

## 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 17 & 18, 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.*

### **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**

**Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God in gratitude for Simon, Mara, and Vera given by Kimberly Grassmeier

### **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.

### **Sunday School Christmas Program**

#### **This Sunday:**

- **9:00 AM** Children's Christmas Program
- **10:00 AM** Christmas Caroling Party for the Sunday School Youth and the residents of deFreese Manor

#### **December 25 & January 1:**

- No Sunday School. Preschool will be provided during the 9 AM service.

### **Youth Forum**

#### **Grades 7—12**

#### **This Sunday, December 18**

We will host a Christmas Caroling Party for the Sunday School Youth and the residents of deFreese Manor.

### **Adult Forum**

#### **Fellowship Hall, 10:10 AM**

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. **This week:** Fellowship **Next week:** Fellowship

## Today at Kountze, *continued*

### Alternative Gifts

#### Today is the Last Day!

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.

---

## This Week at Kountze Memorial

### 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-6<sup>th</sup> gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

### December 19 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

6:00 PM Bible Study

### December 20 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group

6:00 PM Congregation Council

### December 21 Wednesday

11:00 AM Advent Lunch

11:00 AM Bible Study

12:15 PM Worship

5:00 PM Advent Dinner

6:30 PM Worship (in person and livestream)

### December 22 Thursday

OFFICE CLOSED (at noon)

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

### December 23 Friday

OFFICE CLOSED

### December 24 Saturday

4:00 PM Family Worship

7:00 PM Candlelight Worship (in person, TV, and Livestream)

11:00 PM Candlelight Worship

### December 25 Sunday

Christmas Day NOTE SERVICE TIME CHANGE

10:00 AM (in person, TV, & Livestream)

11:00 AM Coffee Hour

### December 26 Monday

OFFICE CLOSED

---

## For Your Calendar/News & Notes

### 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. 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.

Kountze Café

We will be taking a break on Sundays, December 25 and January 1. A fellowship time of coffee and Christmas cookies will follow our 10 AM Worship on those days.

### Wednesdays in Advent

**December 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 21 Menu:

Spaghetti with Meat Sauce or Alfredo Sauce

Garden Salad

Garlic Bread

Dessert

Vegetarian Option Available

### 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: Last Chance registration by **December 26**: \$68. Please return the registration form with payment to Pastor Shari to get registered.

### **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.

### **Carol Joy Holling Camp 2023**

Register for camp by January 31 and **receive \$50 off and get a free CJH Camp Beanie**. The Early Bird \$50 discount applies to all full-week sessions at Carol Joy Holling Camp. The first 500 campers registered before January 31 will receive a CJH Camp Beanie.

### **Altar Flowers, Eternal Candle & TV Broadcast**

The new sign up posters are now available. Be sure to sign up for your special date early so it's still available. Altar Flowers are provided by Janousek Florist and cost \$20 a bouquet. The Eternal Candle is \$7.50 and sponsoring a TV broadcast is \$210. Donating altar flowers or the Eternal candle or providing a church broadcast 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. The Altar Flower and Eternal Candle sign-up is located in the Narthex, just before you enter the Sanctuary.

### **Kountze Pantry**

Thank-you to all the volunteers who made our WOWT Stuff the Bus event a success! Once again, St. Michael Church is providing hygiene tote bags for our guests as a Christmas present. They are filled with full-sized products and are greatly appreciated. Looking forward, Kountze Food Pantry is collecting gloves, especially adult men's gloves. We never seem to have enough! We also would appreciate peanut butter and canned (not jars) pasta sauce as these two items are difficult to purchase in quantity. If you would like to volunteer at the Pantry, please sign up at the following link:

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

### **Peace Light from Bethlehem**

For the past 700 to 1,000 years, an oil lamp has burned continuously in Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity, above the place where Jesus was believed to have been born. Every year since 1986, a child from Austria has traveled at the beginning of Advent to obtain the flame, and with the help of Austria Airlines, transports the

flame –called the Peace Light from Bethlehem – across Europe. Since 2000, the Peace Light has also been making its way to North America each year, with New York's JFK Airport as its transfer point. This simple but extraordinary project is intended to promote peace, harmony, and unity among all peoples of the world – of every race, ethnicity, and creed. Thanks to St. John's Catholic Parish at Creighton University, the Peace Light now burns at Kountze and will continue through Epiphany. It will be used each time we light the Advent wreath. As you gather for Advent worship, may it remind us of the peace of Christ that we share with and receive from others throughout our daily lives. For more about the project, visit [peacelightnorthamerica.org](http://peacelightnorthamerica.org) to view where the peace light is traveling and available across the US this year. Also, check out this video of last year's Peace Light Arrival Ceremony at JFK Airport <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RG0B0ILgzAs> and another video on its previous sharing across the US <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz7RDj7TE04>

### **Holden Village**

Mark #5 #5 #5 < #5 356 #

Save the date and watch the bulletin and Good News for more information. Contact Pastor Duminy with any questions you may have or to let her know if you intend to go on the trip by January 1.#

---

### **Worship with us this Christmas Season!**

#### **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:** 33

**Sunday: 9:00:** 173 **11:00:** 97

**Wednesday: 12:15:** 23 **6:30:** 48

**Total:** 376

**Streaming:** 100

**Cox Cable:** N/A

**Pantry Guests Served:** 1,171 (inc. 395 children)

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 22

**Offering:**

\$22,046.7 (Regular)

\$8,042.43 (Specials)

\$2,328.06 (Debt Reduction)

## Who is this Jesus born of God's love?

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

Sunday	Matthew 1:18-25	God is with us
Monday	Isaiah 7:10-16	A son named Immanuel
Tuesday	Romans 1:1-7	A salutation
Wednesday	Isaiah 9:1-7	A child is born
Thursday	1 John 4:7-12	God is love
Friday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Israel's restoration
Saturday	Luke 2:1-20	The birth of Jesus
Sunday	John 1:1-14	The Word became flesh



© 2018 Vibrant Faith Ministries. All rights reserved.  
Written by Pr. Greg Priebbenow and edited by Vibrant Faith Ministries.  
Go to [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org) for more faith-forming activities.

*Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **Matthew 1:18 (NRSV)***

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

Holy God, we praise you for reaching out to us and all the world with your eternal love through your Son, our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, we thank you for restoring us each day with the gift of food. Strengthen us with this meal to love others as you love us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

May Jesus, the Son of God and Savior of the world bless you with God's steadfast love.

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

- When you think of a special friend or relative, how do you describe that person to others?
- When you think of Jesus, how do you describe him?

*Read:* Matthew 1:18-25.

Since it speaks of Jesus' birth, this is almost an odd text for the last Sunday in Advent. It could be a Christmas Eve or Day writing, except that the focus is less on Jesus' birth and more on his identity: Who is this Jesus? He is divine (conceived by the Holy Spirit) yet also of the lineage of David (son of David, a title for the royal messiah). His role is seen in his name Jesus, meaning, "to save." His entrance into history is the fulfillment of scripture. Jesus' birth is prophetically linked to Isaiah 7 by the name Emmanuel, God with us. This essential point is brought back at the end of the Gospel of Matthew when Jesus says, "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). It is worth reflecting on the coming of Jesus as the Son of God who comes to save and to fulfill the scriptures. This Jesus is not just a historical figure of the past but the very presence of God who is with us today. Jesus is present in the midst of our personal and community needs for salvation from sin, death, and the presence of real evil.

*Discuss:* What part of Jesus' identity do you focus on or relate to during the Advent season?

*Pray:* **Eternal God, help us to sense the awe of Jesus' birth through whom you have come to be with us as our Savior and promise to be with us always. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you help others experience God's love and mercy?

During the four weeks of Advent, we prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Jesus Christ. For the fourth and last week of Advent, light the first candle of hope, the second candle of peace, the third candle of joy, and the fourth candle of love on the Advent wreath. This week, we focus on God's unconditional love for us and our love for one another.

*Say:* **Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord, the light of Christ that gives us hope, peace, joy, and love.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Lessons & Carols