

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

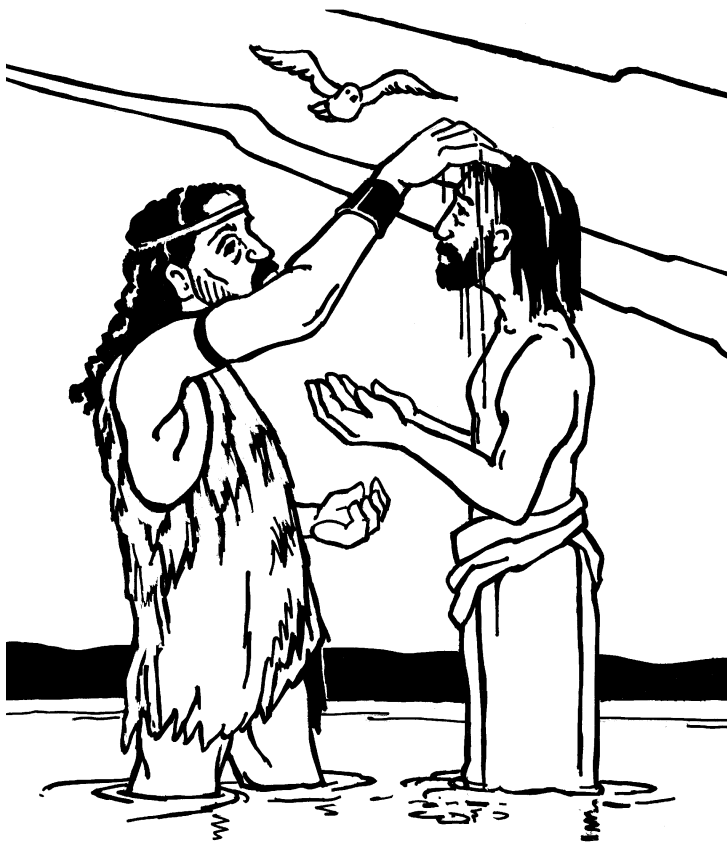
Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

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

January 10, 2021

9:00 AM

BAPTISM of OUR LORD



Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus and the Ephesians, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, organ

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

P In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P We give you thanks, O God,

C **for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters
and by your Word you created the world,
calling forth life in which you took delight.**

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

**By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,
making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.**

**We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,
and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.**

**Shower us with your Spirit,
and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.**

**To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.**

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,
 Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise;
 manifested by the star
 to the sages from afar,
 branch of royal David's stem
 in thy birth at Bethlehem:
 anthems be to thee addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> <p>2 Manifest at Jordan's stream,
 prophet, priest, and king supreme;
 and at Cana wedding guest
 in thy Godhead manifest;
 manifest in pow'r divine,
 changing water into wine;
 anthems be to thee addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> | <p>3 Manifest in making whole
 weakened body, fainting soul;
 manifest in valiant fight,
 quelling all the devil's might;
 manifest in gracious will,
 ever bringing good from ill:
 anthems be to thee addressed,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> <p>4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,
 present in thy holy word;
 grace to imitate thee now
 and be pure, as pure art thou;
 that we might become like thee
 at thy great epiphany,
 and may praise thee, ever blest,
 God in flesh made manifest.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807-1885, alt.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ Holy God,
- ☑ **creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, 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

Genesis 1:1-5

Out of chaos, God brings order. Out of the formless void, God brings light. This familiar story was good news for the Israelites, who experienced much chaos in their history. It remains good news for us. God created and continues to create new life.

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, “*Let there be light*”; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

☒ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

PSALM 29 (read responsively)

¹Ascribe to the LORD, you gods,

ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God’s name;
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

⁴**The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**

⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

⁶**the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

⁷The voice of the LORD
bursts forth in lightning flashes.

⁸**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, “Glory!”

¹⁰**The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king forevermore.**

¹¹O LORD, give strength to your people;
give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

THE SECOND READING

Acts 19:1-7

In Ephesus, Paul encounters people who had received John's baptism of repentance but had never heard of the Holy Spirit or of baptism in the name of Jesus. After Paul baptizes them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and empowers them with gifts of the Spirit.

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ²He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." ⁴Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.

L The word of the Lord.

G Thanks be to God

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

G Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 1:4-11

Mark's gospel reports the story of Jesus' baptism with some irony: the one on whom the Spirit descends is himself the one who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit.

John 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."

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

☞ The Gospel of the Lord.

☞ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING

SERMON

Pastor Duminy

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart"

ELW 800

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
wean it from earth,
through all its pulses move;
stoop to my weakness, strength to me impart,
and make me love you as I ought to love.</p> <p>2 I ask no dream, no prophet ecstasies,
no sudden rending of the veil of clay,
no angel visitant, no op'ning skies;
but take the dimness of my soul away.</p> | <p>3 Have you not bid me love you, God and King;
all, all your own, soul,
heart, and strength, and mind?
I see your cross;
there teach my heart to cling.
Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find!</p> <p>4 Teach me to love you as your angels love,
one holy passion filling all my frame:
the baptism of the heav'n-descended dove,
my heart an altar, and your love the flame.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: George Croly, 1780-1860

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

- ☐ Charlie Otto Wachholtz has been instructed in the Christian faith and desires to make public affirmation of his Baptism.

Charlie Otto Wachholtz

Son of Chad and Rhonda Wachholtz

Baptized on November 30, 2003

at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church

Baptismal Sponsors: *Russ and Mary Meyer*

Bible Verse: Joshua 1:9 *“Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”*

- ☐ Merciful God,
- ☑ **we thank you for Charlie, whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called him to yourself, enlightened him with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished him in this community of faith. Uphold your servant in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

PROFESSION OF FAITH

- ☐ I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the church.
- ☐ Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?
Response from confirmand: I renounce them.
- ☐ Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?
Response from confirmand: I renounce them.
- ☐ Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?
Response from confirmand: I renounce them.
- ☐ Do you believe in God the Father?
- ☑ **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

P Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

C **I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

P Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

C **I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

P You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:
to live among God's faithful people,
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

Confirmand responds: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.

P People of God, do you promise to support Charlie and pray for him in his life in Christ?

P **We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.**

P We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life.

P Stir up in Charlie Otto the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

Response from confirmand: Amen.

P Let us rejoice with Charlie, our brother in Christ.

C **We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we will give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good news to all the world.**

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)

Thanksgiving: for the confirmation of Charlie Otto Wachholtz, son of Chad and Rhonda Wachholtz

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Phoebe Stanga, niece of Karen & Shirley Bonneau

Illness: Shelley Bergmann, sister of Shannon Picha, Richard Bock, Kristin Boe, Don Burton, Mary Cook, 101yr. old great-aunt of Sarah Jewell, Dorothy Cross, Mike Cswerko, 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, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Jeff Perkins, Gary Rodene, Sheri Tipton, Dorothy Vancaster, 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.
G 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 visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online. If you are able, please mail in your offering or donate on-line. Thank you!



OFFERTORY ANTHEM “When Christ’s Appearing Was Made Known”

Text: Coelius Sedulius, c. 5th cent.

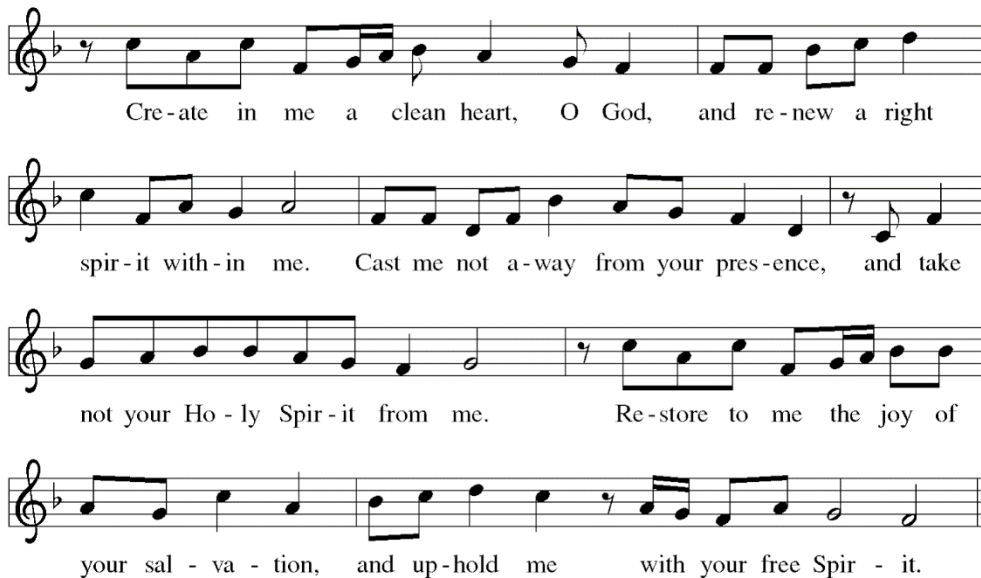
Music: Wilbur Held, 1914-2015

Janet Campbell, *mezzo-soprano*

THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ O God,
- ☑ receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. 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.

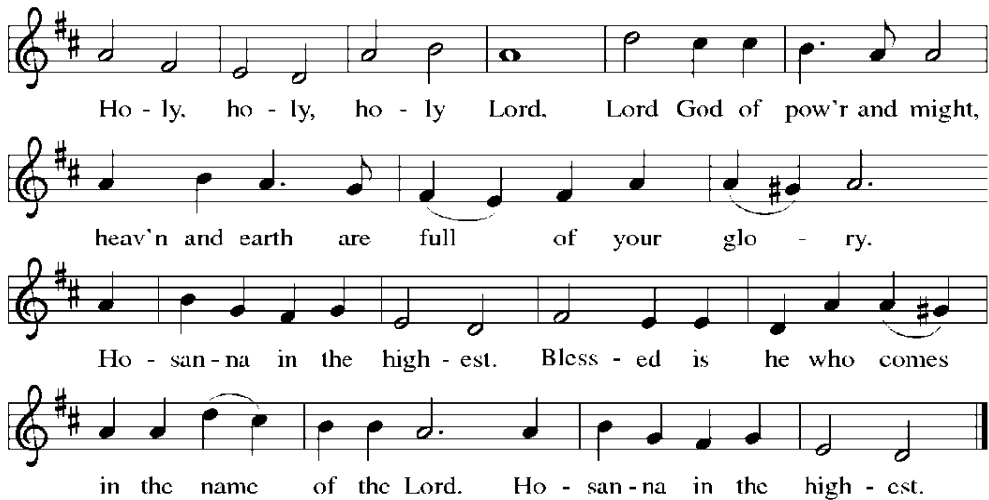
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE FOR EPIPHANY

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. By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations; in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son; and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels, 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 Holy Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus.

C **Come and be fed.**

DISTRIBUTION

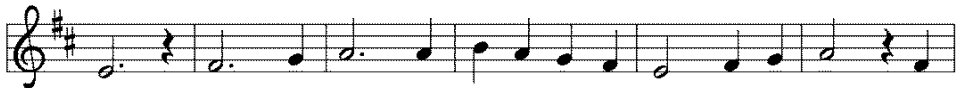
All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You feel weak in faith, come to be strengthened. And you who feel you have no faith, come so that the God of steadfast love will touch your heart with hope and joy.

(sit)

AGNUS DEI



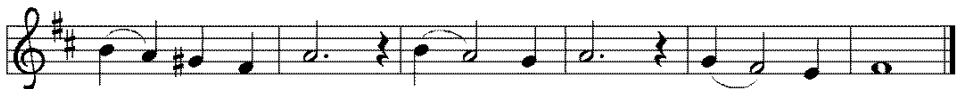
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



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.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Beautiful Savior”

ELW 838

- 1 Beautiful Savior,
King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee,
truly I'd serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
- 2 Fair are the meadows,
fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer,
Jesus is purer,
he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.
- 3 Fair is the sunshine,
fair is the moonlight,
bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter,
Jesus shines purer
than all the angels in the sky.
- 4 Beautiful Savior,
Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor,
praise, adoration,
now and forevermore be thine!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Münster, 1677;
tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823-1904

**1 We are baptized in Christ Jesus,
we are baptized in his death;
that as Christ is raised victorious,
we might live a brand new life.
And if we have been united
in a dreadful death like his,
we will all be reunited, for he lives.**

**2 In the water and the witness,
in the breaking of the bread,
in the waiting arms of Jesus
who is risen from the dead,
God has made a new beginning
from the ashes of our past;
in the losing and the winning we hold fast.**

**3 Glory be to God the Father,
glory be to Christ the Son,
glory to the Holy Spirit,
ever three and ever one;
as it was in the beginning,
glory now resounds again
in a song that has no ending. Amen**

Text: John C. Ylvisaker
Text © 1985 John C. Ylvisaker

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

☐ Christ Jesus,

☑ at this table we have feasted on your very life and are strengthened for our journey. Send us forth from this banquet nourished in body and in spirit to proclaim your good news and serve others in your name. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ God, the creator strengthen you; Jesus, the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✠ keep you in peace.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“God, Whose Almighty Word”

ELW 673

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard
and took their flight:
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.</p> <p>2 Christ, who once came to bring,
on your redeeming wing,
healing and sight;
health to the troubled mind,
sight where illusions blind;
oh, now to humankind
let there be light.</p> | <p>3 Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy dove,
speed forth your flight;
move on the water's face
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.</p> <p>4 Holy and blessed three,
glorious Trinity,
Wisdom, Love, Might:
boundless as ocean's tide,
rolling in fullest pride,
through the earth, far and wide,
let there be light.</p> |
|--|--|

Text: John Marriott, 1780-1825, alt.

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Be the light of Jesus Christ.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, Organist

From Sundays and Seasons.com. ©2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006828. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-705181. New Revised Standard Version Bible, ©1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Evangelical Lutheran Worship ©2006 Augsburg Fortress. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #26828. CCLI License #1511530.

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

January 9 & 10, 2021

Kountze Food Pantry Thank You & Volunteers Needed

**Mondays, 7:30 - 9:00 AM;
9:00 - 11:00 AM;
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

Fridays, 4:00 - 7:00 PM

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Christmas hygiene bags for Pantry guests! As winter approaches, the pantry will be in need of volunteers willing to take a turn facing the elements while helping guests to their cars. The more people we have, the shorter the shift. Right now, we have 2 or 3 people doing all the work for 4 hours. Please consider helping them out by volunteering at the link below:

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

Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle, Television Broadcast for 2021

You can help us beautify the altar at Kountze or sponsor a television broadcast if you wish. This is a simple and meaningful way to honor a loved one who has passed away, celebrate a special anniversary or milestone, or can be given in thanksgiving for friends or family. Their names will appear in the church bulletin on the weekend you select. You can sign up for a date to provide flowers, eternal candle, and/or television broadcast by calling the church office and/or mail your check to the church and note what it is for, and who it is in honor of, in memory, or thanksgiving of.

Today at Kountze

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor of Karen Bonneau on her birthday by her sister, Shirley; in memory of Jean Holcombe in remembrance of her birthday given by Tom Holcombe

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of our Dad/Grandpa, David J. Carlsen given in remembrance of his birthday by his children and grandchildren, the Carlsen and Campbell families

Television Broadcast is sponsored by Karen Bonneau in memory of loved ones and those who have died from COVID-19

Online Sunday School

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

Youth Forum

Sundays at 10:10 AM

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

Attendance and Giving

Saturday Attendance: 21

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 69

Total: 90

Online Attendance: 162

Pantry Guests Served: 518

Medical Clinic Guests Served:

Offering:

\$21,320.55 (Regular)

\$12,690.92 (Specials)

\$23,507.00 (Debt Reduction)

Jesus is God's beloved, and so are we.

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

Sunday	Mark 1:4-11	The baptism of Jesus
Monday	Genesis 1:1-5	God creates light
Tuesday	Acts 19:1-7	Paul baptizes in Ephesus
Wednesday	Mark 15:33-39	Death of Jesus
Thursday	Ephesians 4:1-6	Unity in the body of Christ
Friday	Galatians 3:19-29	The purpose of the law
Saturday	Psalms 29	The voice of God in the storm
Sunday	John 1:43-51	Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael



© 2020 Vibrant Faith Ministries. All rights reserved.
Go to www.vibrantfaithathome.org for more faith-forming activities.

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." **Mark 1:11 (NRSV)**

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, we thank you for Jesus, your Beloved Son and our Savior and for claiming us in baptism as your loved children now and always. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of tender care, as we are given strength from this meal, may we remember with joy that we are your beloved children through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord give you strength and bless you with peace. (Psalm 29:11)

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

- What is a dramatic event you have witnessed or heard about?
- Have you experienced a baptism as a life-changing event? Explain.
- How was Jesus' baptism a life-changing event for the world?

Read: Mark 1:4-11.

Jesus' baptism is marked by dramatic events. Not only did Jesus go out to John in the wilderness, but so did "all the people of Jerusalem" (v. 5). John, who has a strong following acknowledges that Jesus, the one to come after John, is so much more important, that John is not worthy to untie Jesus' sandals. Jesus' own baptizing will bring with it the Holy Spirit, not just the call to repentance, as was the baptism of John. The Holy Spirit will make Jesus' baptism and the Christian baptism different (see Acts 19:1-7). Then, the most dramatic moment happens, the moment that defines Jesus' baptism as a cosmic shattering event: the heavens were torn apart and the Spirit of God came down, appearing like a dove. The tearing apart of the heavens will be matched by the tearing apart of the curtain in the temple at the time of Jesus death (Mark 15:38). Jesus' baptism is linked with the cosmic shattering event of his death that changes for all time our relationship to God. This is something that we participate in through our own baptisms, another earth-shattering experience filled with love that claims us as God's beloved children. Is being claimed by God in baptism earth shattering to you? Why or why not?

Pray: **God of glory and might, help us to see and believe in your earth-shattering power and love for us and to see that love embrace us in the remembrance of our baptisms. Amen.**

The baptism of Jesus took place using water. Water is essential to life. It is important that rivers, lakes, and oceans stay clean but they can get and have been contaminated by people's actions. What are some things we can do to help keep our waters clean and free of pollution?

The "Baptism of our Lord Sunday" is a time to recall our own baptisms. This week in your home, light a candle, perhaps your own baptismal candle. Dip your fingers into a bowl of water and mark the sign of the cross on your forehead or the foreheads of one another. As you mark the sign of the cross, give this blessing:

Say: **You are God's beloved child.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51