

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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

2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131-3616  
402-341-7761

January 17, 2021

9:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY after THE EPIPHANY



*All the baptized have a calling in God's world. God calls not just pastors and deacons but also the youngest child, like Samuel. The story of the calling of Nathanael plays with the idea of place. Nathanael initially dismisses Jesus because he comes from Nazareth. But where we come from isn't important; it's where—or rather whom—we come to. Jesus refers to Jacob, who had a vision in a place he called "the house of God, and . . . the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17). Jesus says he himself is the place where Nathanael will meet God.*

# GATHERING

## PRELUDE

*Mark Jones, organ*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Holy Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, † Son and Holy Spirit, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation.

**C** Amen.

**P** Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** Holy God,

**C** you search us and know us.

**You are acquainted with all our ways.**

**We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—**

**our own sins and the broken systems that bind us.**

**We turn inward, failing to follow**

**your outward way of love.**

**We distrust those who are not like us.**

**We exploit the earth and its resources**

**and fail to consider generations to come.**

**Forgive us, gracious God,**

**for all we have done and left undone.**

**Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them;**

**receive them in your divine mercy. Amen.**

**P** How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

**C** Amen.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1 You servants of God, your Master proclaim,<br/>and publish abroad his wonderful name;<br/>the name, all-victorious, of Jesus extol;<br/>his kingdom is glorious and rules over all!</b></p> <p><b>2 Ascended on high, almighty to save,<br/>yet still he is nigh, his presence we have.<br/>The great congregation his triumph shall sing,<br/>ascribing salvation to Jesus, our king!</b></p> | <p><b>3 Salvation to God who sits on the throne!<br/>Let all cry aloud and honor the Son.<br/>The praises of Jesus the angels proclaim,<br/>fall down on their faces, and worship the Lamb.</b></p> <p><b>4 Then let us adore and give him his right,<br/>all glory and pow'r and wisdom and might,<br/>all honor and blessing, with angels above,<br/>and thanks never ceasing, and infinite love!</b></p> |
|--|---|

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, 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**

- ☐** Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
- ☑** **most merciful redeemer, for the countless blessings and benefits you give. Make us know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day praising you, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

# WORD

(sit)

## FIRST READING

1 Samuel 3:1-20

*At a time when visions are rare and unexpected, the Lord comes to Samuel and calls him to speak the divine word. Though just a boy, Samuel responds to God obediently, as Eli the priest has taught him to respond. This marks the beginning of Samuel's prophetic ministry.*

**N**ow the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

<sup>2</sup>At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; <sup>3</sup>the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup>Then the Lord called, “*Samuel! Samuel!*” and he said, “*Here I am!*” <sup>5</sup>and ran to Eli, and said, “*Here I am, for you called me.*” But he said, “*I did not call; lie down again.*” So he went and lay down. <sup>6</sup>The Lord called again, “*Samuel!*” Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, “*Here I am, for you called me.*” But he said, “*I did not call, my son; lie down again.*” <sup>7</sup>Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. <sup>8</sup>The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, “*Here I am, for you called me.*” Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “*Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.’*” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup>Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, “*Samuel! Samuel!*” And Samuel said, “*Speak, for your servant is listening.*” <sup>11</sup>Then the Lord said to Samuel, “*See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. <sup>12</sup>On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. <sup>13</sup>For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. <sup>14</sup>Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever.*”

<sup>15</sup>Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. <sup>16</sup>But Eli called Samuel and said, “*Samuel, my son.*” He said, “*Here I am.*” <sup>17</sup>Eli said, “*What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.*” <sup>18</sup>So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, “*It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him.*”

<sup>19</sup>As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. <sup>20</sup>And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord.

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

**PSALM 139:1-6, 13-18** (*read responsively*)

<sup>1</sup>LORD, you have searched me out;

O LORD, you have known me.

<sup>2</sup>**You know my sitting down and my rising up;  
you discern my thoughts from afar.**

<sup>3</sup>You trace my journeys and my resting-places  
and are acquainted with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup>**Indeed, there is not a word on my lips,  
but you, O LORD, know it altogether.**

<sup>5</sup>You encompass me, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup>**Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.**

<sup>13</sup>For you yourself created my inmost parts;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>**I will thank you because I am marvelously made;  
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.**

<sup>15</sup>My body was not hidden from you,  
while I was being made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup>**Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;  
all of them were written in your book;  
my days were fashioned before they came to be.**

<sup>17</sup>How deep I find your thoughts, O God!

How great is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup>**If I were to count them, they would be more in number than the sand;  
to count them all, my life span would need to be like yours.**

## THE SECOND READING

## 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

*Paul helps the Corinthians understand that God has claimed the entirety of their lives through the death of Christ. Hence Christian relationships and conduct, including areas of human sexuality, are to reflect the reality that we belong to Christ and that the Holy Spirit lives within us.*

**“A**ll things are lawful for me,” but not all things are beneficial. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be dominated by anything. <sup>13</sup>“Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food,” and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. <sup>14</sup>And God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. <sup>15</sup>Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “*The two shall be one flesh.*” <sup>17</sup>But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. <sup>18</sup>Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. <sup>19</sup>Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? <sup>20</sup>For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

☐ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God

(stand)

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord!**

## HOLY GOSPEL

**John 1:43-51**

*In John's gospel, Jesus' ministry begins with the call of disciples, who then bring others to Jesus. Philip's friend Nathanael moves from skepticism to faith when he accepts the invitation to "Come and see."*

**T**he next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." <sup>44</sup>Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. <sup>45</sup>Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." <sup>46</sup>Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." <sup>47</sup>When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!" <sup>48</sup>Nathanael asked him, "Where did you get to know me?" Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you." <sup>49</sup>Nathanael replied, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" <sup>50</sup>Jesus answered, "Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these." <sup>51</sup>And he said to him, "Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit)

# CHILDREN'S BLESSING

SERMON

Pastor Roynesdal

(stand)

## HYMN OF THE DAY

"Here I Am, Lord"

ELW 574



1	"I, the Lord of sea and sky,	I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2	"I, the Lord of snow and rain,	I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
3	"I, the Lord of wind and flame,	I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin	my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them.	They turn a - way.
I will set a feast for them.	My hand will save.



I, who made the stars of night,	I will make their dark-ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone,	give them hearts for love a - lone.
Fin-est bread I will pro-vide	till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them?	Whom shall I send?"
I will speak my word to them.	Whom shall I send?"
I will give my life to them.	Whom shall I send?"

*Refrain*



Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you



call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you



lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

☑ **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

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

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

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

## 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)*

**Illness:** Lois Andresen, Shelley Bergmann, sister of Shannon Picha, Richard Bock, Kristin Boe, Don Burton, Dorothy Cross, Mike Cswerko, Carol Duncan, sister of Debbie Robinson, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Richard Holzer, father of James Holzer, Renee Johnson, daughter-in-law of Ken & Linda Johnson, Marcie Lafleur, Mary Olson, Toby Rees, 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

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

arr. Dale Wood  
Paul Rath, *soloist*

## 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

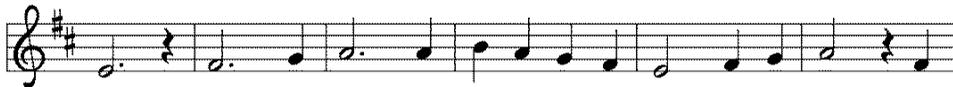
*All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord's Supper. We believe that this is the Lord's table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You feel weak in faith, come 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



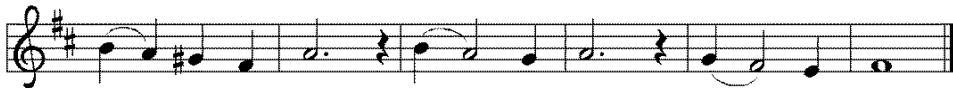
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



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

*“Lord, Be Glorified”*

**ELW 744**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1</b> In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;<br>in my life, Lord, be glorified today.   | <b>3</b> In your church, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;<br>in your church, Lord, be glorified today. |
| <b>2</b> In our song, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;<br>in our song, Lord, be glorified today. | <b>4</b> In your world, Lord, be glorified, be glorified.<br>In your world, Lord, be glorified today.   |

Text: Bob Kilpatrick, b. 1952  
Text © 1978 Bob Kilpatrick Music,  
assigned 1998 to The Lorenz Corporation.  
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**1** Around you, O Lord Jesus,  
your own you gather still  
to share the feast you give us  
with grace our lives to fill.  
You say to us so lovingly,  
“Take, eat! This is my body!  
Take, drink! This is my blood!”

**2** We hear your invitation,  
and heed, O Lord, your call;  
your word of consolation  
is spoken here to all.  
It draws us to your loving heart;  
it brings to us your blessing,  
which never will depart.

**3** We are your own forever;  
until our final breath  
we will be true and never  
in joy, in grief, in death  
depart from you, for you are still  
among your people dwelling,  
as you have said you will.

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

*(stand)*

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P** Christ Jesus,

**C** 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

*“Jesus Shall Reign”*

ELW 434

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> Jesus shall reign where'er the sun<br/>does its successive journeys run;<br/>his kingdom stretch from shore to shore,<br/>till moons shall wax and wane no more.</p> <p><b>2</b> To him shall endless prayer be made,<br/>and praises throng to crown his head;<br/>his name like sweet perfume shall rise<br/>with ev'ry morning sacrifice.</p> | <p><b>3</b> People and realms of ev'ry tongue<br/>dwell on his love with sweetest song;<br/>and infant voices shall proclaim<br/>their early blessings on his name.</p> <p><b>4</b> Blessings abound where'er he reigns:<br/>the pris'ners leap to lose their chains,<br/>the weary find eternal rest,<br/>and all who suffer want are blest.</p> <p><b>5</b> Let ev'ry creature rise and bring<br/>peculiar honors to our king;<br/>angels descend with songs again,<br/>and earth repeat the loud amen.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.

## DISMISSAL

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

## POSTLUDE

*Mark Jones, Organist*

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## Special Notice

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



# KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761

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

January 16 & 17, 2021

### Kountze Food Pantry 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**

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>



### Today at Kountze

**Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God in memory of Phoebe Stanga by her aunts, Karen and Shirley Bonneau; Dave & Norma Pafford in honor of their 62<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary

### 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 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.

### deFreese Manor Board Meeting

The deFreese Manor board will meet today, January 17, at 10:10 AM

### Where Did our Stained Glass Windows Go???

They are at Bovard Studios in Fairfield, Iowa for much-needed repairs. They will have been disassembled and cracked glass will be repaired and thoroughly cleaned, the windows entirely re-leaded, and each will have a new aluminum frame. There will be a one inch laminated protective glass on the exterior, with Low-E Protective Glass on the South Window to protect it from the sun. As stated in the January Good News, The total cost of the project will be \$620,000 and will take approximately five months to complete. We have \$73,000 on hand for the project. The Mission Investment Fund loan approved by the congregation two years ago will pay for the windows. We will begin payments on that loan (which also covered the repairs in the sanctuary) when the project is completed. Any contributions to the stained glass window repair fund will be greatly appreciated.

### Attendance and Giving

**Saturday Attendance:** 22

**Sunday Attendance: 9:00:** 74

**Total:** 96

**Online Attendance:** 147

**Pantry Guests Served:** 217

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 35

**Offering: 12/31/2020\***

\$11,473.00 (Regular)      \$5,799.01 (Specials)

\$106,926.89 (Debt Reduction)

**Offering: 1/10/2021**

\$24,704.00 (Regular)      \$5,600.19 (Specials)

\$4,107.00 (Debt Reduction)

\*We received some offerings in 2021 that were postmarked in 2020 which will count as 2020 offerings.

*God reaches out to us.*

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

Sunday	John 1:43-51	Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael
Monday	1 Samuel 3:1-20	The call of Samuel
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	Honor God in body and spirit
Wednesday	Psalms 40:1-11	Happy are those who trust in God
Thursday	Romans 8:26-30	God reaches out to us
Friday	2 Thessalonians 2:13-17	Be faithful
Saturday	Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18	The Lord knows us well
Sunday	Mark 1:14-20	Jesus calls the first disciples



*Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." 1 Samuel 3:10 (NRSV)*

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

Awesome God, for your desire to have a relationship with us through Christ our Lord, we give you thanks and praise. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

For the food that we eat, for your love that we meet, for this meal that we share as a sign of your care. Amen.

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

May the God that searches you and knows you give you hope and peace through Christ our Lord. (Psalm 139:1)

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

- Are you more of a listener or a talker? Explain.
- Is it easy for you to tell others about Jesus? Why or why not?
- As a disciple of Jesus, why is listening to God so important?

*Read:* 1 Samuel 3:1-20.

Human efforts are important for lots of things in this world, but in the Bible, it is God's efforts that make all the difference. It is not first that we as humans call on God to make God a saving presence in our lives. It is God that reaches out to us. We see this in the story of Jesus calling disciples (John 1:43-51). Jesus takes the initiative with Philip, Nathanael, and with us. We see that same pattern when God calls Samuel. God repeatedly reaches out to a boy who does not know God yet. This is also the theme of Psalm 139:1: "O LORD, you have searched me and known me." According to the psalmist, that is unbelievably awesome news. That news is worthy of our full attention, like the boy Samuel saying to the LORD, "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10). With a God who comes to us, knows us, and calls us to do God's work in the world, it is worth taking the voice of Samuel and making it our own: "Speak, Lord, for I am listening." The church, body of Christ, wants to acknowledge that we are listening to Jesus; the faithfulness of each disciple of Jesus says, "Lord, I am listening to you." How do you listen to God? Is it through prayer, reading the Bible, public worship, or listening to the voice of God through others around you? Explain.

***Pray:* Dear God, just as you pursued Samuel and the disciples Philip and Nathanael, we thank you for pursuing us with your love and grace today through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

To care for someone is to listen to them as Samuel listened to God when God called out to him. Is there someone who could use your attentive listening this week?

Psalm 139 is a beautiful and reflective psalm. Read Psalm 139:1-6 this week using a meditative tradition called *Lectio Divina*. Read it once slowly and pause for reflection. Read it again and pick out a word or phrase that stands out for you. Pause, then read it one last time and wonder how the verses can guide your life this week. Conclude by praying the Lord's Prayer.

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12  
1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20