

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

February 16, 2020

9:00 & 11:00 AM

SIXTH SUNDAY after EPIPHANY



In today's reading from Deuteronomy we are called to choose life by loving and obeying God. Much of today's gospel reading echoes portions of the Ten Commandments. Jesus' instructions to the crowd reveal a pattern of behavior that honors both God and the neighbor, resulting in life and health for the whole community. We too are invited to embrace these commandments, not out of fear of retribution, but because God has promised that to do so means life for us.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

“Kumb Ba Ya”
“There Is A Balm in Gilead”

African American spirituals
arr. Adolphus Hailstork
Mark Jones, organist

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit, the eternal voice from heaven, the anointed and beloved one, the Spirit moving over the waters.

C Amen.

P As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession, trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P God who searches us and knows us,

C you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.

We have not been just in our dealings with others.

We have chosen revenge over mercy.

We have promoted ourselves instead of walking humbly with you.

With what shall we come before you?

**Forgive us our sin, and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

P Beloved of God, you have not received the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ. Receive the promise of baptism: You are God’s child; † your sins are forgiven. Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven:

C Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

“I Want Jesus to Walk with Me”

ELW 325

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

☞ Almighty God,

☞ **the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

JOYFUL SOUNDS CHOIR (11 AM) “*This Little Light of Mine*”

by Joel Rainey

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 30:15-20

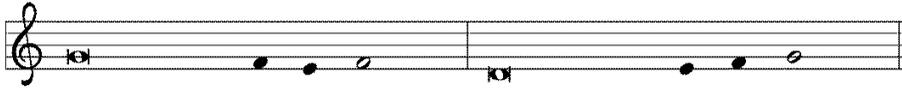
The Lord sets before the people of God a clear choice. Life and prosperity will come to the faithful; loss of the land will be the consequence of disobedience. Choosing life entails loving and holding fast to the Lord. Life in God's presence presupposes the promise made to the ancestors.

Moses said to the people: ¹⁵See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, death and adversity. ¹⁶If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I am commanding you today, by loving the Lord your God, walking in his ways, and observing his commandments, decrees, and ordinances, then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to possess. ¹⁷But if your heart turns away and you do not hear, but are led astray to bow down to other gods and serve them, ¹⁸I declare to you today that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. ¹⁹I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, ²⁰loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him; for that means life to you and length of days, so that you may live in the land that the Lord swore to give to your ancestors, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

☞ The word of the Lord.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 119:1-8 (sung)



¹Happy are they whose | way is blameless,
who follow the teaching | of the LORD!

²**Happy are they who observe | your decrees
and seek you with | all their hearts,**

³who never do | any wrong,
but always walk | in your ways.

⁴**You laid down | your commandments,
that we should | fully keep them.**

⁵Oh, that my ways were made | so direct
that I might | keep your statutes!

⁶**Then I should not be | put to shame,
when I regard all | your commandments.**

⁷I will thank you with | a true heart,
when I have learned your | righteous judgments.

⁸**I will | keep your statutes;
do not utter- | ly forsake me.**

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Human leaders in the church are not the ones who control ministry. Rather they are coworkers who belong to God, the one who truly controls and continuously empowers the ministry of the church.

Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? ⁴For when one says, “*I belong to Paul,*” and another, “*I belong to Apollos,*” are you not merely human?

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸The one who plants and the one who waters have a common purpose, and each will receive wages according to the labor of each. ⁹For we are God’s servants, working together; you are God’s field, God’s building.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ **Thanks be to God.**

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“*Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word*”

ELW 517 vs 1

**Lord, keep us steadfast in your word;
curb those who by deceit or sword
would wrest the kingdom from your Son
and bring to naught all he has done.**

📖 The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

👏 Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 5:21-37

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus exhorts his followers to embrace standards of righteousness that exceed legal requirements and traditional expectations.

Jesus says to the disciples: ²¹“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ ²²But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ²⁸But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

³¹“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ ³²But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

³³“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ ³⁴But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your word be ‘Yes, Yes’ or ‘No, No’; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”

📖 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.

(sit)

SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“My God, How Wonderful Thou Art”

ELW 863

THE APOSTLES' CREED

P With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

C **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.**

(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)

Illness: Richard Bock, Debbi Buike, office volunteer, Don Burton, Joe Doremus, Rodney Edwards, Samuel Garrett, Dolores Hiatt, Karrol Kamarath, Roseann Klug, mother of David Klug, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Gary Rodene, Rosmarie Schmidt, Bess Swanson, Sheri Tipton, Jerry Warner, Ed & Darlene White

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military*—Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Wyatt Johnson, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, 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, Justin Perkins

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

“This Little Light of Mine”
Adult and Joyful Sounds Choir

by Joel Rainey

THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”

ELW 310 vs 1&4

- 1** Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise;
manifested by the star to the sages from afar,
branch of royal David's stem in thy birth at Bethlehem:
anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

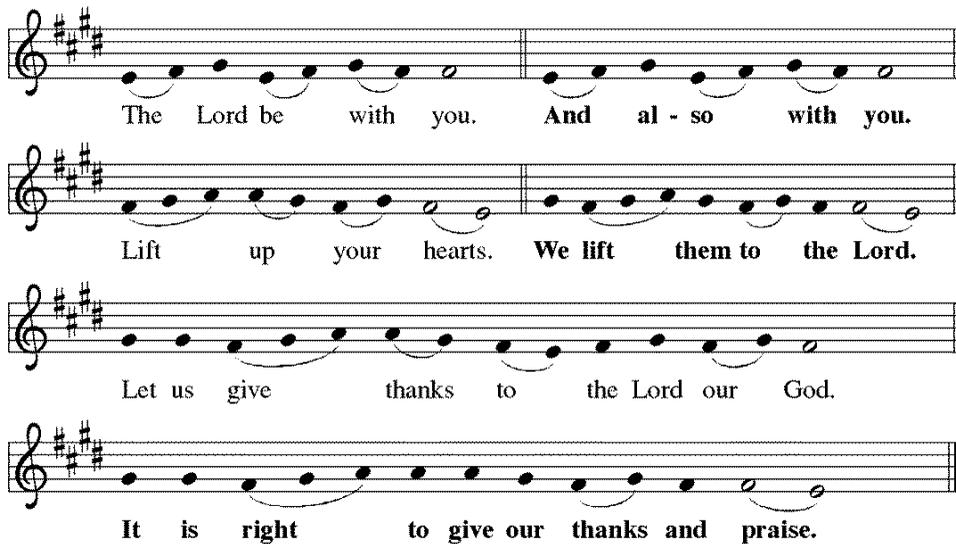
- 4** Grant us grace to see thee, Lord, present in thy holy word;
grace to imitate thee now and be pure, as pure art thou;
that we might become like thee at thy great epiphany,
and may praise thee, ever blest, God in flesh made manifest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807-1885, alt.

OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of wonder,
- C** you formed us in our mother's womb, and from mother earth you bring forth this bread and wine. We place them on your table, together with our lives and all that you have made. Open the heavens to us and pour out your Spirit. We wait for your mercy; we long for your peace; we hunger and thirst for Jesus Christ, our banquet of life. Amen.

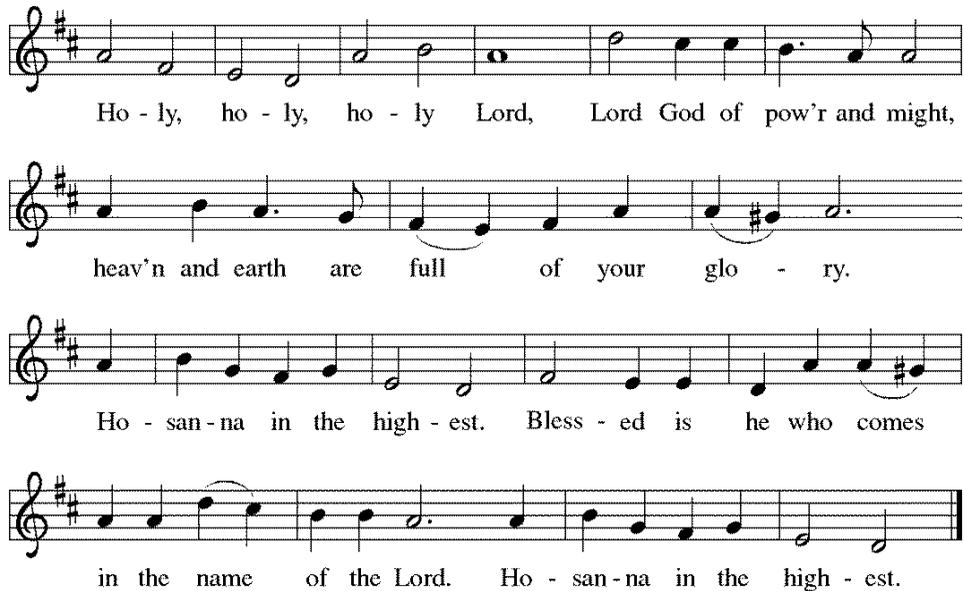
HOLY COMMUNION



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 EPIPHANY

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

☞ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray:

☞ **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

☞ Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

☞ **Come to the table of mercy and joy.**

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)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“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.

“Let Us Break Bread Together”
“There Is A Balm In Gilead”

ELW 471
ELW 614

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☐ Faithful God,
- ☑ you have kept your promise to us in this meal, nourishing us with the gift of salvation. Now send your servants forth in peace, that we may testify to your goodness and share the hope that is ours in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING

(sit)

BLESSING

- ☐ May Christ, the wisdom and power of God, and the source of our life together, keep you united in mind and purpose. And the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death”

ELW 425

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. Let your light shine.
☑ **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Oh, Freedom”

African American Spiritual
arr. Adolphus Hailstork
Mark Jones, organist

† † †

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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
Taylor Brown	Exec. Dir. Kountze Commons

SATURDAY, 5:00 PM

Lector	Debra Kelly
Ushers	Duane Hovendick Penny Hovendick
Comm. Set-up	Penny Hovendick

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Rhonda Wachholtz Dan Collett Lorie Groenjes Scott Henneman
Lector	Ruth Henneman
Ushers	Rodney Nord Bob Johnson Brad Madison Sharon West Dean Winther Dan Troxel
Greeters	Colleen Lenners Carole Meilahn Bev Troxel
Crucifer	John Groenjes
Acolytes	Kaitlyn Munguia Charlie Wachholtz

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Deb Hinrichs Lowell Harms
Lector	Ann Miller
Ushers	Norm Sack Ken Johnson Linda Johnson Lee Johnson
Greeters	Barb Chrisman
Crucifer	Charlie Campbell
Acolytes	Hadley Rief Henry Rief



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

February 15 & 16, 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 worshipping, 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:** The Creed: He Sits at the Right Hand of God **NEXT WEEK:** The Creed: He Will Come Again

ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God in honor of the children's choir directors; Anita, Donna, Judi, and Becky given by Andrew & Nicholas Hansen

ETERNAL CANDLE is given to the glory of God in memory of Pat's sister given by Robert & Pat Ranney

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

JOYFUL SOUNDS CHILDREN'S CHOIR Join us each Sunday from 9-9:30 AM. All children (K-6th grade) who want to praise our Lord by singing, meet in the Joyful Sounds Studio on the 2nd floor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL Join us on Sundays on the 2nd floor for Sunday School. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9:00—10:00 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 at 10:10 AM.

February 16 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)
 10:00 AM Blood Pressure Checks
 10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
 10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
 10:10 AM Adult Forum
 10:15 PM Endowment Board
 10:30 AM Executive Committee

February 17 Monday

President's Day
 OFFICE CLOSED
 6:00 PM Clinic Board

February 18 Tuesday

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group
 6:00 PM Congregation Council

February 19 Wednesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

12:15 PM Worship
 6:00 PM Confirmation Supper
 6:30 PM Confirmation Class
 7:30 PM Confirmation Worship

February 20 Thursday

Council Reports Due
 11:30 AM Men's Luncheon
 4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
 7:00 PM Circle 5

February 22 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

February 23 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)
 10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
 10:10 AM Adult Forum
 12:00 PM Stephen Ministry

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, April 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 May 3. Please indicate your attendance plans on your attendance card or call the church office by April 12 and let us know if you will need childcare when you register. We are also planning a Saturday New Member Class for those not able to attend on Sundays. Please mark April 18 & 25 from 3:00—4:15 PM on your calendars and mark your attendance card if you plan to attend. New members will be received on Saturday, May 2.

KOUNTZE FOOD PANTRY Thanks to all who donated cereal in January. The Kountze Food Pantry is also the recipient of Morning Star Lutheran Church's January Cereal Bowl. They donated 188 lbs. of cereal to us! In February the pantry can once again use donations of toilet tissue. We do strive to make sure every Pantry guest receives one roll. Please leave your donations in the crate located in Fellowship Hall. Your gifts are mightily appreciated! Please consider volunteering for one of the regular shifts from 9:00—11:00 AM or 11:00AM—1:00 PM. The green sign-up book is in Fellowship Hall, meeting room A, by the kitchen.

KMLC MEN'S LUNCH First (possibly annual) Men's Chili Cookoff! Thursday, February 20, 11:30 AM Call the church office or email jim@kmlchurch.org to sign up. Let us know if you will be entering a pot of chili or just attending. If your entering a pot of chili the cost is free otherwise suggested donation for the event will be \$5.00 which will cover cornbread, drinks, deserts and two free tums tablets! Come vote on your favorite chili, there will be prizes for the top three and a great time of fellowship.

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.

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE "PALOOZA" BREAKFAST supporting Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministry is happening February 25 at St. Timothy Lutheran Church from 7:30—9:30 AM. Breakfast will be prepared by "The Pancake Man" Jim Cooper, who is a "showman" as he cooks the cakes. A feast of all you care to eat pancakes, sausage, and enjoy fellowship in support of our work together in faith formation for college age young adults. Free will offering for breakfast—college students free with student ID.

TABLE GRACE ANNUAL FUNDRAISER Nourishing Hungry Bodies and Souls "Voices of Empowerment" with MC D. Kevin Williams on Friday, March 6, from 5:30—8:30 PM at St. Thomas Lutheran Church (17007 Q St). Heavy hors d'oeuvres, music, live and silent auction. This year's fundraiser is in memory of Tom Tentis. Individual tickets are \$80 or sponsor a table (includes 8 tickets) for \$640—\$20,000. Tickets are available at tickets@tablegraceministries.com or call Simone at 402-965-1276. Reserve table or tickets by March 3.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASSES March 22 & 29, 12:15 PM. Communion is open to all baptized Christians. Those children who are already communing or those children interested in receiving Holy Communion are invited to a First Communion class. We will begin with lunch in the conference room followed by instruction in the Nave with Pastor Hall. Participants will receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 9 at 7:00 PM. A good guide for determining when your children are ready to receive Communion is when they begin to ask about receiving it during the liturgy. Please register with the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org.

LYSO June 8—12, 2020, from 8:30—Noon. Grades K—12. Mark your Calendar for this exciting summer ministry opportunity. Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is hosting Lutheran Youth Serve Omaha (LYSO). JOIN US!! Invite your friends.

JOURNEY 2020 The Nebraska Synod Journey is typically a six or seven-day experience held during the summers when there isn't an ELCA Youth Gathering, and it's open to youth who have completed grades 8-12 along with their adult leaders. The next Journey will be held July 6-12, 2020 in Nashville, Tennessee. Early bird (submitted on or before February 15, 2020): \$495. \$100 per person deposit is due with online registrations and is paid by credit card online. Space is limited, so please register early. Registration forms are available online at: <https://nebraskasynod.org/ministries/faithformation/youth/trips/journey-registration.html>

ATTENDANCE & GIVING

Saturday Attendance: 45

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 189 11:00: 107

Midweek - Noon: 13 **Evening:** Closed

Total: 354

Pantry Guests Served: 252

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 33

Offering:

\$15,133.50 (Regular) \$1,806.00 (Specials)

\$1,314.00 (Phase 2)

Jo Kayton, a long-time member of Kountze Memorial will be celebrating her 90th birthday on February 17. Cards may be sent to:

Jo Kayton
8141 Farnam Dr Apt 303
Omaha NE 68114



God's law is meant to protect life.

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

Sunday	Matthew 5:21-37	Teachings of Jesus
Monday	Deuteronomy 30:15-20	Choose life, not death
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 3:1-9	Working together for God
Wednesday	Galatians 5:13-6:2	Fulfilling the law of Christ
Thursday	Deuteronomy 30:8-14	The Lord will bring you back
Friday	Romans 3:19-26	Justified by grace
Saturday	Psalms 119:1-8	The law of the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 17:1-19	Transfiguration of Jesus



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Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and holding fast to him. **Deuteronomy 30:19b-20a (NRSV)**

A Prayer for the Week:

Almighty God, you who give life and protect life with your law, help us to care for others, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this food, a gift of love that gives us life. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord bless you with joy as you walk in the ways of God. (Psalm 119:1)

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

- What is something that you really enjoy in life?
- How do others watching you know that you are enjoying life?
- How do you see God as part of the life you enjoy?

Read: Matthew 5:21-37.

These words from Jesus can seem difficult to accept, even scary. Jesus is doing two basic things. He is presenting himself as an authorized interpreter of God's law ("but I say to you") and he is refuting a use of the law that allows people to abuse others. Jesus points out that not killing and not committing adultery carries with them the commitment to value another person's life beyond not killing or divorcing someone. God's law protects life, all life. That means people's reputations, relationships with others, and ability to live daily in peace is valued by God. God cares about all of life. Jesus' hyperbole about plucking out one's eye or cutting off one's hand is a tool of wisdom speech. It makes a point that the intent of God's law is so very important because God's gift of life is that important. And Jesus—like no other—is authorized to state this point in the face of scribes, Pharisees, and all the learned teachers of the law. How do you see God's law as a gift to protect you and your neighbor?

Pray: **Lord Jesus, you teach us that the greatest law is to love God and neighbor. Help us to live lives that love you and all people. Amen.**

God's law is meant to protect life, which is the theme this week throughout the Daily Bible Readings. The Christian response to Jesus' teachings is to love God and neighbor through actions and words. Think about and act upon what this means to you. Is there a congregation or organization near you that would benefit from a financial contribution or your volunteer time to provide a needed service for others?

The reading from 1 Corinthians 3 this week reminds us that "we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building" (v.9). Gather together a few toy building blocks or boxes. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-9. Build a tower one block at a time. Each time you add a block, name ways we grow in our faith: e.g., worship, prayer, singing, or reading Scripture. After the tower is built, use these practices to grow in your faith this week.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2
2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9