

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

December 6, 2020

9:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY of ADVENT



John calls people to repent, to clear the decks, to completely reorder their lives so that nothing gets in the way of the Lord's coming. The reading from Isaiah gives the context for this radical call: the assurance of forgiveness that encourages us to repent; the promise that the coming one will be gentle with the little ones. Isaiah calls us all to be heralds with John, to lift up our voices fearlessly and say, "See, your God is coming!" We say it to one another in worship, in order to say it with our lives in a world in need of justice and peace.

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.

**1 Prepare the royal highway;
the King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
a level road appear!
Then greet the King of glory,
foretold in sacred story:**

Refrain

**Hosanna to the Lord,
for he fulfills God's word!**

**2 God's people, see him coming:
your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you! *Refrain***

**3 Then fling the gates wide open
to greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
its tribute too may bring.
All lands will bow before him;
their voices join your singing: *Refrain***

**4 His is no earthly kingdom;
it comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
and justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
for kindness so abounding: *Refrain***

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; tr. *Lutheran Book of Worship*
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

- ☐** Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people. As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.
- ☑** **O people of hope, come, let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.**



- 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.

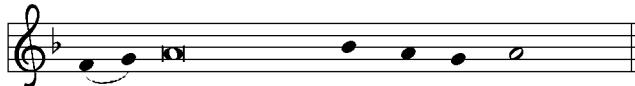


He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
 He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
 Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
 He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

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.



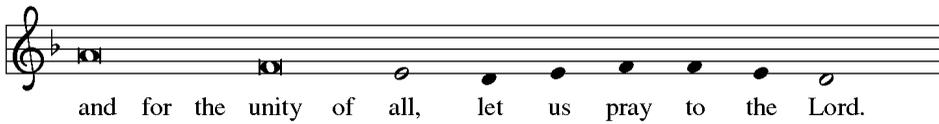
For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



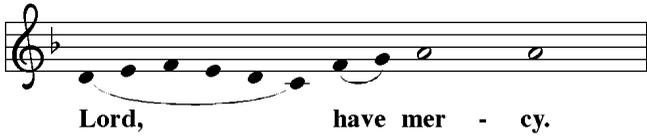
Lord, have mer - cy.



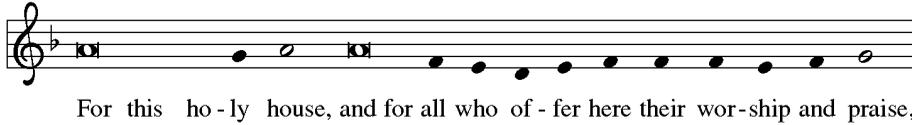
For the peace of the whole world, for the well - being of the church of God,



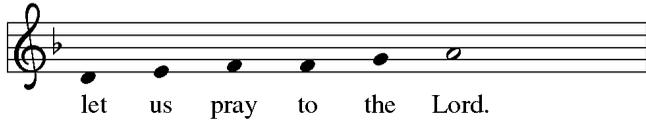
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



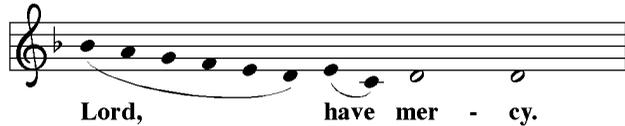
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



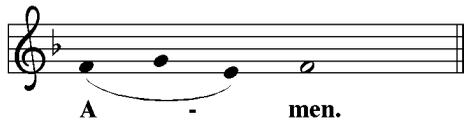
let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Stir up our hearts, Lord God,
- ☑ to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming, strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; 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 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins.

³A voice cries out: "*In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.*"

⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "*Here is your God!*" ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 (read responsively)

¹You have been gracious to your land, O LORD;
you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

**²You have forgiven the iniquity of your people
and blotted out all their sins.**

⁸I will listen to what the LORD God is saying;
for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

**⁹Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you,
that your glory may dwell in our land.**

¹⁰Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together;
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

**¹¹Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth,
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.**

¹²The LORD will indeed grant prosperity,
and our land will yield its increase.

**¹³Righteousness shall go before the LORD
and shall prepare for God a pathway.**

THE SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

L The word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

G Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “*See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’*”

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, “*The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.*”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING

SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

ELW 256

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 "Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.</p> | <p>2 For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills, bow down in humble favor.</p> |
| <p>3 Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.</p> | |

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1635-1711;
tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-1878, alt.

THE NICENE CREED

- P** With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- C** We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response: **P** Lord, in your mercy,
 G hear our prayer.

(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Tim Mathisen, friend of Debbie Bogue

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

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.
G And also with you.

As we share the peace today – and you do so in your home – You are invited 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

“Comfort Ye My People”

from Messiah by G.F. Handel
Nick Pignatore, *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.

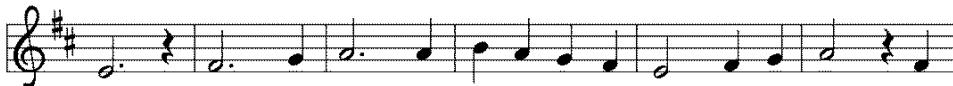
C **Come, eat and drink.**

(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.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Savior of the nations, come;
virgin's son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:
God has chosen such a birth.</p> <p>2 Not by human flesh and blood,
but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.</p> <p>3 Wondrous birth—oh, wondrous child—
from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary's son,
eager now his race to run!</p> | <p>4 From God's heart the Savior speeds,
back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death's command,
back to reign at God's right hand.</p> <p>5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.</p> <p>6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!</p> |
|---|--|

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397;
Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Gracious and abundant God,
- C** 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

- ☐ 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

“Hark, the Glad Sound!”

ELW 239

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,
the Savior promised long;
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
and ev'ry voice a song.</p> <p>2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.</p> | <p>3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.</p> <p>4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
your welcome shall proclaim,
and heav'n's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.
☑ 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
www.kmlchurch.org

December 5 & 6, 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>

Pledge Cards

you haven't returned your pledge cards yet we ask you to prayerfully consider your financial commitment to Kountze's mission and ministry for the coming year, as well as addressing our debt, and return your pledge cards to Kountze as soon as possible either at worship or by mailing them to the church. Thank you!

Simply Giving

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

Mid-Week Advent Worship Services

December 9 "On Being Prepared"
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.

Today at Kountze

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in memory of Elen Pesavento given by Paul Revord

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of Ellen Pesavento given by Paul Revord

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 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month. The 1st 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 2nd & 4th 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/UChtalSdEjyMBKlzbGGIyFA/>

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

Attendance and Giving

Saturday Attendance: 23

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 49

Total: 72

Online Attendance: 138

Pantry Guests Served: 697

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 0

Offering:

\$22,622.00 (Regular) \$1,513.09 (Specials)

\$5,632.00 (Debt Reduction)

God has good news for all people.

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

Sunday	Mark 1:1-8	The beginning of the good news
Monday	Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Tuesday	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Promise of the Lord's coming
Wednesday	Malachi 4:1-6	The great day of the Lord
Thursday	Matthew 3:1-10	The preaching of John the Baptist
Friday	1 Timothy 1:12-17	Gratitude for God's mercy
Saturday	Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13	A prayer for God's peace
Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light



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"[T]he voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Mark 1:3 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

Eternal God, we thank you that through your Son, Jesus Christ, love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Amen. (Psalm 85:10)

Mealtime Prayer:

Generous God, may this gift of food strengthen us to walk in your way of comfort, hope, and peace through the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord God feed you like a shepherd and keep you safe. (Isaiah 40:11)

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

- What is some good news you have heard recently?
- What events in the news do people consider to be positive news or good news?
- The word gospel means good news. How is the coming of Christ into our world good news for you?

Read: Mark 1:1-8.

The beginning of a book helps set up what the book is about and where the story is going. This is true of the Gospel of Mark as well. Mark 1:1-8 is part of Mark's prologue (vv. 1-13) and was used in ancient writings with this very purpose in mind: to give information that helps people follow the story as it unfolds. Mark's point is that good news ("good tidings" in Isaiah 40:9), the gospel, is beginning to happen through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. This good news is linked to John the baptizer who is himself reminiscent of Elijah. When Elijah comes again, God's people will encounter God's promised deliverance (Malachi 4:5). That future time is now present through John and through Jesus. John's message of repentance (v. 4) will be continued by Jesus when he says, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news" (Mark 1:14). Where do you see the good news of Jesus happening today?

Pray: **Merciful God, we thank you for fulfilling your promise of hope and peace through the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Good news has a positive effect on people. Isaiah 40 gives prophetic comfort to God's people. What word of comfort or encouragement can you give to someone this week?

Set up a Christmas nativity set in your home. Place the wise men further away from the set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope and the second one of peace. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the coming of Jesus.

Say this Bible verse: **Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people.** (Psalm 85:8a) *Pray:* **Lord, help us to prepare the way of the Lord. Give us peace and hope. Amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

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

	Price	Quantity	Total
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	_____	\$_____
<i>Total</i>		_____	\$_____

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

No _____ Yes _____

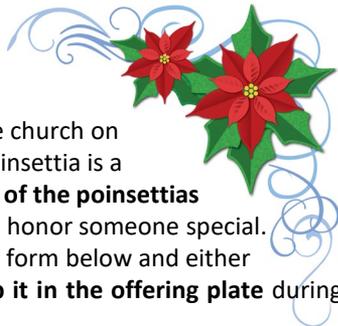
Please provide your name and your mailing address. We will do our best to get these mailed to you within a week.

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

