

KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Stephen Griffith	Transition Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Gretchen Olson Kopp	Vicar
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
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaight	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

December 10 & 11, 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 worshipping, 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.

Today at Kountze

We Have Gone High Def! Our television broadcast on Cox channel 13 will be shown in high definition beginning today. Thanks to our Endowment Fund, they granted us the money to change how we broadcast.

Welcome Shannon Picha! Shannon will begin this Sunday as our new Nursery Director. Besides having three children of her own, Shannon operated her own in-home daycare and has been a substitute Special Ed Para at Papillion Public Schools.

Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God by Ralph & Jane Ross in honor of granddaughter, Hollis Fischer's baptism

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by Ralph & Jane Ross in honor of granddaughter, Hollis Fischer's baptism

Television Broadcast is sponsored to the glory of God by Ralph & Jane Ross in honor of granddaughter, Hollis Fischer's baptism

Kountze Café

Sundays from 9:30—11:00 AM

Join us each Sunday for breakfast. The suggested donation is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger for the hot breakfast (this Sunday) and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Children's Choir

Second Floor Music Room

9:15 AM (after the 9 AM Children's Blessing)

Grades K-5 - Choir

Grades 6-8 - Director's Assistants

The choir will rehearse immediately after the children's blessing at the 9:00 AM service (9:15 AM). If you have any questions, please contact Barb at 402-341-7761.

Sunday School

Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

Join us on Sundays on the 2nd floor for Sunday School. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs.) meets from 9:00—10:00 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery). **This week:** Christmas Program Rehearsal

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. Our form of distribution is Intinction.

Children in Worship

We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a 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.

Thank you for supporting the ministries of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.



Today at Kountze, *continued*

Youth Forum Grades 7—12

In December, you are encouraged to help with the youth Christmas Program preparation from 10:10 to 10:50 AM in the Children's Choir Room. On Sunday, December 18 at deFreese Manor, we will host a Christmas Caroling Party for the Sunday School Youth and the residents.

Adult Forum Fellowship Hall, 10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **This week:** End of Year Giving with Lutheran Planned Giving and Stewardship Update **Next week:** Fellowship

KMLC Young Adults All Adults ages 21 - 40 Sunday, December 11 10:20 AM

You are invited to meet in the Link. The gathering will include listening to ideas of creating space for you at Kountze Memorial and providing information about the Omaha Lutheran Young Adults Organization and the ELCA Upcoming Young Adults Gathering in New Orleans in 2024. Please consider how you might be a part of this ministry!

Merry Tuba Christmas Concert Sunday, December 11

3:30 PM

Kountze Memorial Free to the Public

Bring your friends, the concert is free and open to the Public. It should be a fun way to spend a Sunday afternoon. For those tuba/euphonium players who are interested in playing along, registration is 1:00 PM with rehearsal at 2:00 PM. Bring your own music stand. There is a \$10 participation fee for all players. For more information, contact Nate Griffith at 402-980-6121. We hope you are able to attend, but if not, it will be live-streamed and can be watched at your convenience.

Omaha Lutheran Young Adults—Table Theology Sunday, December 11

6:30 PM

Everett's on Maple

Rev. Dr. Ashley Hall will be leading this discussion

Alternative Gifts

Now through December 18

See next page for more information.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

December 11 Sunday

Advent 3
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)
9:30—11:00 AM Breakfast
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:20 AM Young Adult (21-40) Gathering
3:30 PM Tuba Christmas Concert

December 12 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
6:00 PM Bible Study

December 13 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
3:00 PM KETV Board Meeting
6:00 PM Circle 3 (Link)

December 14 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group
11:00 AM Advent Lunch
11:00 AM Bible Study
12:15 PM Worship
1:00 PM Devotions @ deFreese Manor
5:00 PM Advent Dinner

6:00 PM Executive Committee

6:30 PM Worship

7:30 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

December 15 Thursday

Council Reports Due
Good News Deadline
12:00 PM Circle 4 Potluck (note time change)
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
6:00 PM Circle 5

December 16 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

December 17 Saturday

9:00 AM Children's Program Rehearsal
3:00 PM Candlelight Carol Sing Rehearsal
4:40 PM Prelude
5:00 PM Candlelight Carol Service

December 18 Sunday

Advent 4
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:00 AM Children's Christmas Program
9:30—11:00 AM Breakfast
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)
10:10 AM Adult Forum

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Alternative Gifts

December 11 & 18

When you give someone an Alternative Gift, you triple the blessings: The person who receives the gift not only feels your love and generosity, they will be honored that you gave them a gift that truly makes a difference in someone's life. You will also feel the blessing of giving a gift that represents God's love and compassion for all people and rejects the commercialization of Christmas. The third blessing is for the child or family who benefits from your gift of food, medicine, education, or a step toward self-sufficiency. An order sheet is in your bulletin.

Bible Study

Mondays, 6:00 PM or

Wednesdays, 11:00 AM

Enter through the Farman Office door to join with others and Pastor Shari for time of learning and sharing. The 11:00 AM Wednesday Bible Study will be 30 minutes so you will have time to have lunch before our 12:15 Advent worship. We will be exploring the Lutheran World Relief Study with the following Advent themes:

- Dec. 12 & 14 Preparing the Way for the Lord
- Dec. 19 & 21 Emmanuel, God With Us
- Dec. 26 & 28 No Study

In January we will explore Epiphany Themes as we unwrap the present of Christ in our lives.

Lutheran Women Omaha, LWO

Tuesday, December 13, 12:00 Noon

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

For reservation and more info., Call Faith, 402-734-4629

Wednesdays in Advent

December 14, & 21

Eucharist at 12:15 PM—Lunch at 11:00 AM

Vespers at 6:30 PM—Dinner at 5:00 PM

Featuring Marty Haugen's musical setting, *Holden Evening Prayer*. The pastors' reflections at these services will follow the theme "Holy Darkness."

December 14 Menu:

- Peruvian Baked Chicken (Vegetarian Option Available)
- Cilantro Lime Rice (plain available)
- Vegetable
- Roll with Butter
- Desert T.B.A.

Middle School NE Synod Gathering

Grades 6-8 and Adult Leaders

Saturday, January 14, 10:00 AM to

Sunday, January 15, 1:00 PM

Held at First Lutheran Church in Kearney

This year's theme is "Lean on Me" with theme verses: Isaiah 41:13 & 1 Corinthians 12:12-20. Registration Rates: Regular registration by **December 15**: \$58 and Last Chance registration by **December 26**: \$68. Please return the registration form with payment to Pastor Shari to get registered.

Candlelight Carol Service

Saturday, December 17

5:00 PM; Prelude 4:40 PM

Come and celebrate the birth of Jesus with singing and worshipful reflection. Nursery is provided. Please join us for this special evening of hope, joy, and fellowship! A cheese and dessert reception following the service.

Children's Christmas Program

Sunday, December 18

9:00 AM

New Member Class

January 15 & 22

10:15 AM

If you're interested in learning more about Kountze Memorial and the possibility of becoming a member of our congregation, please come to the New Member classes. Call the church office if you have questions and to let us know you plan to attend.

Worship with us this Christmas Season!

Christmas Eve

4:00 PM

Family Worship

7:00 PM

Candlelight Worship (in person, TV, and Livestream)

11:00 PM

Candlelight Worship

Christmas Day

10:00 AM

NOTE TIME CHANGE

Worship (in person, TV, and Livestream)

New Year's Eve

5:00 PM

Lessons and Carols

New Year's Day

9:00 AM

NOTE TIME CHANGE

(Pre-recorded for TV and Livestream only)

10:00 AM

Lessons and Carols (in person)

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 35

Sunday: 9:00: 159 **11:00:** 83

Wednesday: 12:15: 20 **6:30:** 58

Total: 355

Streaming: 48

Cox Cable: Not available

Pantry Guests Served: 1048 (inc. 343 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 21

Offering:

\$21,885.5 (Regular)

\$53,218.63 (Specials)

\$1,577.75 (Debt Reduction)

God of judgement, mercy, and peace.

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

Sunday	Matthew 3:1-12	Prepare the way of the Lord
Monday	Isaiah 11:1-10	The peaceful kingdom
Tuesday	Romans 15:4-13	Good news for Jews and Gentiles
Wednesday	Psalms 96	Praise to God who comes in judgment
Thursday	Psalms 149	Praise for God's goodness to Israel
Friday	James 3:13-18	Two kinds of wisdom
Saturday	Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19	A prayer for guidance for the king
Sunday	Matthew 11:2-11	Jesus and John the Baptist



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For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. Romans 15:4 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week: Dear God, help us to see in your judgment the cleansing power that frees us to bear the fruit of the new life in Christ Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer: God of peace and love, we thank you for this food and ask that all people have food on their tables and a roof over their heads. Amen.

A Blessing to Give: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing. (Romans 15:13)

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

- When you think of God as judge, what do you imagine?
- Have you ever felt judged because of your faith in God? Explain.

Read: Matthew 3:1-12.

In the Gospel of Matthew, no one gets a free pass. Pharisees and Sadducees are severely chastised. The masses are shown following almost anyone at any given moment. The disciples display their own shortcomings throughout the Gospel. John the Baptist questions if Jesus really is the anticipated Messiah (Matthew 11:2-3). Jesus' own righteousness gets betrayed, even by those closest to him. It is clear that God's rule needs divine judgment. It's not a judgment that desires punishment but one that brings truth to misunderstanding and cleansing and humility to offset self-righteousness. God's judgment is about correction and new beginnings, not threats. God's judgment finds all of us coming up short and in need of a Savior, in the need of Jesus. John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus and baptized him. Jesus' baptism with the Holy Spirit cleanses to create a changed life. The result is a people set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name.

Discuss: In what ways have you been set free to bear fruit in Jesus' name?

Pray: **God of judgment and mercy, cleanse our hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit that we may trust in you and bear the fruit of peace, joy, and love for all through Christ Jesus. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve the poor and needy with fairness and compassion rather than judgement?

During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. For this second week of Advent, light the first candle of hope and a second candle of peace on the Advent wreath. This week, we focus on the peace that Jesus brings us to set aside our differences and trust in God's promise. Say: Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, the light of Christ that gives us hope and peace.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11