

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor  
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor  
Paul H. Moessner, Associate Pastor  
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131-3616  
402-341-7761  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

March 11, 2018

9:00 & 11:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT



*The fourth of the Old Testament promises providing a baptismal lens this Lent is the promise God makes to Moses: those who look on the bronze serpent will live. In today's gospel Jesus says he will be lifted up on the cross like the serpent, so that those who look to him in faith will live. When we receive the sign of the cross in baptism, that cross becomes the sign we can look to in faith, for healing, for restored relationship to God, for hope when we are dying.*

## PRELUDE

## GATHERING

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** God of heaven and earth, you come in close and make us yours. Equip us by your Spirit to confess our sin, embrace your forgiveness, and seek the way you set before us in your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** With honesty of heart, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.*

- P** Merciful God,
- C** **forgive us.**
- Our will is handcuffed to sin, and we cannot break free.**  
**We have spoken when we should have kept quiet.**  
**We were silent when we should have said something.**  
**We acted when we knew better.**  
**We were still when we know we should have moved.**  
**For the wrong we have done,**  
**for the good we have failed to do, have mercy on us,**  
**through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

- P** People of God, look to ✠ Jesus Christ, given to heal you and set you free because God loved the world so much, because God loved you so much. Take hold of life—eternal life!
- C** **Amen.**

### PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*“Word of God, Come Down on Earth”*

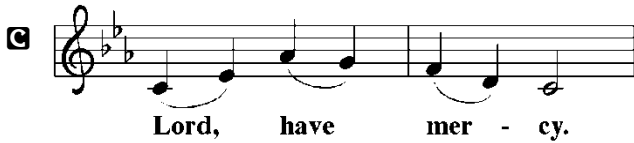
**ELW 510**

### APOSTOLIC GREETING

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C** **And also with you.**

## KYRIE

**P** In peace let us pray to the Lord.



**P** For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord .



**P** For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



**P** For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.



**P** Help, save comfort and defend us gracious Lord.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** O God, rich in mercy,

**C** by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

# WORD

(sit)

## FIRST READING

**Numbers 21:4-9**

*Though God provides food and water for the Israelites in the wilderness, they whine and grumble. They forget about the salvation they experienced in the exodus. God punishes them for their sin, but when they repent God also provides a means of healing: a bronze serpent lifted up on a pole.*

**F**rom Mount Hor [the Israelites] set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. <sup>5</sup>The people spoke against God and against Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food.” <sup>6</sup>Then the Lord sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. <sup>7</sup>The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. <sup>8</sup>And the Lord said to Moses, “Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.” <sup>9</sup>So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

**A** The word of the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

## PSALM 107:1-3, 17-22 *(read responsively)*

<sup>1</sup>Give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good,  
for his mercy endures forever.

**<sup>2</sup>Let the redeemed of the Lord proclaim  
that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

<sup>3</sup>gathering them in from the lands;  
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

**<sup>17</sup>Some were fools and took rebellious paths;  
through their sins they were afflicted.**

<sup>18</sup>They loathed all manner of food  
and drew near to death’s door.

**<sup>19</sup>Then in their trouble they cried to the Lord  
and you delivered them from their distress.**

<sup>20</sup>You sent forth your word and healed them  
and rescued them from the grave.

**<sup>21</sup>Let them give thanks to you, Lord, for your steadfast love  
and your wonderful works for all people.**

<sup>22</sup>Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving  
and tell of your deeds with shouts of joy.

## SECOND READING

**Ephesians 2:1-10**

*While we were dead in our sinfulness, God acted to make us alive as a gift of grace in Christ Jesus. We are saved not by what we do but by grace through faith. Thus our good works are really a reflection of God's grace at work in our lives.*

**Y**ou were dead through the trespasses and sins <sup>2</sup>in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup>All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. <sup>4</sup>But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—<sup>6</sup>and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup>not the result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

**A** The word of the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

*(stand)*

### **LENTEN VERSE**

*“Thy Word”*

**Chorus:**        **Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet And a light unto my path  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet And a light unto my path**

**Verse 1:**        **When I feel afraid And I think I've lost my way  
Still You're there right beside me  
Nothing will I fear As long as You are near  
Please be near me to the end**

**Verse 2:**        **I will not forget Your love for me and yet  
My heart forever is wandering  
Jesus be my guide And hold me to Your side  
I will love You to the end**

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

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

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

**John 3:14-21**

*To explain the salvation of God to the religious leader, Nicodemus, Jesus refers to the scripture passage quoted in today's first reading. Just as those who looked upon the bronze serpent were healed, so people will be saved when they behold Christ lifted up on the cross.*

[Jesus said:] <sup>14</sup>“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup>that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. <sup>16</sup>“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. <sup>17</sup>“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. <sup>18</sup>Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. <sup>19</sup>And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. <sup>20</sup>For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

**P** The Gospel of our Lord

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

*(sit)*

## CHILDREN'S BLESSING *(9:00 AM)*

*Children (aged 3 years through 5<sup>th</sup> 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.*

## SERMON

Pastor Hall

*(stand)*

## HYMN OF THE DAY

*“O Word of God Incarnate”*

**ELW 514**

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

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

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

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

## THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Response:    **P** Lord, in your mercy,  
                  **C** hear our prayer.

*(In our prayers today, during a time of silence, pray for those listed below and for others according to their needs)*

**Thanksgiving:** For the baptism of Neka Belle Durio, daughter of Dustin & Molly

**Illness:** Emalee Gardels, Jr Green, Eunice Grunberg, Lavern Larkowski, Susan Muchmore, Alice Pickinpaugh, Gary Rodene, Ed White

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Brennan Hron, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, and Joel Woosley

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Krystle Moraska & Ignacio Madrussan, Argentina; Lindsay Mack, Mexico; Our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

## THE PEACE IS SHARED

**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 church 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 or use the giving kiosk in the Fellowship Hall.



## THE TABLE IS PREPARED

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*“God So Loved the World”*

John Stainer

(stand)

### OFFERTORY HYMN

*“Create in Me a Clean Heart”*

ELW 186

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right  
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of  
your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923  
Music © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ Merciful God,  
☑ receive the sacrifice of our praise and thanksgiving and the offering of our lives, that following in the way of the cross, we will know the joy of the resurrection; through Christ our Lord. Amen.



## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

*(The Thanksgiving continues)*

■ It is indeed right ...  
...and join their unending hymn:

## SANCTUS

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of

pow - er and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -

san - na in the high - est. Blessed 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

- ☩ 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

- ☩ Return to God with all your heart.**  
**☩ Receive bread for the journey, drink for the desert.**

*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.*

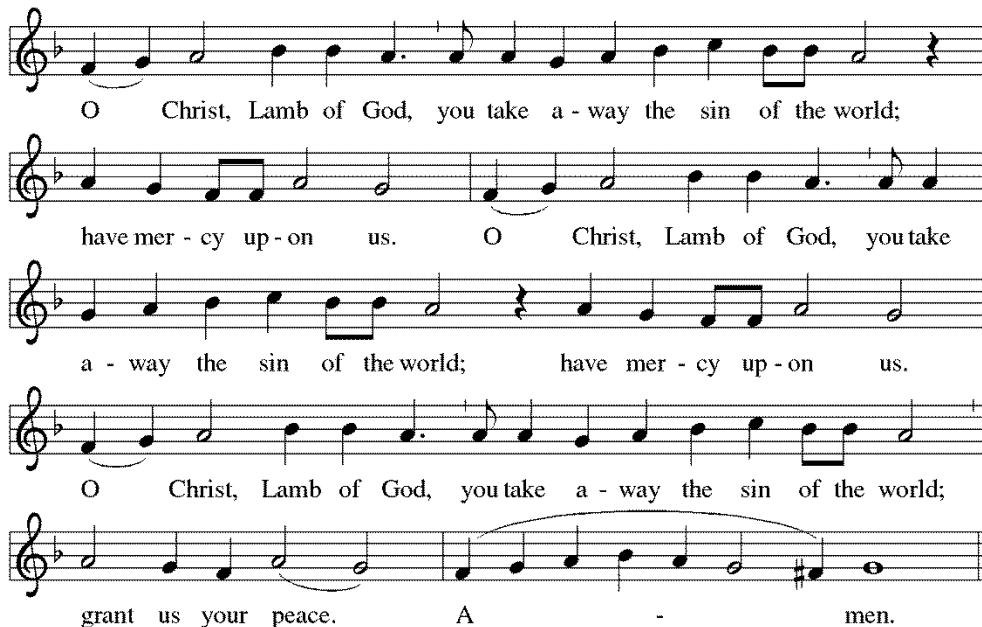
*The form of distribution is **intinction**, You will receive the consecrated bread and you may then dip it in the wine.  
Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.*

(sit)

## AGNUS DEI

*“O Christ, Lamb of God”*

ELW 196



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
have mer - cy up - on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take  
a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy up - on us.  
O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;  
grant us your peace. A - men.

Music: J. Bugenhagen, *Christliche Ordnung*, 1528

## HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

*“O Bread of Life from Heaven”*

ELW 480

*“O Lord, We Praise You”*

ELW 499

(stand)

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Compassionate God,  
**C** you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten pilgrimage: may our fasting be hunger for justice, our alms, a making of peace, and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## SENDING

### BLESSING

- P** May God who has called us forth from the dust of the earth, and claimed us as children of the light, strengthen you on your journey into life renewed. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you ✝ peace.
- G** Amen.

### HYMN

*"Abide with Me"*

**ELW 629**

### DISMISSAL

- P** Marked with the cross of Christ, go forth to love and serve the Lord.
- G** Thanks be to God.

### POSTLUDE

✝      ✝      ✝

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## KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Olaf Roynesdal	Senior Pastor
Pr. Paul Moessner	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu	Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe	Christian Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Amanda Zasada	Administrative Assistant
Lauri Askew	Staff Treasurer
Sheri Rose	Financial Secretary
Søren Johnson	Custodian
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Donna Moessner	Director of Children's Music
Danny Bos	Handbell Director/Custodian
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton	Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer	Urban Ministries Coordinator

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### SATURDAY, 5:00 PM

Lector	Paul Revord
Ushers	Paul Revord
	Ellen Pessevento

### SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Steve Jacobson
	Liz Pemberton
	Jeff Perkins
Lector	Jan Falk
Ushers	Glenn Anderson
	Dan Collett
	Ted Kaasch
	Mark Mahaffey
	Gary Westerman
	Bob Woodworth
	Marcy Madison
Greeters	Sharon Anderson
	Bev Troxel
	Karen Wolf
Crucifer	Britten Johnson
Acolytes	Rahn Johnson
	Kaitlyn Munqua

### SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

Comm. Asst.	Lowell Harms
	Ashley Sum
Lector	June Anderson
Ushers	Adam Klinker
	Linda Hoagland
	Julie O'Doherty
	Monica Albers
Greeters	Julie King
	Rosemary Tessin
Crucifer	Nicole Campbell
Acolytes	Anthony Bonacci
	Hadley Rief



# KOUNTZE

## Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761

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

**March 10 & 11, 2018**

*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 nearly 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** Join us on Sundays for a hot breakfast buffet served from 8-11 AM prepared by Jim West and the kitchen crew. The suggested donation for the hot breakfast is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger. If you're able to help set up, prep/cook, and/or clean up after breakfast on Sunday mornings, please talk to Jim, or let the church office know. We would appreciate your help! Thanks.

**ADULT FORUM** Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **THIS WEEK:** Review of Constitution changes **NEXT WEEK:** Congregational Meeting

**BAPTISM SEMINAR** Noon, Sunday, March 11. Meet with Pr. Hall in the Nave immediately after the liturgy, and then he will walk through the baptismal liturgy. To register, call the church office at 402-341-7761.

**ETERNAL CANDLE** is given to the glory of God and in honor of Anna Kidder's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday

**TELEVISION BROADCAST** is given to the glory of God and in memory of Pastor Paul H. G. Moessner

## CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** Join us each Sunday on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor for children 2 years—8<sup>th</sup> grade. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9—10 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery). Sunday School (2 yrs—8<sup>th</sup> grade) is held from 10:10—10:50 AM.

**CHILDREN'S CHOIR** Grades K—5<sup>th</sup> grade. We meet at 9 AM in the Joyful Sounds Studio. Preschool (and grades K—5<sup>th</sup> that are not in choir) will continue with Kristin Boe for the Children's Sermon Lesson.

**HIGH SCHOOL FORUM** Join us each Sunday in the Youth Center at 10:10 AM.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CHOIR** rehearsal in the Adult Choir room each Sunday from 11—11:40 AM. Come and sing!

**March 11 Sunday**

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal  
 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast  
 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship  
 9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)  
 9:00 AM Joyful Sounds Choir (K-5<sup>th</sup> gr)  
 10:10 AM Adult Forum  
 10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)  
 10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)  
 11:00 AM MS/HS Choir Rehearsal  
 12:00 PM Baptism Seminar  
 12:00 PM Book Group  
 12:15 PM Family & Friends Planning Session  
 8:30 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

**March 12 Monday**

10:00 AM Pantry

**March 13 Tuesday**

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

**March 14 Wednesday**

9:00 AM Sewing Group  
 10:30 AM Bible Study - Cross Purposes  
 11:15 AM Lenten Lunch  
 12:15 PM Worship  
 6:00 PM Lenten Dinner  
 6:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal  
 7:00 PM Worship

**March 15 Thursday**

Good News Deadline  
 Council Reports Due  
 11:30 AM Men's Luncheon  
 4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic  
 7:00 PM Circle 5

**March 17 Saturday**

9:30 AM Women's Prayer Group  
 10:00 AM Active Threat Training  
 1:30 PM Confirmation  
 5:00 PM Worship

**March 18 Sunday**

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal  
 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast  
 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship  
 9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)  
 9:00 AM Joyful Sounds Choir (K-5<sup>th</sup> gr)  
 10:00 AM Blood Pressure Checks  
 10:10 AM Adult Forum  
 10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)  
 10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)  
 10:30 AM Executive Committee  
 11:00 AM MS/HS Choir Rehearsal  
 12:00 PM First Communion Class  
 8:30 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

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**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** 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 card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828.

**ALTAR FLOWERS AND ETERNAL CANDLE** Altar Flowers are provided by Janousek Florist and cost \$20 a bouquet (no flowers during Lent). The Eternal Candle is \$7.50. Please sign up in the narthex if you would like to help us beautify the altar by donating altar flowers or the eternal candle.

**NEW MEMBER CLASS** If you are interested in joining our congregation, the next class will be held April 15 & 22 from 12—2 PM. Plan to attend both sessions. Lunch will be served and childcare is provided. Please indicate your attendance plans on your attendance card or call the church office and let us know if you will need childcare when you register.

**BIBLE STUDY FOR LENT – CROSS PURPOSES** Wednesdays in March, 10:30 AM. Led by Pastor Paul. How do various images found in the Bible help us experience God’s work on and through the Cross? This week: A Battlefield; Next week: A Court of Law and a Prison.

**KMLC MEN’S LUNCHEON** Thursday, March 15, 11:30 AM at Kountze Memorial – Cost \$10. Our program will be presented by Ann Lawless, of Completely Kids. We want to explore possible partnerships with that ministry. In addition, Ann is Executive Director of our neighborhood association, recently renamed “The Quarters”. Both aspects are important for Kountze as we seek God’s directions for our future. Please RSVP by Tuesday, March 13 to the church office (402-341-7761) or Pastor Paul, paul@kmlchurch.org).

**FIRST COMMUNION CLASS** Sunday, March 18, 12:00 PM. Communion is open to all baptized Christians. Those children who are already communing or those children interested in receiving Holy Communion are invited to a First Communion class. We will begin with lunch in the conference room followed by instruction in the Nave with Pastor Hall. Participants will receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday, March 29 at 7:00 PM. A good guide for determining when your children are ready to receive Communion is when they begin to ask about receiving it during the liturgy. Please register with the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org.

### **SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**Sunday March 18, 10:10 AM**

#### **To Consider the Following Resolution**

BE IT RESOLVED, that, in accordance with Chapter 18 of the Constitution of Kountze Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church (the “Constitution”), the amendments to the Constitution as proposed by the Church Council and presented to the congregation for consideration at this meeting (the “Amended and Restated Constitution”) be, and they hereby are, approved; that the Amended and Restated Constitution be brought before the congregation for ratification at the next regular meeting of the congregation; and that upon ratification the Amended and Restated Constitution shall become effective within 120 days from the date of receipt of notice of the amendments by the ELCA Nebraska Synod as required by Chapter 18 of the Constitution.

**LENTEN PRAYER RETREAT** Saturday, March 24, 9:30 to noon. ...teach us to pray. Like the disciples asked of Jesus, we wonder if our prayer life might become stronger. In the centuries since then, faithful followers have learned disciplines that may help us grow in the practice of prayer. Pastor Paul will help review some of these practical ways that prayer can deepen our relationship with our Lord.

**ORDER OF SAINT JOHN COMMISSIONING AND APPRECIATION LUNCHEON** Mark your calendars for April 15. Commissioning will be held at the 11:00 AM Worship Service with a luncheon to follow at 12:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall. There is no cost for the luncheon. The OSJ Sponsors are hosting an appreciation luncheon for all current OSJ members, alums, and parents. Acolytes will take part in a special commissioning during the 11:00 AM worship service. Then, we will gather in Fellowship Hall at 12:15 PM for an appreciation luncheon and present the 2018 Outstanding Acolyte Award. A group photo will also be taken. Please plan to attend this event as we honor all those who serve in this very meaningful ministry. Make your reservations by calling or texting Jeff and Robin Perkins at 402-917-2461 by Sunday, April 8.

### **LENT at KOUNTZE**

Theme: Being Lutheran Together

**March 14 - To the Glory of God Alone**

**March 21 - The Gospel-Evangelical Alone**

**Lunch** – 11:15 AM – 12:15 PM; **Dinner** - 6 -7 PM

**Cost** - Free-will Offering

**Worship** - 12:15 PM and 7 PM (child care at 7 PM)



### **ATTENDANCE & GIVING**

**Saturday Attendance:** 63

**Sunday Attendance:** 9:00: 236 11:00: 110

**Midweek - Noon:** 41 **Evening:** 70

**Total:** 520

**Pantry Guests Served:** 282

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 40

**Offering:**

\$19,649.26 (Regular) \$83.61 (Specials)

\$1,844.50 (In the City for Good)

## Faith is a gift from God.

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

Sunday	John 3:14-21	God so loved the world
Monday	Numbers 21:4-9	The serpent of bronze
Tuesday	Ephesians 2:1-10	Faith is a gift from God
Wednesday	1 John 4:7-21	God is love
Thursday	Isaiah 12:1-6	Thanks to God, our Savior
Friday	Galatians 2:15-21	Saved through faith in Christ
Saturday	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Sunday	John 12:20-33	The grain of wheat that dies



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For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. **Ephesians 2:8-9 (NRSV)**

### A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, thank you for being God's light in our world. Thank you for all you have done in us and through us. Amen. (John 3:19-21)

### Mealtime Prayer:

Each meal we eat is a reminder of your love for us. Thank you, God! Amen.

### A Blessing to Give:

May God, who is rich in mercy, grace, and love, make you alive together with Christ.

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Talk about something you love to do.
- Tell about a time you felt you were not in control of what was happening around you.
- We want to have control in most everything we do, including our faith, but Ephesians 2:8-9 makes it clear that faith is a gift. How does that influence how you think, judge, and live as one who believes in the power and grace of God?

*Read:* John 3:14-21.

In the Gospel of John, the word “world” refers to that which is opposed to—even hates—God (See John 1:10; 3:19; 12:31; 14:22-24; and 15:18-20). Martin Luther called John 3:16 “the gospel in miniature.” C.S. Lewis stated that the reason God created us was so that God could love us. Reflect on what it means that God loves the world that is hostile to God.

Finish these sentences: “Today God showed me love by . . .” and “Today I can show God's love to others by . . .” Then recite John 3:16.

**Pray: Dear God, thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who shows us your love, a commitment to us that we cannot fully understand but that blesses us with hope and purpose in the world you love. Amen.**

We were “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life” (Ephesians 2:10). Acts of service are not simply an obligation but “a way of life.” List or talk about the gifts you have been given to serve others. Now list or talk about how those gifts are used to care for others. Give thanks to God for this way of life.

It is a Christian tradition to begin a meal by offering a word of thanks as a mealtime prayer. It was more common in past generations to also offer a prayer at the end of the meal, a prayer that could include words similar to Psalm 107:1.

Begin the meal with this prayer: **Each meal we eat is a reminder of your love for us. Thank you, God! Amen.** Finish the meal with: **O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever. Amen.**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:** Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12  
Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33