, greet the outcast, free the bound,
as you taught us love unspoken, teach us now where you are found.**

**Once again we tell the story-- how your love for us was shown,
when the image of your glory wore an image like our own.
Come, enlighten with your wisdom, come and fill us with your grace.
May the fire of your compassion kindle every land and race.**

**Holy Child within the manger, lead us ever in your way,
so we see in every stranger how you come to us today.
In our lives and in our living give us strength to live as you,
that our hearts might be forgiving and our spirits strong and true.**

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Almighty God our redeemer.
- ☑ **you created light that we might live, and you illumine our world with your beloved Son. By your Spirit comfort us in all darkness, and turn us toward the light of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

Thus says the Lord: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "*Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.*"⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.⁹ With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "*He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.*"¹¹ For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 147:12-20 (*read responsively*)

¹²Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;

praise your God, O Zion,

¹³**who has strengthened the bars of your gates
and has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁴God has established peace on your borders
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵**God sends out a command to the earth,
a word that runs very swiftly.**

¹⁶God gives snow like wool,
scattering frost like ashes.

¹⁷**God scatters hail like bread crumbs.
Who can stand against God's cold?**

¹⁸The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

¹⁹**God declares the word to Jacob,
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

²⁰The LORD has not done so to any other nation;
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

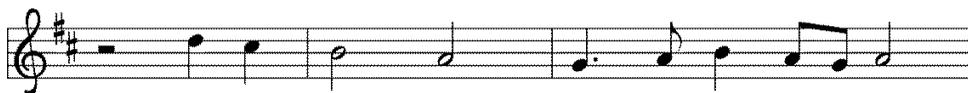
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

☒ The word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



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

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord!**

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There 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. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John testified to him and cried out, "*This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'*") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

☐ 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

THE NICENE CREED

- P** With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- 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;
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**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.**

(stand)

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)

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Maxine Selberg; to the family and friends of Ruby Nielsen

Thanksgiving: for the baptism of Everly Rose Risenberg, daughter of Alex Riesenberg & Hannah Englekamp

Illness: Richard Bock, Joe Bonfante, Ron Brown, Debbie Buike, office volunteer, Don Burton, Joe Doremus, Rodney Edwards, Rev. Harry Fink, Samuel Garrett, Susie Henry, Dolores Hiatt, Rosann Klug, mother of David Klug, Marcie Lafleur, Jean Nippert, Mary Olson, Gary Rodene, Sheri Tipton, Jerry Warner, Ed & Darlene White, Don Zinnecker

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Wyatt Johnson, 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; Rev. Rachel Ringlaben, Argentina; Meghan Brown Saavedra, Mexico; Our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin; the Wittenberg Center and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators

Other Prayers: *Seminarians*— Adam Klinker, Katie Larson

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 congregation 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.



MUSICAL OFFERING

THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

1 Angels we have heard on high,
Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

3 Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.

Refrain.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

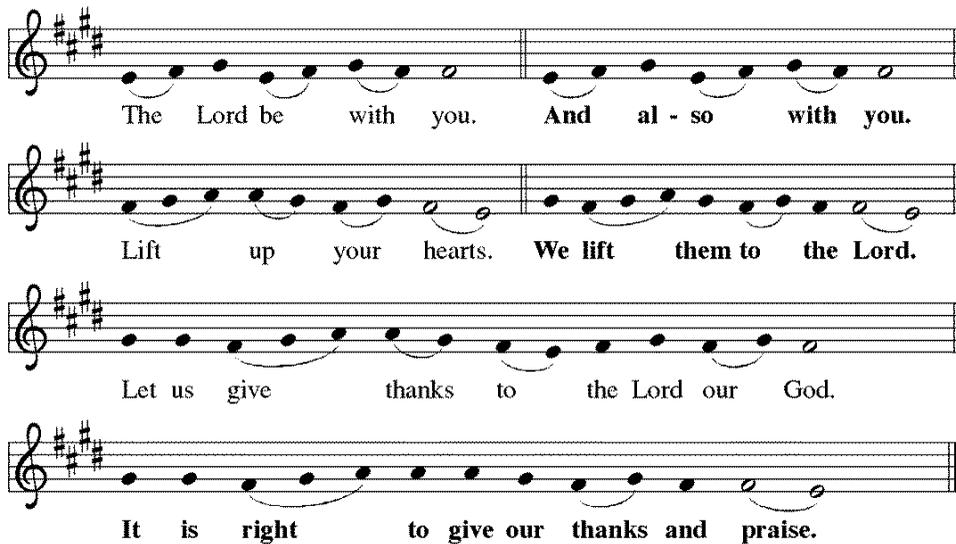
Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864

OFFERING PRAYER

P Generous God,

C you have given us life, this community, and these gifts of the earth that become the meal of your grace. Move in our hearts, that we might use your gifts to bring hope and blessing wherever we go, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

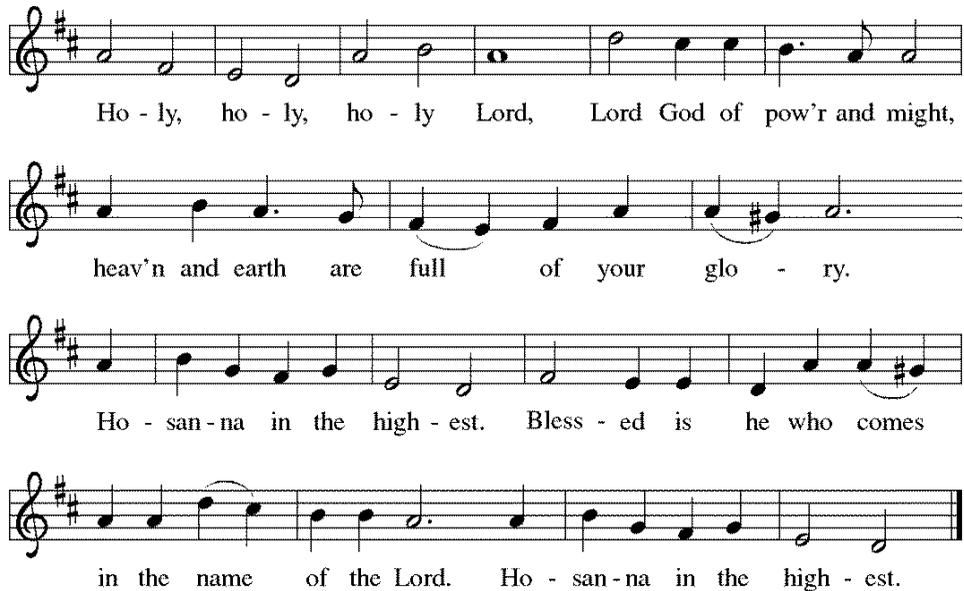
HOLY COMMUNION



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.

PREFACE FOR THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

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 WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(sung to the tune: Away in a Manger)*

**Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your Name!
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord, reign alone:
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
From evil deliver Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom; o'er all things You reign.
And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.
To you be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- P** Love has come: God's love for all people.
- C** Come and eat, for Christ invites 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.*

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(sit)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

*“What Child Is This”
“Your Little Ones, Dear Lord”*

ELW 296

ELW 286

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Emmanuel, God with us,
- C** you grace us with life and breath and give us bread for the journey. Send us out in service to this world that you love, telling the amazing news of your coming to be Savior and Lord of all. Amen.

SENDING

(sit)

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- P** Grace from God’s own heart, peace from the ✠ Child in the manger, and strength from the Spirit of life be blessings for you today and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

ELW 290

DISMISSAL

- P** Christ is Born! Go tell in on the mountain everywhere.
- C** Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Olaf Roynesdal	Senior Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu	Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe	Christian Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Sarah Jewell	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Søren Johnson	Custodian
Kayla Slaight	Housekeeper
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Donna Moessner	Dir. of Children's Music
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton	Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer	Director of the Weber Clinic
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director

SATURDAY, 5:00 PM

Lector
Ushers

Comm. Set-up

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Giselle Loucks Lorie Groenjes Tarna Kidder Liz Pemberton
Lector	Jerry Clanton
Ushers	Joe Councill Jim Comfort Janice Falk John Georgeson Jeff Perkins Fred Wachal Chad Wachholtz
Greeters	Darlene Anderson Joyce Wachal Jinette Cswercko
Crucifer	Anna Kidder
Acolytes	Jane Kidder Dannika Rees

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Deb Hinrichs Lowell Harms
Lector	Bruce Anderson
Ushers	Linda Hoagland Julie O'Doherty James Holzer
Greeters	Myrna Carter
Crucifer	Torin Edwards
Acolytes	Neely Edwards Communion Assistant



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

January 4 & 5, 2020

Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a "City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry" and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for over 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 each Sunday 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:** No Forum (Fellowship time) **NEXT WEEK:** The Creed: God our Father

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS Please feel free to take one or more poinsettias home with you after Worship this weekend.

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God in honor of the baptism of Everly Rose Riesenbergs by Keith and Gretchen

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

JOYFUL SOUNDS CHILDREN'S CHOIR, SUNDAY SCHOOL, AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH FORUM

January 5:	No Sunday School
January 12:	Sunday School, Children's Choir & HS Forum resumes

January 5 Sunday

Homebound Communion
 No Sunday School
 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
 9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
 10:10 AM Adult Forum - Fellowship

January 6 Monday

Epiphany of Our Lord
 10:00 AM Pantry

January 7 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
 11:00 AM Devotions @ deFreese Manor

January 8 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group
 12:15 PM Worship
 6:00 PM Confirmation Supper
 6:30 PM Confirmation Class

7:00 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal
 7:30 PM Confirmation Worship

January 9 Thursday

9:30 AM WELCA Board
 11:30 AM Property Committee
 4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

January 11 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

January 12 Sunday

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
 9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
 9:00 AM Joyful Sounds Children's Choir (gr K-6)
 10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
 10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
 10:10 AM Adult Forum
 12:00 PM Book Group

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.

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 Sundays, January 19 & 26, 2020, from 12:15—2:00 PM. Please plan to attend both sessions. Lunch will be served and childcare is provided. New members will be received on February 2. Please indicate your attendance plans on your attendance card or call the church office by January 12 and let us know if you will need childcare when you register.

KOUNTZE FOOD PANTRY Thank-you to all who contributed, both time and treasure, to make the Kountze Food Pantry a beacon of hope this Christmas season. Your generosity and efforts are greatly appreciated as we work together to fulfill our mission of giving to the poor, in Christ's name. Please consider donating food, money or time in the new year. We are open Monday mornings. You may sign up to volunteer in the book located in the Fellowship Hall, meeting room A, near the kitchen. Thank-you!

SIMPLY GIVING Just a reminder - if you give your offering automatically through Simply Giving, please remember if there are any changes to be made, whether increasing, decreasing, or stopping the automatic giving, you need to indicate this change to the office or the withdrawals will continue as they are currently set up. Please send an email to noni@kmlchurch.org or complete a new Simply Giving form and turn it into the

office so we can make those changes. **If you would like more info. on Simply Giving**, you can pick up a form at the Welcome Desk or call the office.

PARKING... On a regular basis we run out of handicapped parking spaces on Sunday mornings. In order to ease this situation, please use the east parking lot (by the handicapped entrance) only if you have a mobility issue. Those who are physically able are asked to use the west parking lot. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS Saturday, January 4, 4:30-5:00 PM in the Bride's Room near Sanctuary and Sunday, January 19, 10:00-11:00 AM in the Fellowship Lounge. Trained volunteers provide blood pressure checks free of charge on the 1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday of each month.

YESTERDAY'S YOUTH Yesterday's Youth will be taking our yearly winter break, for weather related reasons. We will not be meeting in January or February. You will not want to miss out, when we return on March 3!! Stephen Sieberson will be our speaker. He will be discussing his new book, so mark your calendars for the first Tuesday in March!! Stay tuned for some very exciting news and changes. Stay warm and keep safe during these colder winter months!

KMLC MEN'S LUNCHEON Join us on Thursday, January 16, 11:30 AM. The suggested donation for lunch is \$10. Watch the bulletin and weekly e-news for more information. Please RSVP to the Church office by Tuesday, January 14 or to jim@kmlchurch.org.

BAPTISM SEMINAR If you are interested in having your child baptized and have not been through a Baptism Seminar before, please join us on Sunday, January 27 at 10:10 AM. We will meet in the Nave. The purpose of the seminar is to introduce parents to the theology of baptism, walk through the baptismal liturgy, discuss scheduling for the baptism, and address any questions the parents might have. Please call the church office to register at 402-341-7761.

SIMPLY GIVING Just a reminder - if you give your offering automatically through Simply Giving, please remember if there are any changes to be made, whether increasing, decreasing, or stopping the automatic giving, you need to indicate this change to the office or the withdrawals will continue as they are currently set up. Please send an email to noni@kmlchurch.org or complete a new Simply Giving form and turn it into the office so we can make those changes. If you would like more info. on Simply Giving, you can pick up a form at the Welcome Desk or call the office.

CJH CAMP EARLY BIRD SAVINGS! Register for CJH Camp before January 31, 2019 and get \$50 off a full-week session and a drawstring bag! You can register online at <https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>.

HOSPICE VOLUNTEER EDUCATION Hospice volunteers provide companionship for individuals living with terminal illnesses and their families. Volunteers choose the hours they are able to serve and determine the geographical location in the metro Omaha/Council Bluffs and the surrounding area. Volunteer education will take place on February 20, 24, and 27 and is sponsored by CHI Health at Home Hospice, VNA Hospice, and Hospice House—The Josie Harper Residence. If interested, please call: VNA Hospice: Celeste Feuerbach at 402-930-4143. CHI Health at Home Hospice: Mary Pendell at 402-898-8239. Hospice House: Tina Geistfeld at 402-343-8600.

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

Saturday Attendance: 24

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 163 **11:00:** 75

Midweek - New Year's Day

Total: 262

Pantry Guests Served: Closed

Medical Clinic Guests Served: Closed

Offering:

\$20,583.50 (Regular) \$5,318.73 (Specials)

\$8,735.00 (Phase 2) \$7,847.00 (Christmas)

**The Annual Meeting of Kountze Memorial Church
Sunday, February 2, 2020 10:10 AM**

In the Fellowship Hall

The Annual Report will be available on Sunday, January 26, 2020. You can pick it up that Sunday or during the week. It will also be available on our website, www.kmlchurch.org and click on "About Us". All items to be included in the Annual Report should be in to the office by Sunday, January 12, 2020.



The Christmas message is full of grace and truth.

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

Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh
Monday	Jeremiah 31:7-14	The joyful return of the exiles
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:3-14	Spiritual blessings in Christ
Wednesday	1 Peter 5:1-11	Tending the flock of God
Thursday	Genesis 50:14-21	Joseph's promise to his brothers
Friday	2 Corinthians 12:1-10	Visions from the Lord
Saturday	Psalm 147:12-20	Sing and praise the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 3:13-17	The baptism of Jesus



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And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. **John 1:14 (NRSV)**

A Prayer for the Week:

God of grace and truth, give us faith to believe and to live with joy, for you have entered our world and our lives as the light that shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, just as you give us our daily bread, give us the joy of knowing the Bread of Life who brings light to all people. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you with grace and joy.

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

- The twelve days of Christmas have not ended. Why do you think some people take their decorations down early?
- What is so amazing about the Christmas story?
- Why is the message of Christmas so important to hear again and again?

Read: John 1:1-18.

After the celebrations, it is hard to remember that we are still in the season of Christmas, a time to focus on the power, meaning, and joy of Christ's birth. This is when "the Word became flesh and lived among us" (v. 14). It is good to know that we are children of God. Ephesians lifts this up by noting that we are adopted. The Greek text makes it clear that we are adopted like a son. At that time, it was the son who inherited all that the father had. We, as those adopted by God, are heirs to all that God has (Ephesians 1:14). What an amazing message, filled with "grace and truth." John uses the word grace (undeserved kindness) four times in this text, but never again. The rest of the Gospel gives us examples of this grace through light, bread, wine, vines, water, and more. The Christmas message is worthy of an entire season to envision and digest again and again. God comes in human form to touch us with "grace upon grace" (v. 16) that we may know that we are children and heirs of all that God can give us. How can you continue to celebrate and live the message of Christmas in daily life?

Pray: O God of Christmas joy, remind us of your grace and truth that makes us heirs of eternal gladness through the Word that became flesh and now still lives among us. Amen.

The twelve days of Christmas begin on December 25th and end on January 5th, the day before Epiphany. We often increase giving and donations to support those in need the weeks before Christmas but seldom the days after. Sing or listen to *The Twelve Days of Christmas* song. It is about giving. For each verse of the song the giving increases. In what ways can you increase your giving of time, talents, and treasures this coming year?

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17