

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Stephen Griffith, Interim 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
www.kmlchurch.org

January 2, 2022

9:00 & 11:00 AM

EPIPHANY of OUR LORD



Epiphany means “manifestation.” On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles—that is, to all nations. Some Christian traditions celebrate three great epiphanies on this day: the magi’s adoration of the Christ child, Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle, in which he changes water into wine. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God’s grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who sends the word with angels, who is made flesh among all peoples, and who breathes peace on all earth.

G Amen.

P In Christ, we are bold to name our sin and cry out for peace.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P Holy God,

G we confess our sin before you.

We replace compassion with competition.

We seek what is mighty while ignoring the meek.

We are quick to anger but slow to forgive.

We have not put on love in harmony with you.

Wrap us in the grace of your powerful Word.

Swaddle our hearts with your peace,

that all we do, in word or deed,

may reflect your love born among us. Amen.

P I bring you good news of great joy for all people: God has come among us in the child born of Mary, Christ the Lord. + In Christ your sins are forgiven and you are clothed in peace.

G Amen.

**1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.**

Refrain

**Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright;
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light!**

**2 Born a king on Bethlehem’s plain,
gold I bring to crown him again;
king forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. *Refrain***

**3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh;
prayer and praising, gladly raising,
worshiping God Most High. *Refrain***

**4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. *Refrain***

**5 Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
heav’n sings alleluia:
alleluia the earth replies. *Refrain***

Text: John Henry Hopkins Jr., 1820-1891, alt.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

GLORIA

Assisting minister

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All

Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,

we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.

Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;

you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.

For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,

you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,

in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God,

C on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Isaiah 60:1-6

Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her, because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. ²For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. ³Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurse's arms. ⁵Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. ⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

L The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14 (read responsively)

¹Give the king your justice, O God,

and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

**⁶Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

**¹⁰May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him,
and all the nations do him service.

**¹²For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor,
and preserves the lives of the needy.

**¹⁴From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:1-12

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

☒ 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.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

C Glory to you, O Lord

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:1-12

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “*Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.*” ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “*In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:*” ⁶“*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.*”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “*Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.*” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING (9:00 AM)

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either follow the teacher upstairs for an extended children's sermon (joining us again later in time for Communion) or they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon.

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Arise, Your Light Has Come!”

ELW 314

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Arise, your light has come!
The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God
which shines on you today.</p> | <p>3 Arise, your light has come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the brokenhearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.</p> |
| <p>2 Arise, your light has come!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.</p> | <p>4 Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.</p> |

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947
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WELCOME FOR A TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

- ☐ A church family is constantly changing. Babies are born, loved ones grow older; individuals come and go in our church life. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, these endings and beginnings.

Today we welcome Rev. Stephen Griffith as our Transitional Pastor.

- ☐ Pastor Griffith, in the presence of this congregation will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge your duties in harmony with the constitutions of the church?

Response: I will and I ask God to help me.

- ☐ Will you love, serve and pray for these people of God, nourishing them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, and lead them forward during this important time of change?

Response: I will and I ask God to help me.

- ☐ Will you lead these people of God in giving faithful witness to the Word and in making known the love of God through loving service among themselves and in this community?

Response: I will and I ask God to help me.

P Almighty God, Father, Son and + Holy Spirit, who has given you the will to do these things, give you the power of the Holy Spirit so that you may perform them with strength and compassion.

C Amen.

(stand)

P I ask all of you now, the people of this congregation, will you receive this messenger of Christ, Pastor Griffith, who continues the work of bringing the Gospel of hope and Salvation? Will you welcome his wife Mary Kay and she joins him in this transition period with us? Will you regard them as fellow servants of Christ and work with them in the ministry and mission of this congregation?

C We will.

P Will you pray for Pastor Griffith and honor him for his work's sake, and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

C We will.

L By your statements of commitment and the affirmation of this congregation, we welcome Pastor Stephen Griffith as the Transitional Pastor of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. We also welcome his wife Mary Kay Totty, who is serving as pastor in Seward, NE.

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.

WE SHARE GOD'S PEACE

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

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this congregation possible. We encourage everyone to give. 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.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Kai Johnson, violin

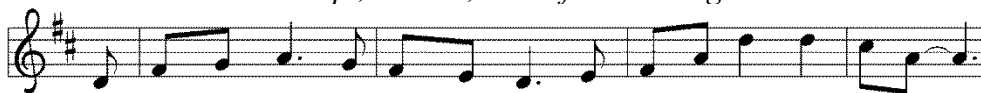
THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring”

ELW 691



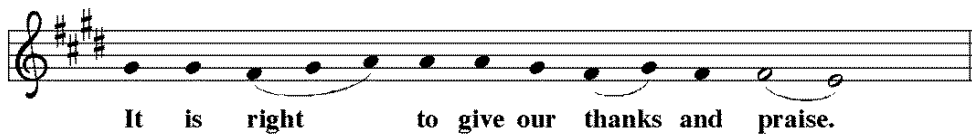
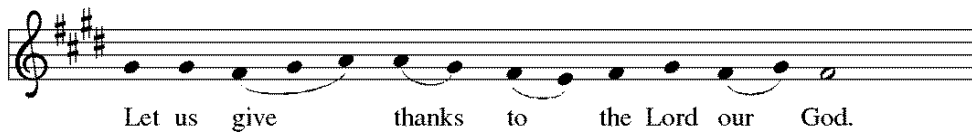
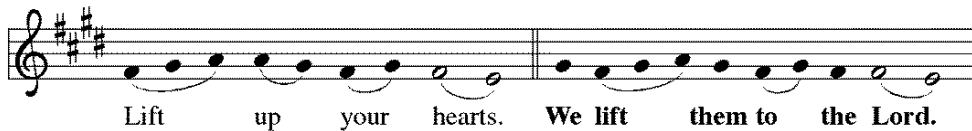
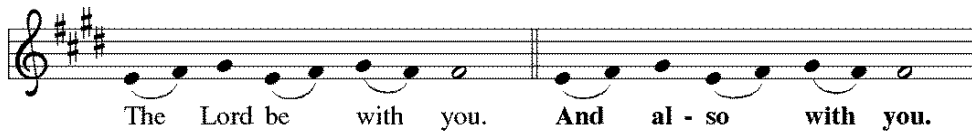
- 1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to place up - on your ta - ble.
- 2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They grew in your good plea - sure.
- 3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we lift in prayer be - fore you.



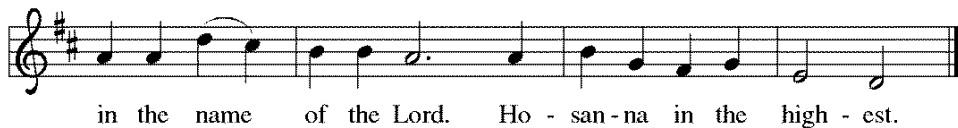
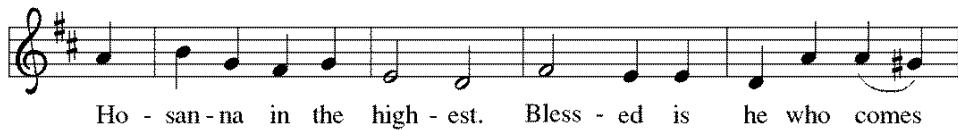
We do not wor - ship as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
What once was com - mon, dail - y food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
Lord, by your grace now come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

- P** Gracious God,
- C** your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth. As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, prepare us to receive the grace and truth you offer at this table and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION



SANCTUS



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 Feast on God's gift of grace.

C **We come to Christ's banquet.**

THE 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.

Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the king,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary!

2 Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

"The First Noel"

ELW 300

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as
they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their
sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

Refrain

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay.

Refrain

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Refrain

Text: English traditional

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and
lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.</p> <p>2 Cold on his cradle the
dewdrops are shining;
low lies his head with the
beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
maker and monarch and savior of all.</p> | <p>3 What shall we give him, in
costly devotion?
Shall we bring incense and
off'rings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?</p> <p>4 Vainly we offer each
ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his
favor secure;
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.</p> <p>5 Brightest and best of the
stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and
lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Reginald Heber,
1783-1826, alt.

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☞** We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus,
- ☞** God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine. As we have shared this feast of love, strengthen us to share your love with all the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- ☐ The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, though Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

HYMN

“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”

ELW 310

- | | |
|--|---|
| <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.

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. Christ is near.
☑ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

† † †

KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Stephen Griffith	Interim Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu	Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe	Christian Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Sarah Jewell	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Kayla Slight	Housekeeper
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton	Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer	Director of the Weber Clinic
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

January 1 & 2, 2022

Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a “City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry” and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for over 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.

Holy Communion

All who are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. Instructions will be provided during worship. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully.

Children in Worship

We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Quiet activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a Quiet Room, just off the west side of the main sanctuary, that includes a TV and a variety of toys, games, and books for young children.

Nursery

Our nursery is available from 9 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it

Attendance Cards

All those attending worship are encouraged to fill out the card included in your bulletin and place in the offering plate.

Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices

Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

E-news & Social Media

If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and

monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the attendance card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828.

Today at Kountze

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God in honor of Mary Ann Johnson's birthday given by Bob Johnson

Television Broadcast is sponsored by Bob & Mary Ann Johnson in celebration of Bob's 55th ordination anniversary

Adult Forum Sundays, 10:10

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for coffee and fellowship. This week we are welcoming Pr. Steve, our congregation's Interim Senior Pastor. Please join us.

Youth Forum Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

All 7th – 12th Graders are invited to join us!

This Sunday—A New Year – how will you meet it?

KMLC Refugee Resettlement Task Force “Epiphany Tree”

Kountze is co-sponsoring a refugee family through Lutheran Family Services, which means we will provide all the items needed for an arriving family. Starting Jan.8, please stop by the “Epiphany Tree” and select an ornament listing one or more of the various furniture and household items needed that you would

Today at Kountze, *continued*

like to donate. Bring your donations and place them in the box in Fellowship Hall **by January 30**. If you need help transporting larger furniture items, we will arrange for volunteers to help. Just as the Magi

came from afar, so do our new neighbors. Thank you for your generosity and answering Christ's call to offer hospitality to those in need.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

January 2 Sunday

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Youth Forum

10:10 AM Adult Forum—Welcome Pr. Griffith

January 3 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

January 4 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

January 5 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship

6:00 PM Confirmation Supper

6:30 PM Confirmation Class

7:00 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

January 6 Thursday

Epiphany of Our Lord

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

January 7 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

January 8 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

January 9 Sunday

Annual Reports are Due

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

12:15 PM Book Group

Ongoing and Coming Soon

Confirmation Resumes

Wednesday, January 5

6:00 PM

Confirmation in January continues with our in-person meetings from 6 – 7:45 PM on Wednesday evenings in the Kountze Fellowship Hall. Our focus turns to Worship and the Sacraments.

'22 Stewardship Campaign

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." - 2 Corinthians 9:7-8

Due to all the fall personnel changes, our Stewardship Campaign is now during our time After Epiphany. We look to this time and join the Refugee Resettlement Task Force in pondering the gifts that the Magi brought to the newborn King, Jesus. It is the hope of the Congregational Council that you will consider your pledge of time, talents and treasures toward Kountze for the coming year. The timeline for our Stewardship Campaign is the

following:

- Mailing Stewardship letter and Pledge cards on January 6
- Stewardship Temple Talk during worship on January 8 & 9
- Returning your Pledge Cards before January 31

Sunday School will resume on January 9. We will start of 2022 by learning about, and celebrating, Epiphany.

New Member Class

January 16 & 23 (please plan to attend both sessions)
12:15 - 2:00 PM

If you are interested in finding out more about Kountze Memorial or would like to join our congregation, please consider attending this New Member class. Lunch will be served and childcare is provided. Please call the church office to register and let us know if you need childcare. You may also register on the attendance card in your weekly bulletin. If you have questions, please talk to one of our Pastors. New Members will be received on January 30.

Ongoing and Coming Soon *continued*

Men's Lunch Resumes

Thursday, January 20

11:30 AM

After taking the month of December off, the Men's Lunch will resume. Please call the church office on Tuesday, January 18 to make a reservation or email jim@kmlchurch.org. This month's program / speaker TBA (To Be Announced) please watch the weekly bulletin.

Project Linus Event

Friday, January 28

6:00 PM

Happy New Year! The Christian Education Committee's resolution for 2022 is to do more service projects for our community. Each month we will have a different project for you to give of your time and talents. For January, we will be making blankets for Project Linus. This charity gives children with severe illnesses or trauma a security blanket. We will be meeting at the church Fellowship Hall on January 28 at 6:00. A chili and hot dog dinner will be provided. In addition to needing volunteers to make tie blankets, we need donations of prewashed fleece or cotton material. Please sign up for this event by calling the church office at 402-341-7761 so that we have enough food and materials on hand. Contact Kristin Boe at Kristin@kmlchurch.org with any questions.

Kountze Food Pantry

Kountze Food Pantry is once again collecting gloves,

mitten, and hats! There is always a need in the winter months. Please leave your donations in the pantry box in Fellowship Hall or in the office. Your kindness is greatly appreciated by our guests!

Please note: Family Fare receipts must be complete in order to be counted. Partial receipts cannot be submitted.

Pantry Volunteers Needed:

Mondays: 7:30 - 9 AM; 9 - 11 AM; 11 AM - 1 PM

Fridays: 4 - 7 PM

If you would like to help, please sign up to volunteer at the following link:

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

Year End Giving

The church office will be closed on December 31 in observance of New Years Day. All financial gifts to Kountze Memorial that you wish to be on your 2020 giving statement should be in the office by Thursday, December 30, 2021 or postmarked no later than December 31, 2021.

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 need to indicate this change to the office 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**, you can pick up a form at the Welcome Desk or call the office.

Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 13, 2022

10:10 AM in the Fellowship Hall

Committee and Boards Reports for the year need to be into Office Manager, Debbie Bogue by January 9. Thank you to each one for your efforts to complete the reports by this date. It allows for the staff time to get it printed and assembled along with all the other weekly task that continue to be done.

Annual Reports will be distributed at Worship the weekend of February 5 and 6.

On Sunday, February 6, Treasurer Tim Backora will lead a review of the budget during Adult Forum time.

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: Christmas Day—no 5:00 PM Service

Sunday: 9:00: 64 **11:00:** 37

Wednesday: not available at time of printing

Total: 101

Streaming: 12/24:73 **12/26:** 57

Cox Cable: not available at time of printing

Pantry Guests Served:465 (inc. 172 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: closed

Offering:

\$16,414.00 (Regular) \$16,964.96 (Specials)

\$5,407.00 (Debt Reduction)

God lives among us with grace and truth.

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

Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh
Monday	Jeremiah 31:7-14	Israel will return to its own land
Tuesday	Ephesians 1:3-14	Spiritual blessings in Christ
Wednesday	2 Timothy 1:8-14	Thanksgiving and encouragement
Thursday	Zechariah 8:14-17	God's promises to Zion
Friday	2 Corinthians 12:1-10	Visions from the Lord
Saturday	Psalms 147:12-20	Sing and praise the Lord
Sunday	Luke 3:15-17, 21-22	The baptism of Jesus



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And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, our hearts sing with gladness for your grace and truth that blesses us each day through Jesus, the Word that became flesh and lives among us now. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of abundant love, we thank you for the gift of this food, a reminder of your care for us each and every day through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you every day and in every way. (Ephesians 1:3)

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

- Talk or think about the people that support you in your daily life.
- Who has mentored you in the Christian faith? How has that person mentored you?

Read: John 1:1-18.

As beautiful as the birth story in Luke is, there is something very powerful about John's account. It is the message of Jesus' entry into our world and lives that is not connected with specific moments. John's account has a timeless and cosmic quality to it that captures the imagination. Not everything about us is marked in time and in a location like Bethlehem. It might be the death of a loved one or an enduring crisis. During such moments, what we need most is God's grace that accepts us, God's light that shatters darkness, and God's truth that heals relationships. What we need to know is that God's Word has entered our lives and world [become flesh] and lives among us now, during our highs and lows and everything in between. This light, grace, and truth stands with us in Christ Jesus, not just as individuals, but as God's whole people.

Discuss: Where do you hope for God's healing power in the world? In your life?

Pray: Gracious God, you turn our sadness into joy; may we remember that you are present in our lives and world to give us hope, peace, and compassion for others through Christ. Amen.

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how can you share God's grace with someone?

During the twelve days of Christmas, we remember that St. Francis of Assisi is credited with making the first nativity scene on Christmas Eve in the year 1223. He was devoted to the Christ child. During these twelve days, we remember the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. If you have a nativity scene set up in your house, consider leaving it out until Epiphany on January 6. Place the white Christ candle (from the Advent wreath) near the scene. Light the candle and take a moment to meditate on the birth of Jesus.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22