

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Stephen Griffith, Transition Senior Pastor  
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor  
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2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131-3616  
402-341-7761  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

December 24, 2022

4:00, 7:00 & 11:00 PM

## The Nativity of Our Lord—Christmas Eve



## PRELUDE

**Kountze Brass** (4:00 pm, 7:00 pm)

Scott Quackenbush, Jaime Tyser, *trumpet*

Jason Stromquist, Jay Wise, *trombone*

**Cellist** (7:00 pm, 11:00 pm)

Samuel Pierce-Ruhland

## GATHERING

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the Word made flesh, our life and salvation.

**C** Amen.

**P** Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of our God and Savior, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** God of life,

**C** you promise good news of great joy for all people,  
and call us to be messengers of your peace.

We confess that too often we hoard our joy,  
our resources, and our security.

We nurture conflict and build barriers.

We neglect the needs of our neighbors  
and ignore the groaning of creation.

Have mercy on us.

Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.

Where we are reluctant, give us courage.

Where we are cynical, restore our trust.

Renew us with your grace

and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.

**P** Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In † Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation.

**C** Amen.

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN***“Oh Come, All Ye Faithful”***ELW 283 vs. 1-3**

**1 O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;  
come and behold him,  
born the king of angels:**

**2 The highest, most holy,  
light of light eternal,  
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;  
Son of the Father  
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!**

**3 Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!  
Glory to God  
in the highest: *Refrain***

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711-1786;  
tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-1880, sts. 1, 3-4; tr. unknown, st. 2

**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.

**HYMN OF PRAISE***“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”***ELW 270**

**1 Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king;  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all you nations, rise;  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

**2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!  
Hail, incarnate deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain***

*Refrain*

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn king!"**

**3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!  
Hail the Sun of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth. *Refrain***

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Almighty God,

**G** you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his 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 9:2,4-7**

*This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!*

**T**he people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

**L** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

### PSALM 96 (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup>**Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord;  
proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

<sup>3</sup>Declare God's glory among the nations  
and God's wonders among all peoples.

<sup>4</sup>**For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised,  
more to be feared than all gods.**

<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;  
but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.

<sup>6</sup>**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;  
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples,  
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

<sup>8</sup>**Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name;  
bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;  
tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

<sup>10</sup>**Tell it out among the nations: “The Lord is king!  
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved  
will judge the peoples with equity.”**

<sup>11</sup>Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

<sup>12</sup>**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O Lord,  
for you come to judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>You will judge the world with righteousness  
**and the peoples with your truth.**

## SECOND READING

**Titus 2:11-14**

*The appearance of God’s grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior’s final appearance.*

**T**he grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

**L** Word of God, Word of Life.

**G** Thanks be to God.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”*

**ELW 257 vs. 7**

**7 O come, O King of nations, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new**

*Refrain*

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

**G** Glory to you, O Lord!

## THE CHRISTMAS GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

*God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.*

**I**n those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.

**G** Praise to you, O Christ.

*(sit)*

### **CHILDREN'S BLESSING** (4:00 pm)

*Children (aged 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) are invited to come forward.*

*Then, they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the service.*

## SERMON

- 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

(stand)

### THE NICENE CREED

- ☐ God has made us God's people through our Baptism into Christ.  
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- ☑ 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.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

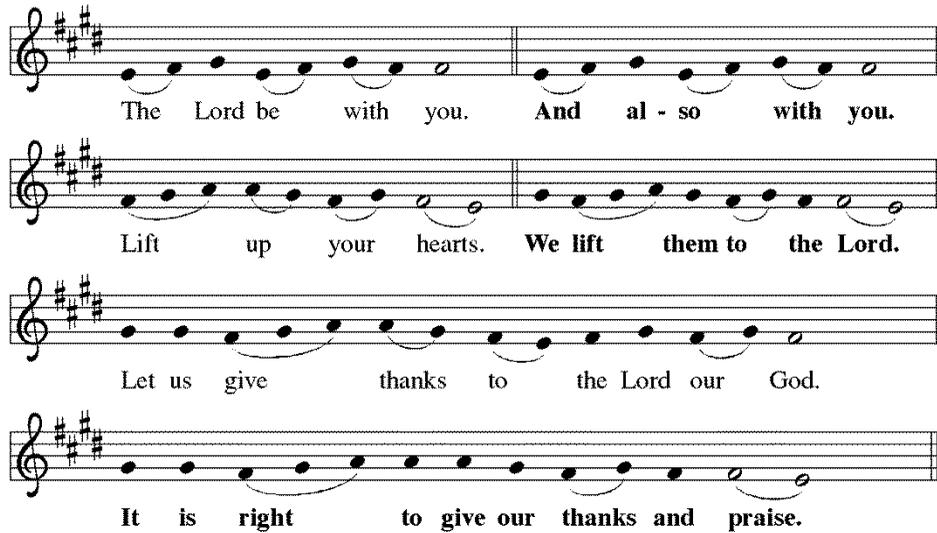
Response:   **P** God of grace,  
                  **C** hear our prayer.

## **THE CHRISTMAS PEACE IS SHARED**

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



## HOLY COMMUNION

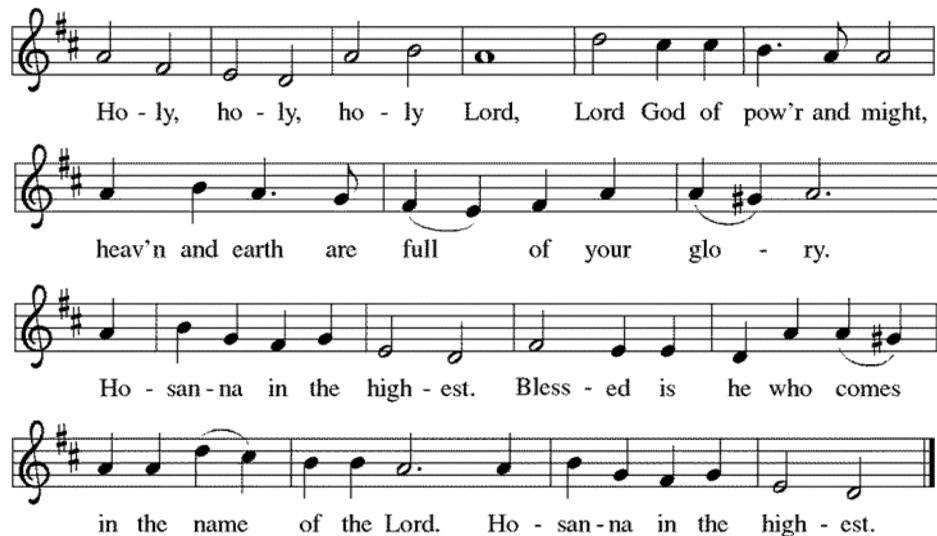


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE FOR THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD

- ☐ 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. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. 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

tune of "Away in a Manger" ELW 277

**Our Father in heaven, all praise to Your Name!  
Your kingdom among us, Your will done the same  
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord, reign alone:  
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;  
As we forgive others, our sins take away;  
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;  
From evil deliver Your children most dear.**

**For Yours is the kingdom; o'er all things You reign.  
And Yours is the power; all things You maintain.  
To you be the glory, resounding again  
From all of creation, forever! Amen.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- ☐** Glory to God in the highest!
- ☑** Come to the table of peace.

### 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 who 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. The form of distribution is intinction: you will receive the consecrated bread and then you may dip the bread into the wine. Gluten free bread is available upon request.*

(sit)

## AGNUS DEI



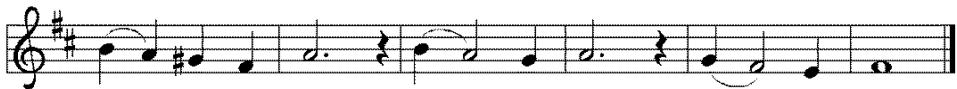
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



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

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

ELW 289

**1** Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply,  
echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain*

**Gloria in excelsis Deo;  
gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**2** Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heav'nly song?  
*Refrain*

**3** Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn king.  
*Refrain*

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864

- 1 **Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus  
laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky  
looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**
- 2 **The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus,  
no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus;  
look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**
- 3 **Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever  
and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children  
in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

Text: North American, 19th cent.

*"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"*

- 1 **It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,  
from heav'n's all-gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
to hear the angels sing.**
- 2 **Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heav'nly music floats  
o'er all the weary world.  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
they bend on hov'ring wing,  
and ever o'er its babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.**
- 3 **And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow:  
look now, for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing;  
oh, rest beside the weary road  
and hear the angels sing!**
- 4 **For lo! The days are hast'ning on,  
by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.**

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1810-1876

*(stand)*

## **BLESSING**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**P** God our redeemer,

**G** you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

### **CANDLE LIGHTING** *(7:00 pm & 11:00 pm)*

#### **CANDLE LIGHT HYMN**

*“Silent Night, Holy Night”*

**ELW 281**

**1** Silent night, holy night!

All is calm, all is bright

Round yon virgin mother and child.

Holy Infant, so tender and mild,

Sleep in heavenly peace,

Sleep in heavenly peace.

**2** Silent night, holy night!

Son of God, love’s pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face,

With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,

Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

**3** Silent night, holy night!

Wondrous star, lend thy light;

with the angels let us sing,

Al-le-lu-ia to our King;

Christ, the Savior, is born!

Christ, the Savior, is born!

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849;

John F. Young, 1820-1885

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

- ☐ Alleluia! I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Alleluia!
- ☑ **Alleluia! To us is born a Savior, Jesus Christ! Alleluia!**

*The Gospel is read.*

## THE GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATION

**John 1:1-5, 9-14**

*The congregation will stand and face the reader as the Gospel is read from the center of the nave. Listen in wonder and awe.*

## CLOSING PRAYER

- ☐ The Lord be with you.
- ☑ **And also with you.**
  
- ☐ Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we will walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- ☑ **Amen.**

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# SENDING

## BLESSING

- ☞ God bless you and keep you, † Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

## THREE-FOLD AMEN

## HYMN

*“Joy to the World”*

**ELW 267 vs. 1,2,4**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!</b><br/>Let earth receive her king;<br/>let ev'ry heart<br/>prepare him room<br/>and heav'n and nature sing,<br/>and heav'n and nature sing,<br/>and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.</p> | <p><b>2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!</b><br/>Let all their songs employ,<br/>while fields and floods,<br/>rocks, hills, and plains<br/>repeat the sounding joy,<br/>repeat the sounding joy,<br/>repeat, repeat the sounding joy.</p> |
| <p><b>4 He rules the world with truth and grace</b><br/>and makes the nations prove<br/>the glories of his righteousness<br/>and wonders of his love,<br/>and wonders of his love,<br/>and wonders, wonders of his love.</p>             |   |

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

## DISMISSAL

- ☞ Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.  
☞ Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

**Kountze Brass** (4:00 pm, 7:00 pm)

Scott Quackenbush, Jaime Tyser, *trumpet*  
Jason Stromquist, Jay Wise, *trombone*

**Cellist** (7:00 pm, 11:00 pm)

Samuel Pierce-Ruhland

† † †

## 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](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

**December 24 & 25, 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

### Kountze Café

#### Christmas Day & New Year's Day

#### 11:00 AM Coffee Hour

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. Beginning again January 8, join us each Sunday from 9:30—11:00 AM 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.

### Nursery

The KMLC Nursery officially opened Sunday, December 11, and will be open every Sunday from 8:45 AM until 12:00 PM as well as other Occasional Special Church Services. We need volunteers to assist as we are required to have two people in the nursery to remain open. High schoolers or other adults are encouraged to email [Nursery@kmlchurch.org](mailto:Nursery@kmlchurch.org) or reach out to Shannon Picha personally if interested in assisting.

### Sunday School

#### December 25 & January 1:

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

### Youth Forum

#### Grades 7—12

No Youth Forum on Christmas or New Years, but join us again on January 8 at 10:10 AM for a time of community, learning, and serving. On January 8 we will be assisting with Sunday School.

### Adult Forum

#### Fellowship Hall, 10:10 AM

No Youth Forum on Christmas or New Years, but join us again on January 8 at 10:10 AM

### 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.**



## This Week at Kountze Memorial

### 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

### December 28 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship

### December 30 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

### December 31 Saturday

New Year's Eve  
5:00 PM Worship

### January 1 Sunday

Christmas 1  
New Year's Day  
9:00 AM (TV & Livestream only)  
10:00 AM Worship (Note time)  
11:00 AM Coffee Hour

### January 2 Monday

OFFICE CLOSED

### January 3 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

### January 4 Wednesday

12:15 PM Worship  
6:00 PM Confirmation Class  
7:00 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

### January 5 Thursday

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

### January 6 Friday

Epiphany of Our Lord  
5:00 PM Pantry

### January 7 Saturday

Homebound Communion  
5:00 PM Worship

### January 8 Sunday

Epiphany of Our Lord  
Homebound Communion  
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal  
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  
12:15 PM Book Group

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## For Your Calendar/News & Notes

### Omaha Lutheran Young Adults Table Theology

Sunday, January 8

6:30 PM

Place TBA

For latest information join on Facebook, or email  
omahalutheranyoungadults@gmail.com

### Bible Study

Mondays, 6:00 PM or

Wednesdays, 11:00 AM

Enter through the Farnam office door to join with others and  
Pastor Shari for time of learning and sharing.

Dec. 26 & 28 No Study

Beginning January 9 & 11 we will explore Epiphany Themes as  
we unwrap the present of Christ in our lives.

### 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.

### Confirmation

7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders meet each Wednesday evening beginning  
again on January 4 at 6 PM in the Fellowship Lounge. During  
the month of January, we will be studying the Creeds of the  
church.

### 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 High School Retreat

For 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders

January 21-22

1:00 PM Saturday - 1:30 PMish Sunday

Cost is \$50 per person and register by January 13 at <https://www.cjhcenter.org/hs-retreat>

### Journey to DENVER

The NE Synod Youth trip for 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders will take place  
July 10-15, 2023. (This is a change from Sunday to Friday to a  
Monday to Saturday.) Registration is extended till **January 29**  
for \$400.00 and **February 25** for \$500.00. Our home base will  
be at Colorado Christian University, with lodging offered in  
suite style dorm rooms. Each day we will be doing service  
projects, sharing in community building activities, bible study

and worship. Mark your calendars and plan to join the Nebraska Synod ELCA high school making the journey together this coming summer!

### **Jumping with Jesus Through Life's Highs and Lows**

**4-6<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Friday, January 27**

**6:45-9:00 PM**

**Altitude Trampoline Park**

**5575 N 90<sup>th</sup> St**

A Trampoline Park formation adventure for youth from across Omaha's Lutheran Congregations will gather for fellowship, creative learning, and lots of jumps! Friends are welcome as long as they register. Treats and water provided. Register and pay Pastor Shari by Wed. Jan. 25<sup>th</sup>. \*\*You must fill out Altitude's jump waiver on their website or this link: <https://altitude.active8pos.com/public/waiver/video?loc=OMAHA>

### **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.

### **2022 Contribution Note**

In order for your offerings to be counted toward your 2022 giving, it needs to be in the office or postmarked no later than December 31, 2022.

### **Join our Kountze Café Team!**

There are still opportunities to join the breakfast crew on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and/or 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday from 8 – 11:30 AM. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday Continental Breakfast: 2 people to set up from 8-9 AM, 3 people to clean up from 10:45 – 11:30 AM. The grocery lists are established, who might be willing to shop and get the supplies to the church by Saturday morning? There are also opportunities to make mini quiches on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month and French Toast Bake the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month. Families are welcome to serve together. Thank you for considering how you might be a part of this ministry and then let Pastor Shari know how you might respond.

### **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**

We are 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**

**July 22 – 29, 2023**

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 Tuesday, January 3. We need to submit a reservation list by January 5-

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### **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)

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### **Attendance & Giving**

**Saturday:** 153

**Sunday: 9:00:** 174 **11:00:** 45

**Wednesday: 12:15:** 6:30:

**Total:** 372

**Streaming:** 101

**Cox Cable:**

**Pantry Guests Served:** 1076 (inc. 363 children)

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 21

**Offering:**

\$20,107.12 (Regular) \$7,282.88 (Specials)

\$2,147.00 (Debt Reduction)

*The glory and power of God is here.*

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

Sunday	John 1:1-14	The Word became flesh
Monday	Isaiah 52:7-10	Let Zion rejoice
Tuesday	Hebrews 1:1-12	God has spoken by a Son
Wednesday	Isaiah 62:6-12	Salvation of Zion
Thursday	Psalms 97	The glory of God's reign
Friday	Titus 3:4-7	Maintain good deeds
Saturday	Psalms 98	Sing praises to the Lord
Sunday	Matthew 2:13-23	The escape to Egypt



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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:**

God of hope, peace, joy, and love, we thank you for your glory, power, and might as shown to us in the humble birth of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Dear God, you who feed shepherds and kings alike, we thank you for this food, a sign of your glory, power, and might that is shown to us in Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. Amen.

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

May the glory of Jesus' birth shine brightly in you today.

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

- How does someone overcome the fear of darkness?
- How does Jesus bring you from fear and darkness into joy and light?

*Read:* John 1:1-14.

John's introduction of Jesus points to a world of contrasts between darkness and light, that is, between the power of fear and deception and the light of God that brings grace, and truth. The arrival of Jesus, the Word that became flesh and now dwells among us, sheds light on what true power and real life looks like: it's the glory of grace and truth. Grace is that divine gift of underserved kindness. In John truth is more than facts. It is a way of life lived in relationship to Jesus, who is "*the way, the truth and the life*" (John 14:6). Jesus comes to shed light on that which brings God's glory and creates goodness and life. Through the Word that became flesh, all created life has come into being. Powers that live in darkness are not life-giving. The good news to hear this Christmas—and always—is that Jesus' light overcomes darkness. Jesus is the source of all that is life-giving, that which is full of grace and truth for all. It is the power worth knowing and trusting.

*Discuss:* Where have you seen the powers of darkness at work in the world? Where have you seen the powers of grace and truth at work in the world?

*Pray:* **God of glory and might, we thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the light of the world, who brings your grace and truth to conquer all the darkness of sin and evil. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you help others to have hope in the God of grace and truth?

During the four weeks of Advent, we prepared our hearts and minds for the day of Jesus' birth and his coming again. Light the four candles of hope, peace, joy, and love on the Advent wreath. Then light the white one, the Christ candle, in the center of the wreath. This week, we focus on God's unconditional love for us and our love for one another. Dim the lights in the room and have a moment of silence to gaze upon the candles.

*Leader:* ***The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*** (John 1:5)

*All:* **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