

# 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](http://www.kmlchurch.org)**

**November 1, 2020**

**9:00 AM**

**ALL SAINTS DAY**



*All Saints celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. As November heralds the dying of the landscape in many northern regions, the readings and liturgy call us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptism is complete. At the Lord's table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved.

**C** Amen.

*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

**P** Most merciful God,

**C** we confess that we are not awake for you.

We are not faithful in using your gifts.

We forget the least of our siblings.

We do not see your beautiful image in one another.

We are infected by sin

that divides your beloved community.

Open our hearts to your coming,

open our eyes to see you in our neighbor,

open our hands to serve your creation. Amen.

**P** Beloved, we are God's children, and Jesus, our Beloved, opens the door to us. Through † Jesus you are forgiven, by Jesus you are welcome, in Jesus you are called to rejoice! Let us live in the promises prepared for us from the foundation of the world.

**C** Amen.

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*"For All the Saints"*

ELW 422

vs. 1, 2, 6, 7

1 For all the saints  
who from their labors rest,  
who thee by faith before the world confessed,  
thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

2 Thou wast their rock,  
their fortress, and their might;  
thou, Lord, their captain in the well-fought  
fight;  
thou, in the darkness drear,  
their one true light.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

6 But then there breaks  
a yet more glorious day:  
the saints triumphant rise in bright array;  
the King of glory passes on his way.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

7 From earth's wide bounds,  
from ocean's farthest coast,  
through gates of pearl streams in the  
countless host,  
singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost:  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Text: William W. How, 1823-1897

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☞ Almighty God,  
☞ you have knit your chosen people together in one communion, in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant us grace to follow your blessed saints in lives of faith and commitment, and to know the inexpressible joys you have prepared for those who love you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## WORD

(sit)

### FIRST READING

**Revelation 7:9-17**

*The book of Revelation is written to seven churches in western Asia Minor during a time of great oppression. Today's reading is a response to the question asked in 6:17: "Who is able to stand?" The writer gives the faithful the assurance of God's protection and a vision of victory.*

**A**fter this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup>They cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!" <sup>11</sup>And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup>singing,

*"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."*

<sup>13</sup>Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?" <sup>14</sup>I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. <sup>15</sup>For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. <sup>16</sup>They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; <sup>17</sup>for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

☞ The word of the Lord!

☞ **Thanks be to God!**

**PSALM 34:1-10, 22** (*read responsively*)

<sup>1</sup>I will bless the LORD at all times;  
the praise of God shall ever be in my mouth.

<sup>2</sup>**I will glory in the LORD;  
let the lowly hear and rejoice.**

<sup>3</sup>Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD;  
let us exalt God's name together.

<sup>4</sup>**I sought the LORD, who answered me  
and delivered me from all my terrors.**

<sup>5</sup>Look upon the LORD and be radiant,  
and let not your faces be ashamed.

<sup>6</sup>**I called in my affliction, and the LORD heard me  
and saved me from all my troubles.**

<sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD  
and delivers them.

<sup>8</sup>**Taste and see that the LORD is good;  
happy are they who take refuge in God!**

<sup>9</sup>Fear the LORD, you saints of the LORD,  
for those who fear the LORD lack nothing.

<sup>10</sup>**The lions are in want and suffer hunger,  
but those who seek the LORD lack nothing that is good.**

<sup>22</sup>O LORD, you redeem the life of your servants,  
and those who put their trust in you will not be punished.

**SECOND READING**

**1 John 3:1-3**

*A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God's purposes. God, out of divine love, set us apart to be the children of God. Our holy hope is that we shall see God as God really is.*

**S**ee what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. <sup>2</sup>Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. <sup>3</sup>And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.

☐ 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. Matthew.

☞ **Glory to you, O Lord!**

## HOLY GOSPEL

**Matthew 5:1-12**

*In the Beatitudes, Jesus provides a unique description of those who are blessed with God's favor. His teaching is surprising and shocking to those who seek wealth, fame, and control over others.*

**W**hen Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup>“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup>“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

☞ The Gospel of the Lord.

☞ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*(sit)*

## CHILDREN’S BLESSING

## SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

*(stand)*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

“Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones”

**ELW 424**

**1 Ye watchers and ye holy ones,  
bright seraphs, cherubim, and thrones,  
raise the glad strain: "Alleluia!"  
Cry out, dominions, prinedoms, pow'rs,  
archangels, virtues, angel choirs:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia!**

**2 O higher than the cherubim,  
more glorious than the seraphim,  
lead their praises: "Alleluia!"  
Thou bearer of the eternal Word,  
most gracious, magnify the Lord:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia!**

**3 Respond, ye souls in endless rest,  
ye patriarchs and prophets blest:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!"  
Ye holy twelve, ye martyrs strong,  
all saints triumphant, raise the song:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia!**

**4 O friends, in gladness let us sing,  
supernal anthems echoing:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!"  
To God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Spirit, Three in One:  
"Alleluia! Alleluia!" Alleluia, alleluia,  
alleluia!**

Text: J. Athelstan Riley, 1858-1945

Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal* ©  
Oxford University Press 1906. All rights reserved.

(sit)

# LITANY OF THE SAINTS

Leader Assembly

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Be gra - cious to us: **Hear us, O God.**  
De - liv - er your people: **Hear us, O God.**

You loved us before the world was made: **Hear us, O God.**  
You rescued the people of your promise: **Hear us, O God.**  
You spoke through your prophets: **Hear us, O God.**  
You gave your only Son for the life of the world: **Hear us, O God.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: **Great is your love.**  
and was born of the vir - gin Mary: **Great is your love.**  
who by his cross and suffering re - deemed the world: **Great is your love.**  
and has washed us from our sins: **Great is your love.**  
who on the third day rose from the dead: **Great is your love.**  
and has given us the vic - to - ry: **Great is your love.**  
who ascend - ed on high: **Great is your love.**  
and intercedes for us at the right hand of God: **Great is your love.**

For the gift of the Ho - ly Spirit: **Thanks be to God.**  
For the one holy catholic and apos - tol - ic church: **Thanks be to God.**  
For the great cloud of witnesses  
into which we are bap - tized: **Thanks be to God.**

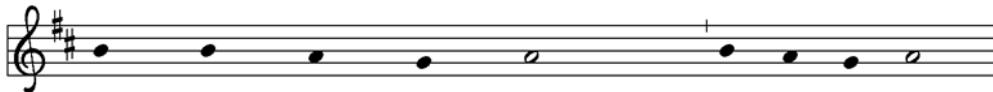
For Sarah and Abraham, Isaac and Re - bekah: **Thanks be to God.**  
For Gideon and Deborah, Da - vid and Esther: **Thanks be to God.**  
For Moses and Isaiah, Jeremi - ah and Daniel: **Thanks be to God.**  
For Miriam and Rahab, Abi - gail and Ruth: **Thanks be to God.**



For Mary, mother of our Lord: **Thanks be to God.**  
For John, who baptized in the Jordan: **Thanks be to God.**  
For Mary Magdalene and Joanna, Ma-ry and Martha: **Thanks be to God.**  
For James and John, Pe - ter and Andrew: **Thanks be to God.**  
For Paul and Apollos, Ste - phen and Phoebe: **Thanks be to God.**



For all holy men and women,  
our mothers and fa - thers in faith: **Thanks be to God.**  
For the noble band of the prophets: **Thanks be to God.**  
For the glorious company of the a - postles: **Thanks be to God.**  
For the white-robed ar - my of martyrs: **Thanks be to God.**  
For cherubim and seraphim,  
Michael and the ho - ly angels: **Thanks be to God.**



Be gra - cious to us: **Hear us, O God.**  
De - liv - er your people: **Hear us, O God.**



Give new life to your servants by the grace of baptism: **Hear us, O God.**  
Strengthen all who bear the sign of the cross: **Hear us, O God.**  
Clothe us in compas - sion and love: **Hear us, O God.**  
Bring us with all your saints to the riv - er of life: **Hear us, O God.**



Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

*(see insert for Celebration of All Saints' Day)*

**WE CELEBRATE THE NEW SAINTS OF GOD,  
JOINED TO CHRIST THROUGH THE GIFT OF BAPTISM**

*We give thanks for those who have been welcomed in the body of Christ  
and into the mission we share since All Saints' Day last year.*

*Romy Damme*

*Margarita Valquier*

*Penelope Hadfield*

*Reed Clanton*

*Maren Arent*

*Ellie Durio*

*Gemma Bottolfson*

*Everly Riesenberg*

*Silje Pignatore*

*Traeden Allison*

*Max Garday*

**REMEMBERING THE SAINTS OF GOD**

*We give thanks for the life and witness of those saints who have gone before us and now rest with God. Today we remember those saints of our own Faith Community who entered the church triumphant since All Saints' Day last year.*

***Rest eternal grant them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them.***

*Vera Waterman*

*Ronald Stadie*

*Delores Hiatt*

*Maxine Selberg*

*Jean Holcombe*

*Howard Jensen*

*Ruby Nielsen*

*Maryann Stadie*

*Lois Carlsen*

*Carolyn Nippert*

*Pamela Carlson*

*Frances "Joe" Doremus*

*Jean Laughlin*

*Jack Duffield*

*James "Tim" Daugherty*

*Joseph Bonfante*

*Rosemarie Schmidt*

*Douglas Lash*

*Teresa Valentine*

*Annabell McKenna*

*Joan Nelson*

*Lloyd Peters*

(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)*

**Thanksgiving:** for the birth of Louis Stephen Urlaub, son of Steve & Jennifer Urlaub

**Illness:** Richard Bock, Don Burton, Carol Coffey, Pr. Shari Duminy, Carol Duncan, sister of Debbie Robinson, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Ranae Gardner, Samuel Garrett, Richard Holzer, father of James Holzer, Renee Johnson, daughter-in-law of Ken & Linda Johnson, Harlan Kirkvold, father of Steve Kirkvold, Josh Kropenske, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Patricia Ranney, Gary Rodene, Evelyn Sueper, grandmother of Melissa Osentowski, Sheri Tipton, Dorothy Vancaster, Charlie Wachholtz, Ed & Darlene White, Robert Whitehead, Kimberly Wilson, Joanne Worm

**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; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators

**Other Prayers:** *Seminarians*—Adam Klinker, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks, Justin Perkins

## WE SHARE GOD’S PEACE

## MEAL

(sit)

### THANKOFFERING

*“And so, with all the saints, with the choirs of angels and the hosts of heaven...”* When we gather around the altar of the Lord in His House we pray and praise God with *“all the company of heaven.”* Those we have lost in the Lord are not truly lost to us – they have simply entered their rest with the Lord. As we gather to worship our Lord, we gather along with them. On the Last Day everything that God has given into the care of our stewardship will fade away – everything except our brothers and sisters in Christ. Caring for one another in love and grace is our highest calling. *If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online.*



### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*“At The River”*

adapted by: Aaron Copland  
Janet Carlsen Campbell, *mezzo-soprano*

(stand)

## OFFERTORY HYMN

*“Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”*

ELW 184



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bles-sing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that



we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of



all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble



with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERING PRAYER

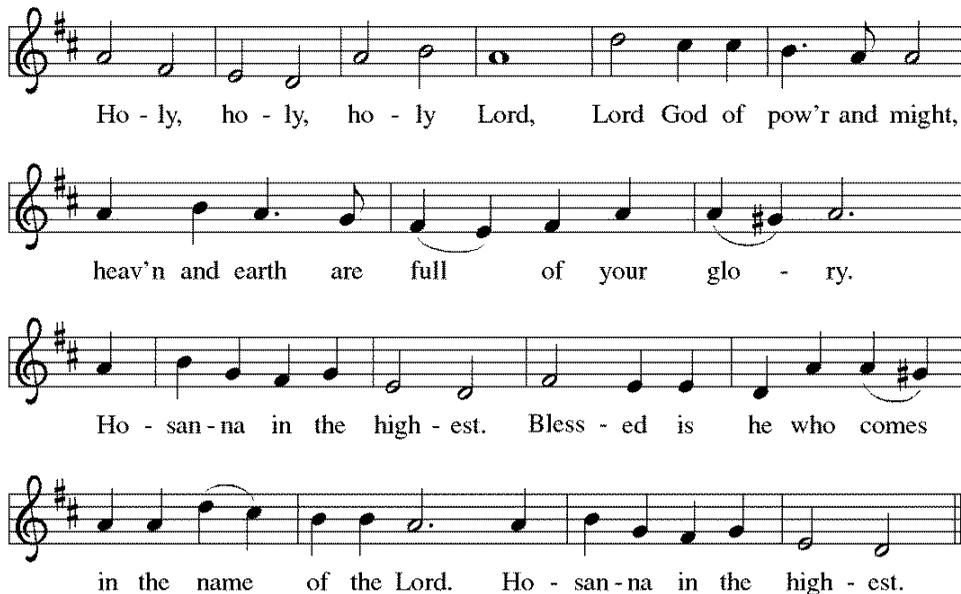
- P** God of all goodness,
- C** generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. Amen.

## HOLY COMMUNION

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

## PREFACE FOR ALL SAINTS' DAY

### 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

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

**C** **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

**P** There is a place for you at the banquet.

**C** Come and feast at Jesus' table.

*(sit)*

## **HYMNS DURING COMMUNION**

*“What Wondrous Love Is This”*

**ELW 666**

- 1** What wondrous love is this,  
O my soul, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!  
What wondrous love is this  
that caused the Lord of bliss  
to bear the dreadful curse  
for my soul, for my soul,  
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?
  
- 2** When I was sinking down,  
sinking down, sinking down,  
when I was sinking down, sinking down,  
when I was sinking down  
beneath God's righteous frown,  
Christ laid aside his crown  
for my soul, for my soul,  
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.

- 3** To God and to the Lamb  
I will sing, I will sing;  
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;  
to God and to the Lamb,  
who is the great I AM,  
while millions join the theme,  
I will sing, I will sing,  
while millions join the theme, I will sing.
  
- 4** And when from death I'm free,  
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;  
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;  
and when from death I'm free,  
I'll sing God's love for me,  
and through eternity  
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;  
and through eternity I'll sing on.

Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.

*(stand)*

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P** Lord Jesus,

- C** in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey, strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way. Amen.

# SENDING

(sit)

## BLESSING

- ☞ May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of Almighty God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit, be with you today and always.

## THREE-FOLD AMEN

## HYMN

*“Shall We Gather at the River”*

**ELW 423**

**1 Shall we gather at the river,  
where bright angel feet have trod,  
with its crystal tide forever  
flowing by the throne of God?**

**we will walk and worship ever,  
all the happy golden day. *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
the beautiful, the beautiful river;  
gather with the saints at the river  
that flows by the throne of God.**

**3 Ere we reach the shining river,  
lay we ev'ry burden down;  
grace our spirits will deliver,  
and provide a robe and crown. *Refrain***

**2 On the margin of the river,  
washing up its silver spray,**

**4 Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
soon our happy hearts will quiver  
with the melody of peace. *Refrain***

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899

## DISMISSAL

- ☞ Beloved of God, go now in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
☞ Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

† † †

## Special Notice

If you plan to attend Worship in person, please call/e-mail the church office no later than noon on the Thursday before the Saturday or Sunday you want to attend. Please note that the plans set forth are subject to immediate change. You may still join us for Worship on Cox channel 13 or live streamed at <https://www.kmlchurch.org/live-streaming/>



# KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

October 31 & November 1, 2020

## Kountze Food Pantry

Need Personal Care Items & Volunteers

**Mondays, 7:30 - 9:00 AM;**

**9:00 - 11:00 AM;**

**11:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**Fridays, 4:00 - 7:00 PM**

The Food Pantry is collecting personal care items for Christmas bags. We need: FULL SIZE shampoo and conditioner, razors and shave cream, toothpaste, brushes and floss, bar soap or body wash, and toilet paper. If you would also like to volunteer, we are open Monday 7:30 AM-1:00 PM, and Friday 4:00 - 7:00 PM. Please sign up to volunteer at the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/200834787701155>

## Did you know...

If you shop with Amazon you can benefit the Kountze Endowment! Simply go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and log in as you normally would. In the upper left you will see the word **supporting**. Type in **Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church Endowment Fund** and click on the select button. Amazon will donate ½% of all your purchases to our Endowment Fund.

## Today at Kountze

### Special Congregation Meeting Rescheduled

A special congregational meeting for the sole purpose of voting on calling The Reverend Shari Duminy as Associate Pastor will be rescheduled. Watch the bulletin and e-news for more information.

**Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God in honor of all of the volunteers who help in this difficult time in church given by Albert & Ilse Grage; In memory of Carrie Jones and loved ones given by Betty Callies & Marvel Green

## Online Sunday School

Lessons are videotaped and posted on the KMLC Parents Facebook page as well as the Kountze Memorial Facebook Page. In addition, there are pintables and activity suggestions that complement the lesson. If you would prefer to receive the lessons by email, please contact Kristin Boe at [kristin@kmlchurch.org](mailto:kristin@kmlchurch.org).

## Youth Forum

**Sundays at 10:10 AM**

**IN-PERSON:** The youth group will meet in-person in the green space on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month. The 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month will be current event Sunday.

Please bring an article or current event to share (must be non-COVID related).

**ZOOM:** The youth group will meet via Zoom on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month.

## Adult Forum

Members and friends of the congregation will have the opportunity to study Martin Luther's "Freedom of a Christian" (1520). The ELCA is encouraging study of this monumental text on its 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Pr. Hall will post videos for this multi-week study on a Kountze Memorial designated channel on YouTube. The YouTube link to the videos is

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChtalSdEiyMBKIZjbGGIyFA/>

The text of "Freedom of a Christian" and the study guide are available for free on the ELCA's Reformation homepage: [www.elca500.org](http://www.elca500.org).

## Attendance and Giving

**Saturday Attendance:** 16

**Sunday Attendance: 9:00:** 62

**Total:** 78

**Pantry Guests Served:** 861

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 27

**Offering:**

\$11,320.04 (Regular)      \$1,755.48 (Specials)

\$707.00 (Debt Reduction)

*God promises glory and peace forevermore.*

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

Sunday	Matthew 5:1-12	The beatitudes
Monday	Revelation 7:9-17	God will wipe away tears
Tuesday	1 John 3:1-3	Our hope in God
Wednesday	Joshua 3:7-17	Crossing over the Jordan River
Thursday	Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Friday	John 11:17-27	The resurrection and life
Saturday	Psalm 34:1-10, 22	Honor the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 25:1-13	A parable of the ten bridesmaids



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“[F]or the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” **Revelation 7:17 (NRSV)**

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Almighty God, we thank you for joining us to the saints throughout the ages through our shepherd, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for this food as we taste and see that you are good. Amen. (Psalm 34:8)

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the Lord of glory and honor and power and might bless you now and forever more. (Revelation 7:12)

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

- Tell or think about someone who has died and who was a loving gift to you.
- Describe or think about what being a saint means to you.
- What is your vision of heaven and how is that important to your daily life?

*Read:* Revelation 7:9-17.

The seer of this heavenly vision allows us to imagine the future of loved ones who have died, especially those who have shaped our own lives of faith with their living witness. Most likely they did not experience the kind of persecution envisioned in Revelation, but all lives know the pain and turmoil of daily struggles. In the end, what remains of their—and our—sufferings and disappointments are swept up in a larger reality, one that sees the Lamb at the center. This is Christ, our shepherd, who suffered and died and through whose blood our lives are purified that we all may stand before the throne of God. The truth of the reign of God through the Good Shepherd is that all our sorrows will be wiped away. We look to a future where there are no more tears, no more sadness to overcome. Yes, there is a great victory in life, it is the victory of the Lamb who was slain and now begins his reign of “[b]lessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and power and might . . . to our God forever and ever! Amen” (v. 12). How does this text give you comfort for loved ones who have died? How does it bring comfort for your own life?

*Pray:* **Almighty and living God, we thank you for the promise of life and love and peace for all the saints—past, present, and future—through Christ our shepherd. Amen.**

In the Bible, we learn about the disciples, the first followers of Jesus. They are set apart by God to witness to Christ and are called saints. All Christians are saints. In what ways do you witness to Christ through acts of service to others?

All Saints Day is a time to remember all the saints in our lives, both the living and the dead. Take a white, plastic tablecloth, cover the table with it, and write on the tablecloth the names of those who have blessed your life. Place a candle in the center. Light the candle and pray: **Dear God, thank you for the witnesses who have touched my life with faith, love, and hope. I thank you for (read the names) through Christ, the Lamb of God. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70  
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13