

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

## A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor  
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2650 Farnam Street  
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[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

December 13, 2020

9:00 AM

THIRD SUNDAY of ADVENT



*“Rejoice always,”* begins the reading from 1 Thessalonians. Isaiah and the psalmist make clear that God is turning our mourning into laughter and shouts of joy. *“All God’s children got a robe,”* go the words of a spiritual. It is not so much a stately, formal, pressed outfit as it is a set of party clothes, clothes we are happy to wear. We receive that robe in baptism, and in worship we gather for a foretaste of God’s party.

# GATHERING

## PRELUDE

*Mark Jones, organ*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

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

**P** Loving and forgiving God,

**C** we confess that we are held captive by sin.

**In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray.**

**We have not welcomed the stranger;**

**we have not loved our neighbor;**

**we have not been Christ to one another.**

**Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us up and turn us from our sin.**

**Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

**P** People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free—free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God. May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

ELW 257 vs. 1-4

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.**

**3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law  
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain**

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.**

**4 O come, O Branch of Jesse, free  
your own from Satan's tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save,  
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave. Refrain**

**2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh;  
in strength and beauty come and stay;  
teach us your will and guide our way. Refrain**

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710;  
tr. Composite

Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

- ☐ Blessed are you, God of might and majesty, for you promise to make the desert rejoice and blossom, to watch over the strangers, and to set the prisoners free. As we light three candles, satisfy our hunger with your good gifts, open our eyes to the great things you have done for us, and fill us with patience until the coming of the Lord Jesus.
- ☑ **O ransomed people of the Lord, come, let us travel on God’s holy way and enter into Zion with singing. Amen.**

## HYMN

*“Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah”*

ELW 240 vs. 3



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



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

## 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.**

## KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

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

## WORD

(sit)

### FIRST READING

**Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11**

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

**T**he spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; <sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; <sup>3</sup>to provide for those who mourn in Zion — to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. <sup>4</sup>They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. <sup>8</sup>For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. <sup>9</sup>Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed. <sup>10</sup>I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. <sup>11</sup>For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

☞ The word of the Lord.

☞ **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 126** (*read responsively*)

<sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,  
then were we like those who dream.

<sup>2</sup>**Then was our mouth filled with laughter,  
and our tongue with shouts of joy.  
Then they said among the nations,  
“The LORD has done great things for them.”**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great things for us,  
and we are glad indeed.

<sup>4</sup>**Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses of the Negeb.**

<sup>5</sup>Those who sowed with tears  
will reap with songs of joy.

<sup>6</sup>**Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,  
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.**

**THE SECOND READING**

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

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

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

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

☞ The word of the Lord.

☞ **Thanks be to God**

(stand)

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

The image shows two systems of musical notation for a Gospel Acclamation. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in the key of D major (one sharp). The first system contains the lyrics 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.' The second system contains the lyrics 'Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!'. The music is written in a simple, hymn-like style with block chords and single notes.

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord!**

## HOLY GOSPEL

**John 1:6-8, 19-28**

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

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

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

<sup>24</sup>Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. <sup>25</sup>They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" <sup>26</sup>John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, <sup>27</sup>the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." <sup>28</sup>This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit)

## CHILDREN'S BLESSING

## SERMON

*Pastor Roynesdal*

(stand)

# HYMN OF THE DAY

## "Lost in the Night"

ELW 243



1 Lost in the night do the peo - ple yet lan - guish,  
2 Must we be vain - ly a - wait - ing the mor - row?  
3 Sor - row - ing wan - d'ers, in dark - ness yet dwell - ing,  
4 Light o'er the land of the need - y is beam - ing;



long - ing for morn - ing the dark - ness to van - quish,  
Shall those who have light no light let us bor - row,  
dawned has the day of a ra - diance ex - cel - ling,  
riv - ers of life through its des - erts are stream - ing,



plain - tive - ly sigh - ing with hearts full of an - guish.  
giv - ing no heed to our bur - den of sor - row?  
death's deep - est shad - ows for - ev - er dis - pel - ling.  
bring - ing all peo - ples a Sav - ior re - deem - ing.



Will not day come soon?	Will not day come soon?
Will you help us soon?	Will you help us soon?
Christ is com - ing soon!	Christ is com - ing soon!
Come and save us soon!	Come and save us soon!

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## THE NICENE CREED

- ☐ With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- ☑ **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.**

## 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 baptism of Katherine Sue Hagge, daughter of Nathan & Amanda Hagge on December 6, 2020

**Sympathy:** to the family and friends of Ronald Rasmussen

**Illness:** Richard Bock, Don Burton, Carol Duncan, sister of Debbie Robinson, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Samuel Garrett, Richard Holzer, father of James Holzer, Renee Johnson, daughter-in-law of Ken & Linda Johnson, Harlan Kirkvold, father of Steve Kirkvold, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Gary Rodene, Phoebe Stanga, niece of Karen & Shirley Bonneau, Sheri Tipton, Dorothy Vancaster, Charlie Wachholtz, Darlene White, Robert Whitehead, Kimberly Wilson, Joanne Worm, Marianne Zinnecker, mother of Don Zinnecker

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Wyatt Johnson, Josh Kropenske, 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

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

*As we share the peace today – and you do so in your home – You are invited you to contact a fellow member by phone, email or letter. You can do that today or any time during the week. Pick someone from the church directory. We could email each other or call each other during this time when we cannot meet. Then each week select another person to contact. Try to make it someone you don’t really know and get acquainted with them. Always be sure to leave your address, email, and phone number on your message in case they do not have a directory. Talk to people you know and get the names and addresses of those who might not have directories and try to contact them. By the time we meet again we will have made many new friends.*

# MEAL



(sit)

## THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Please Support the overall ministry of Kountze Memorial during these difficult times. If you are able, please mail in your offering or donate on-line. Thank you!

## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“The Little Road to Bethlehem”

by Michael Head  
Sue Mollner, *soloist*

## THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

## OFFERTORY HYMN



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



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



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



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

## OFFERING PRAYER

- P** Generous God,  
**C** you have created all that is, and you provide for us in every season. Bless all that we offer, that through these gifts the world will receive your blessing. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.

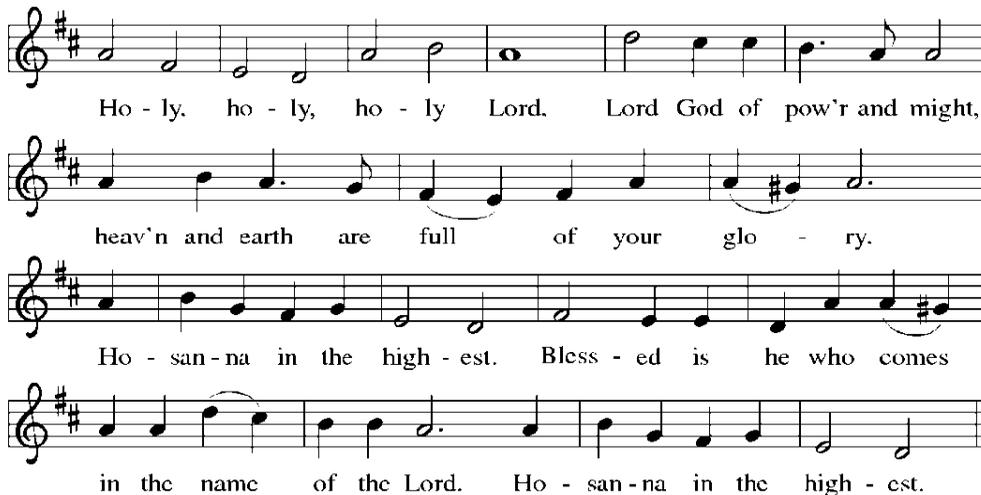
## HOLY COMMUNION

- 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 ADVENT

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted us, your people, with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## 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** Even as we watch and wait, Christ is here.

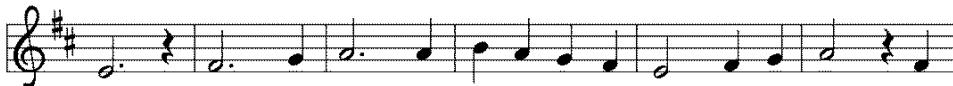
**C** **Come, eat and drink.**

*(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, grant us peace.

- 1 On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
announces that the Lord is nigh;  
awake and hearken, for he brings  
glad tidings of the King of kings!
- 2 Then cleansed be ev'ry life from sin;  
make straight the way for God within,  
and let us all our hearts prepare  
for Christ to come and enter there.
- 3 We hail you as our Savior, Lord,  
our refuge and our great reward;  
without your grace we waste away  
like flow'rs that wither and decay.
- 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health restore,  
and make us rise to fall no more;  
oh, let your face upon us shine  
and fill the world with love divine.
- 5 All praise to you, eternal Son,  
whose advent has our freedom won,  
whom with the Father we adore,  
and Holy Spirit, evermore.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. Composite

*“Now We Join in Celebration”*

ELW 462

- 1 Now we join in celebration  
at our Savior's invitation,  
dressed no more in spirit somber,  
clothed instead in joy and wonder;  
for the Lord of all existence,  
putting off divine transcendence,  
stoops again in love to meet us,  
with his very life to feed us.
- 2 Lord, as round this feast we gather,  
fill our hearts with holy rapture!  
For this bread and cup of blessing  
are for us the sure possessing  
of your loving deed on Calv'ry,  
of your living self, our vict'ry,  
pledge of your unfailing presence,  
foretaste here of heav'nly gladness.
- 3 Lord, we share in this communion  
as one fam'ly of God's children,  
reconciled through you, our brother,  
one in you with God our Father.  
Give us grace to live for others,  
serving all, both friends and strangers,  
seeking justice, love, and mercy  
till you come in final glory.

Text: Joel W. Lundeen  
Text © Joel W. Lundeen, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

(stand)

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Gracious and abundant God,  
**G** you have done great things for us, and we rejoice. In this bread and cup you give us life forever. In your boundless mercy, strengthen us and open our hearts to the world's needs, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## SENDING

### BLESSING

- P** The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, ✠ now and forever.

### THREE-FOLD AMEN

### HYMN

*“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”*

ELW 244

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> Rejoice, rejoice, believers,<br/>and let your lights appear;<br/>the evening is advancing,<br/>and darker night is near.<br/>The bridegroom is arising<br/>and soon is drawing nigh.<br/>Up, pray and watch and wrestle;<br/>at midnight comes the cry.</p> <p><b>2</b> The watchers on the mountain<br/>proclaim the bridegroom near;<br/>go forth as he approaches<br/>with alleluias clear.<br/>The marriage feast is waiting;<br/>the gates wide open stand.<br/>Arise, O heirs of glory;<br/>the bridegroom is at hand.</p> | <p><b>3</b> The saints, who here in patience<br/>their cross and suff'rings bore,<br/>shall live and reign forever<br/>when sorrow is no more.<br/>Around the throne of glory<br/>the Lamb they shall behold;<br/>in triumph cast before him<br/>their diadems of gold.</p> <p><b>4</b> Our hope and expectation,<br/>O Jesus, now appear;<br/>arise, O Sun so longed for,<br/>o'er this benighted sphere.<br/>With hearts and hands uplifted,<br/>we plead, O Lord, to see<br/>the day of earth's redemption<br/>that sets your people free!</p> |
|--|---|

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

### DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.  
**G** Thanks be to God.

### POSTLUDE

*Mark Jones, Organist*

## 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  
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December 12 & 13, 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 Kountze Food Pantry is asking for full-sized, personal care and hygiene products to give out in lieu of the holiday bags we have given to our guests in the past. We would like to include an all-in-one shampoo/conditioner, bar soap or body wash, toothbrush and paste, razor and shave cream. Of course, toilet tissue is always needed. Thank you! If you would like to volunteer please sign up at the following link:

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

### Mid-Week Advent Worship Services

December 16 "Mary's Song"

December 23 "Joseph"

Paul Rath will serve as Cantor for Holden Evening Prayer. These services will be in-person and livestreamed. Those wishing to be in-person should register by the Tuesday prior to the service and again enter through the west Kountze Commons doors.

### Christmas Eve, 4:00 PM or 7:00 PM

**Christmas Day, 10:00 AM**

**Make Your Reservations Now!**

The 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service will be televised on Christmas Eve at 7:00 PM on Cox Cable channel 13 and will also be livestreamed. A bulletin will be posted online.

For **in-person worship**, seating will be limited so you must **register** with the church **by Tuesday, December 22**. Enter through the west Kountze Commons doors.

## Today at Kountze

**Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God in honor

of Bill Christensen on his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday given by Madaline Christensen

### Online Sunday School

Lessons are videotaped and posted on the KMLC Parents Facebook page as well as our Kountze Facebook Page.

**Zoom Codes: Meeting ID 938 1883 9381**

**Passcode: 697624**

### Youth Forum

**Sundays at 10:10 AM**

**IN-PERSON:** The youth group will meet in-person in 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

Pr. Hall continues to post videos for a multi-week study of Martin Luther's "Freedom of a Christian" (1520), on a Kountze Memorial designated channel on YouTube. The YouTube link to the videos is:

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

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:** 71

**Total:** 87

**Online Attendance:** 184

**Pantry Guests Served:** 928

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 28

**Offering:**

\$18,696.04 (Regular)      \$7,527.29 (Specials)

\$2,757.00 (Debt Reduction)

## Jesus brings good news.

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

Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light
Monday	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Good news of deliverance
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	A call to rejoice
Wednesday	Romans 10:14-17	Those who bring good news
Thursday	1 Thessalonians 3:6-13	Timothy's encouraging report
Friday	Genesis 18:1-18	A son for Abraham and Sarah
Saturday	Psalms 126	A people who dream
Sunday	Luke 1:26-38	The birth of Jesus foretold



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Go to [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org) for more faith-forming activities.

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners. Isaiah 61:1 (NRSV)*

### A Prayer for the Week:

God of power and might, help us to be aware of the needs of people and be prepared to bring joy and good news to people through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

### Mealtime Prayer:

May this gift of food fill our hearts with laughter and make us shout with joy. Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May the God of peace make you holy in spirit and soul and body. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)

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

- Think or talk about a time when you felt sad or brokenhearted.
- When you feel discouraged, who do you talk to or what do you do to feel better?
- Jesus comes to change our lives. How does Jesus make a difference for your life and the lives of others?

*Read:* Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11.

An American emailed his friend in Zimbabwe and asked if he was well. The response was "I am well if you are well." That response comes with a communal understanding of wellness. We can't be well on our own. Neither can we truly feel okay about ourselves if we feel safe and protected while our neighbor does not feel okay. Isaiah 61:1-2 brings good news for all, including—and especially—the oppressed, the brokenhearted, captives, prisoners, those who mourn and those who owe debts (The year of the Lord's favor was a time to forgive debts). God's work of justice and mercy that brings joy will be seen in all the nations (v. 11) and is for all, not just a select and privileged few. How do you see the wellbeing of others as important to your own wellbeing?

*Pray:* **God of justice, we give you thanks that your goodness and mercy is for us and for all the world through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Isaiah 61:11)**

There is a theme of joy in our readings this week. This joy includes God's promise to overcome pain, disappointment, and fear. Think of someone currently experiencing difficulties. How can you be the hands and voice of God's good news to that person this week?

Place the wise men further away from the nativity set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope, the second one of peace, and the third one of joy. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the good news and joy the coming of Jesus brings us. *Say this Bible verse:* **Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Pray: Lord God, thank you for being with us in times of sadness and times of joy. Give us hope, peace and joy as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Luke 1:46b-55  
Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

# *Kountze Alternative Gifts 2020*

Alternative Gifts have been a tradition at Kountze for 16 years, carrying out God's love to the world with over \$170,000 in donations. Not only does Alternative Gifts feed the hungry and heal the sick, this program also helps us to give gifts that avoid materialism and honor the true meaning of Christmas. Alternative Gifts will again be available this year during Advent, although as with most things in this time of pandemic, we will need to get creative. Instead of setting up a table in Fellowship Hall, we will take your "orders" through the mail. We will need to scale back the number of choices available to manage the workflow. The options for your gifts this year are the Kountze Pantry and the Weber Healing Gift Free Clinic. These two have always been the most popular options in the Alternative Gift program and they are central to our mission at Kountze. For those of you who still want to donate towards goats and chicks and other causes, you may do so directly through the ELCA at their website: <https://goodgifts.elca.org/>

If you would like to support Alternative Gifts this year, this is the procedure beginning November 29 through December 20:

- Complete the Alternative Gift Wish List
- Write your check to Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church
- Mail your list and your check to :

Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church  
2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131

4. We will process the wish lists each week and mail you the cards and inserts for you to share as gifts.

If you have questions about this, please call or email Jonna Holland at 402-669-4575 or [jholland@unomaha.edu](mailto:jholland@unomaha.edu)

## *Kountze Pantry*

Provide one bag of food for a family in Omaha	\$15
Provide two bags of food for a family in Omaha	\$25
Provide a week's groceries for a family in Omaha	\$50

## *Kountze Free Clinic*

Provide supplies for the free Clinic	\$10
Provide medicine for the free Clinic	\$25

# *Alternative Gift Wish List 2020*

## *Kountze Pantry*

	<b>Price</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total</b>
Provide one bag of food for a family in Omaha	\$15	_____	\$_____
Provide two bags of food for a family in Omaha	\$25	_____	\$_____
Provide a week's groceries for a family in Omaha	\$50	_____	\$_____

## *Kountze Free Clinic*

Provide supplies for the free Clinic	\$10	_____	\$_____
Provide medicine for the free Clinic	\$25	_____	\$_____
<b><i>Total</i></b>		_____	\$_____

Do you want cards mailed to you that describe your donation so that you can give this as a gift to someone?

No \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide your name and your mailing address. We will do our best to get these mailed to you within a week.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

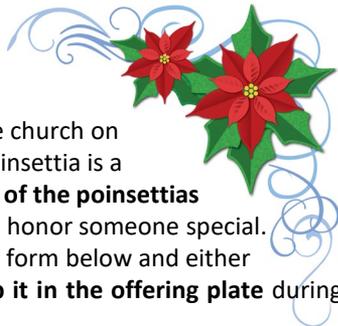
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# POINSETTIA ORDER, 2020

Please place your order by Sunday, December 13



We are now taking orders for poinsettias to beautify the church on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Giving a Christmas poinsettia is a special way to honor or remember loved ones. **The cost of the poinsettias is \$10.00 each.** You may also simply give a gift of love to honor someone special. If you would like to order a poinsettia, please fill out the form below and either **mail it to the church office** with your payment or **drop it in the offering plate** during Worship.

Poinsettias are available for pickup **after the 7:00 PM Service on Christmas Eve or after the 10:00 AM Worship Service on Christmas Day.**

In **memory** of:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_

In **honor** of

1. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ by: \_\_\_\_\_

or

A gift of love for: \_\_\_\_\_

by: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use the back if more room is needed.



Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church  
2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131-3616

