

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

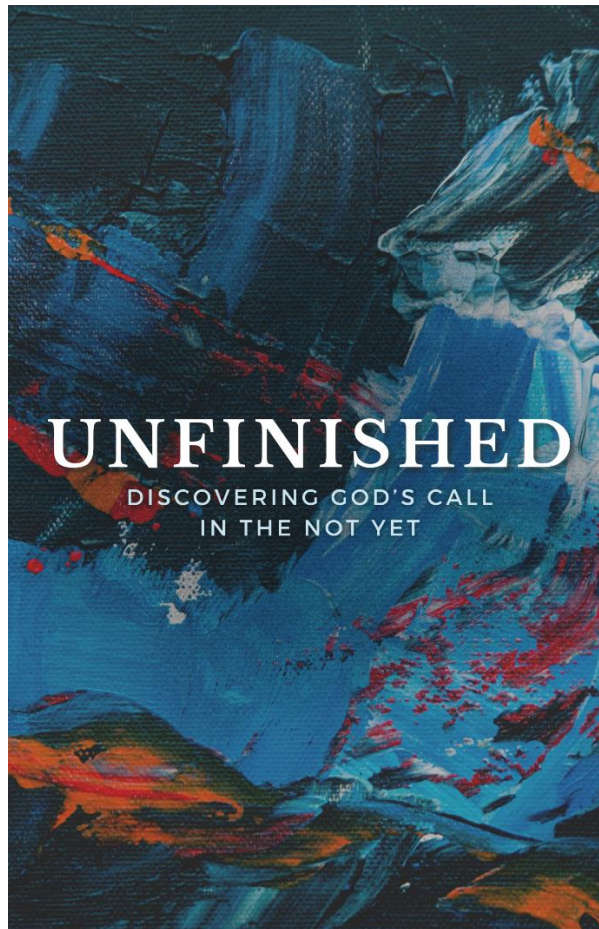
Stephen Griffith, Transition Senior Pastor
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Gretchen Olson Kopp, Vicar

2650 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68131-3616
402-341-7761
www.kmlchurch.org

March 5, 2023

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

SECOND SUNDAY in LENT



During Lent we journey with all those around the world who will be baptized at the Easter Vigil. In today's gospel Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born of water and Spirit. At the font we are given a new birth as children of God. As God made a covenant with Abraham, in baptism God promises to raise us up with Christ to new life. From worship we are sent forth to proclaim God's love for all the world.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

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 Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Most merciful God,

C **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.



- 1 Wash, O God, our sons and daughters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
- 2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
- 3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
 Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
 To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
 God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
 We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.

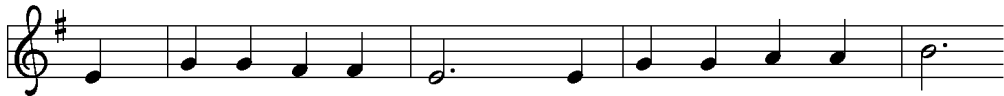


Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
 one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
 By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

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.**

KYRIE



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.

2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.

3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.

Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.

Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P O God, our leader and guide,

C in the waters of baptism you bring us to new birth to live as your children. Strengthen our faith in your promises, that by your Spirit we may lift up your life to all the world through your Son, 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

Genesis 12:1-4a

God's call of Abram and Sarai has a clear purpose—that through them all the families of the earth would gain a blessing. As they set out on their journey, they are accompanied by promises of land, nation, and a great reputation.

The Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

^{4a}So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM 121 (*read responsively*)

¹I lift up my eyes to the hills;
from where is my help to come?

²**My help comes from the LORD,
the maker of heaven and earth.**

³The LORD will not let your foot be moved
nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.

⁴**Behold, the keeper of Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep;**

⁵the LORD watches over you;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

⁶**the sun will not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.**

⁷The LORD will preserve you from all evil
and will keep your life.

⁸**The LORD will watch over your going out and your coming in,
from this time forth forevermore.**

SECOND READING


Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

In the person and example of Abraham we discover that a right relationship with God does not involve earning a reward from God but entails trusting God's promises. Abraham is the forebear and model for both Jews and Gentiles, because we too trust that ours is a God who gives life to the dead.

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

 Word of God, Word of Life.

 **Thanks be to God.**

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



We are turn - ing, Lord, to hear you; you are mer - ci - ful and kind -



slow to an - ger, rich in bless - ing, and with love to us in - clined.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 3:1-17

A curious Pharisee visits Jesus by night to learn from the teacher his friends reject. Jesus speaks to him about life in the Spirit and the kingdom of God.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God." ³Jesus answered him, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above." ⁴Nicodemus said to him, "How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?" ⁵Jesus answered, "Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." ⁹Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰Jesus answered him, "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?"

¹¹"Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"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.

¹⁷"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."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon, or follow Ms. Boe upstairs for an activity in the Sunday School room, and Ms. Carlsen for Children's Choir.

SERMON

Pastor Duminy

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Womb of Life and Source of Being"

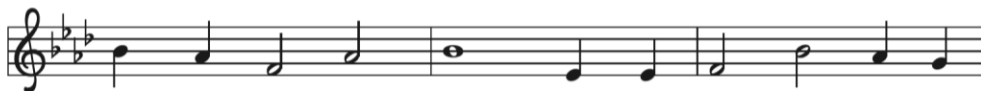
ACS 948 vs. 1-3



- 1 Womb of life and source of be - ing, home of ev - 'ry rest - less
- 2 Word in flesh, our broth - er Je - sus, born to bring us sec - ond
- 3 Brood - ing Spir - it, move a - mong us; be our part - ner, be our
- 4 Moth - er, Broth - er, ho - ly Part - ner; Fa - ther, Spir - it, On - ly



heart, in your arms the worlds a - wak - ened; you have
birth, you have come to stand be - side us, know - ing
friend. When our mem - 'ry fails, re - mind us whose we
Son: we would praise your name for - ev - er, One - in -



loved us from the start. We, your chil - dren, gath - er
weak - ness, know - ing earth. Priest who shares our hu - man
are, what we in - tend. La - bor with us; aid the
Three and Three - in - One. We would share your life, your



round you, at the ta - ble you pre - pare. Shar - ing
strug - gles, Life of life and Death of death, ris - en
birth - ing of the new world yet to be, free of
pas - sion, share your word of world made new, ev - er



sto - ries, tears, and laugh - ter, we are nur - tured by your care.
Christ, come stand a - mong us, send the Spir - it by your breath.
ser - vant, lord, and mas - ter, free for love and u - ni - ty.
sing - ing, ev - er prais - ing, one with all, and one with you.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

- ☞ God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.
- ☞ **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: ☞ Merciful God,
☞ **receive our prayer.**

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

Sympathy: to the family and friends of Jason Keogh, nephew of Gloria Erickson

Prayers This Week: Marlys & Gordon Bergjord, Jessica Hannon, Gerald Klonglan, father of Jason Klonglan, Ralph Morse

On-going Care: Cheri Biggs, John & Jane Bodnar, Don Burton, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Richard & Betty Holzer, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Rosanne Klug, Orville & Julie Knapp, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Kathy Preninger, Joyce Wachal, Darlene White, Debra Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Brenden Frerck, Wyatt Johnson, Tyler Johnston, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, Joel Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Katie Larson, Columbia; Rev. Robert and Kathy Moore, Wittenburg Center, Germany; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin, as they assist refugees from the war in Ukraine

Other Prayers: *Seminarians*— Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks, Justin Perkins

THE PEACE IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always. **G** 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 place your offering in the plates that are located at the entrances to the Sanctuary. For those of you watching through our media outlets, if you are able, please mail in your offering or donate online. Thank you!



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“God So Loved the World”

Stainer

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil”

ELW 512

Lord, let my heart be good soil, o-pen to the seed of your word.

Lord, let my heart be good soil, where love can grow and peace is un-der-stood.

When my heart is hard, break the stone a - way. When my heart is cold,

warm it with the day. When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.

Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart be good soil.

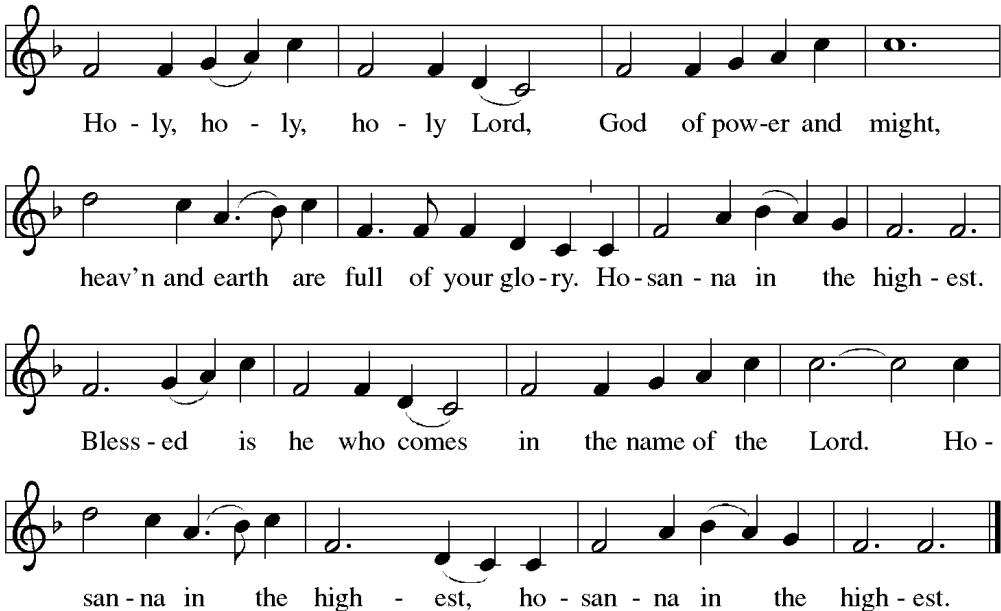
OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of good gifts,
C receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

- P** The Lord be with you. **C** And also with you.
P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.
- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C It is right to give our thanks and praise.
- P** 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. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that, renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. 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, God of pow-er 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover
from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

C **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

- P** O God of resurrection and new life: ... Grace our table with your presence.

C **Come, Holy Spirit.**

- P** Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
Send us forth, burning with justice, peace, and love.

C **Come, Holy Spirit.**

- P** With your holy ones of all times and places, ...
we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

C **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread;

**and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

AGNUS DEI





- 1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

-  Come and receive Jesus,
-  our strength in the wilderness.

(sit)

THE DISTRIBUTION

All baptized Christians who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and his Real Presence in, with and under the bread and wine, are welcome to the Lord’s Supper. We believe that this is the Lord’s table and is he who invites you. So you who are strong in faith, come with gratitude. You 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.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

“Just As I Am, without One Plea”

ELW 592

- 1

Just as I am, without one plea,
but that thy blood was shed for me,
and that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 2

Just as I am, though tossed about
with many a conflict, many a doubt,
fightings and fears within, without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.
- 3

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come,
- 4

Just as I am; thy love unknown
has broken ev'ry barrier down;
now to be thine, yea, thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Text: Charlotte Elliott, 1789-1871



1 As the win - ter days grow long - er, draw - ing short the hours of night;
 2 As the vines burst in - to blos - som, fra - grant in the morn - ing air,
 3 As we jour - ney through this sea - son, pil - grims through a thirst - y land,



as our ea - ger ex - pec - ta - tion waits for Eas - ter's dawn - ing light—
 lift - ing spir - its with their sweet - ness, lur - ing hearts to thank - ful prayer—
 quench us with your liv - ing pres - ence; guide us with your lov - ing hand.



yearn - ing peo - ple, here we gath - er, turn - ing watch - ful eyes to you:
 Lent - en peo - ple, here we gath - er, seek - ing lives re - fresh - ed from sin.
 Wan - d'ring peo - ple, here we gath - er, called to rest a - long our way.



God who bless - es earth with spring - time, shine with - in our world a - new!
 God who bless - es earth with spring - time, bloom with - in our hearts a - gain!
 God who bless - es earth with spring - time, grant us sab - bath joy this day!

(stand)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P Embodied God,

C at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus. With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise, empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors and touch the world with your love. Amen.

SENDING

DISMISSAL OF EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

BLESSING

- ☞ God, the giver of love, ☩ Christ, the resurrection and the life, and the Holy Spirit of rebirth bless you in this Lenten journey.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

"How Firm a Foundation"

ELW 796

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 How firm a foundation, O saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in Christ Jesus, the Word!
What more can he say than to you he has said
who unto the Savior for refuge have fled? | 3 "When through fiery trials your pathway shall
lie,
my grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply.
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design
your dross to consume and your gold to refine." |
| 2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
for I am your God and will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to
stand,
upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand." | 4 "Throughout all their lifetime my people shall
prove
my sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;
and then, when gray hairs shall their temples
adorn,
like lambs they shall still in my bosom be
borne." |

Text: J. Rippon, *A Selection of Hymns*, 1787, alt.

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Serve in love.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

✙ ✙ ✙

Worship with us this Lenten Season!

Wednesdays in Lent

11:00 AM	Lenten Lunch
12:15 PM	Lenten Worship
5:00 PM	Lenten Dinner
6:30 PM	Lenten Worship (in person and Livestream)

Digital Devotions are also available through links from the weekly e-news and our church website. There are a few options that you might find helpful:

- ◉ Weekly Wednesday Jonah – Children and Family Ideas
- ◉ Weekly Sunday Lectionary - Children and Family Ideas
- ◉ Near and Now Weekly Bible Study
- ◉ Daily Unfinished Devotional
- ◉ Weekly Vocare Guided Meditations and Videos



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

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www.kmlchurch.org

March 4 & 5 2023

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

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. 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. You will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip into the wine.

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 8:45 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.



Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of Lois Carlsen by her children and grandchildren.

Kountze Café

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 and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Children's Choir

Second Floor Music Room

Sundays, 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).

Sunday School Focus:

Through the month of March, the Sunday School students will continue to learn of Jesus' life and his progression to the cross. Over the four weeks of March, the children will hear of Jesus' temptation in the desert, learn of Christ as a healer and parable-maker, study the time Jesus enters Jerusalem and shares bread and wine with the disciples, ending with the culmination of Jesus on the cross and the meaning of Easter.

Youth Forum

Grades 7—12

7th - 12th graders meet each Sunday from 10:10 to 10:50 AM in the Youth Room. Join us for this time of community, learning and serving. **This week:** What's New? - in our lives and current events **Next week:** Assisting with Sunday School

Today at Kountze, *continued*

Adult Forum Fellowship Hall 10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **This week:** Music of the Lutheran Tradition **Next Week:** Pondering the Crucifixion, Part 1

March Service Project

The Sunday School is collecting items for the Nebraska Humane Society for the March service project. Items can be brought to church and left in front of the Sunday School office. A list of donations can be found on the Human Society website and include standard items of food, treats, toys, blankets, and more. Items to be gathered also include many recyclable items such as cereal boxes, paper towel and toilet paper tubes, egg cartons, and plastic coffee containers.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 5 Sunday

Lent 2
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 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)
10:10 AM Adult Forum

March 6 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
6:00 PM Call Committee

March 7 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

March 8 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group
11:00 AM Lenten Lunch
12:15 PM Worship
1:00 PM Devotions @ deFreese Manor
5:00 PM Lenten Dinner
6:30 PM Worship

March 9 Thursday

9:30 AM WELCA Board
11:30 AM Property Committee
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic
4:00 PM Holden Meeting @ St. Timothy's Church
6:00 PM Worship & Music Committee

March 10 Friday

11:00 AM Millard Mini Singers—Barb Carlsen
5:00 PM Pantry

March 11 Saturday

10:00 AM AGO - Jean Johnson—Fellowship Hall
5:00 PM Worship

March 12 Sunday

Lent 3
Daylight Saving Time—spring ahead 1 hour
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 AM Kountze Cafe - 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

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Middle School Lock-In

Grades 6 -8

Friday, March 10, 8:00 PM

Saturday, March 11, 8:00 AM

Cost: \$35 per Camper

Register at <https://www.cjhcenter.org/lock-in>

Lutheran Women Omaha (LWO)

Tuesday, March 14, 12:00 Noon

St. Timothy Lutheran Church

For info, call Faith, 402 734 4629. Reservations are required

Journey to Denver

The NE Synod Youth trip for 8th - 12th graders will take place July 10-15, 2023. Registration is extended until **March 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! Friends are welcome to join our group.

Quilts & Kits Headed to Turkey

Lutheran World Relief has created a special video that shows faith in action as their warehouse team prepares a shipment of LWR Mission Quilts, Personal Care Kits and Baby Kits to be delivered to Turkey. They extend deep gratitude to the quilters and kit-makers. Because of the commitment to making quilts and kits year-round, Lutheran World Relief is sending these valuable resources and bringing hope to our neighbors who have lost everything. The video can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SR0BE75v4J4>

Kountze Pantry

Thanks to all of you who helped us save receipts from Family Fare! The good news is we raised thousands of dollars. The bad news is the program has ended, so we no longer need the receipts. The Kountze Food Pantry is in the process of partnering with Family Fare in a new reward program. We are still collecting hygiene products for our guests, especially feminine supplies and shaving razors and cream. If you, or someone you know would like to volunteer, please sign up at the link below:

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

Our Lenten Focus "Unfinished"

UNFINISHED – Out of the Depths is written by Dr. Michael J. Chan and will be our focus for Wednesdays in Lent on the book of Jonah. He says, "Jonah walks a Lenten path. Like all human beings, he is prone to wander from his Creator in favor of determining the shape and scope of his own future. This temptation is especially powerful when God calls us to take on risky ventures, travel to strange places, and confront things inside of us that prevent us from seeing one another as God does. God meets us in those liminal, Lent-like spaces when we find ourselves somewhere between trust and doubt, courage and fear, anger and empathy." Join us as we explore these themes:

- March 8 Jonah 2; Psalm 130; God in the Depths of Chaos
- March 15 Jonah 3; Obedience and Preservation
- March 22 Jonah 4; Faithful and Unfinished
- March 29 Matthew 8:23-27 (cf. Mark 4:34-41; Luke 8:22-25); Jesus, a New Jonah

UNFINISHED – Discovering God's Call in Not Yet is written by Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox and will be our focus for Sundays of Lent. She writes, "The church by its very nature, and we as people of faith, live our whole lives in the space between no longer and not yet. Cross-marked and Spirit-sealed, we dwell in the space between the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the final fulfillment of God's hope-filled promises. In this space between, we dwell in the unfinished as unfinished people. As John reminds us, "we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed." But we are not left alone in this space between no longer and not yet. We are not left alone to navigate this unfinished life by ourselves. God is here - present-tense, each and every day - calling to us, accompanying us, renewing and recreating us - over and over again." We will be using the lectionary readings to focus on the following themes:

- March 5 Called to Openness
- March 12 Called by God
- March 19 Called to Attentiveness
- March 26 Called to Regret
- April 2 Palm/Passion Sunday, Called to Experience God's Presence
- April 9 Easter Sunday, Called to Resurrection

UNFINISHED Digital Devotions are also available on our church website, through links in the weekly e-news or use the QR code to the right. There are a few options that you might find helpful:

- Weekly Wednesday Jonah – Children and Family Ideas
- Weekly Sunday Lectionary - Children and Family Ideas

- Near and Now Weekly Bible Study
- Daily Unfinished Devotional
- Weekly Vocare Guided Meditations and Videos



Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox writes of this weekly practice: "One way that we can lean into and honor this space between no longer and not yet is to engage in spiritual practices that both invite us to be attentive to God's present-tense call and nourish God's relationship with us. This Lent, you are invited into the spiritual practice vocare, a practice designed to help you discover and embrace various ways that God calls you in everyday life so that even amid the not yet, you can more intentionally live life on purpose for the common good."

Beginning on Ash Wednesday with a reminder of our shared, called, baptismal life and culminating on Easter Sunday with the call to practice resurrection, each week will add a new guiding word of the vocare practice and practical ways to engage vocare in your personal life, your circle of relationships, and your congregation. You won't want to miss the chance to honor the space between no longer and not yet!"

Wednesdays in Lent

Meals Served 11:00 AM – Noon & 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Worship—12:15 & 6:30 PM

All meals served with choice of water, iced tea or coffee (decaf at supper) and dessert. Meals are free will offering.

Menu for March 8

Lasagna Soup or Chicken Noodle Soup
Garlic Cheese Bread
Dessert

If you would like to help in the kitchen, please contact Jim Smejkal (402-341-7761 or jim@kmlchurch.org)



Thank you for the prayers, cards and kind expressions of sympathy during the recent loss of my Mom.
Penny Hovendick and family

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 30

Sunday: 9:00: 152 **11:00:** 71

Wednesday: 12:15: 43 **6:30:** 68

Total: 364

Streaming: 80 (inc. Wednesday)

Pantry Guests Served: 1097 (inc. 317 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 20

Offering:

\$9,726.66 (Regular) \$6,264.30 (Specials)

\$508.99 (Debt Reduction)

God loves us all through Jesus.

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

Sunday	John 3:1-17	For God so loved the world
Monday	Genesis 12:1-4a	Call of Abram
Tuesday	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	God's promise gained through faith
Wednesday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	A song of joy
Thursday	Psalms 5	Trust in God
Friday	Romans 8:31-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
Saturday	Psalms 121	Assurance of God's protection
Sunday	John 4:5-42	Jesus and the woman at the well



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"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." **John 3:16 (NRSV)**

A Prayer for the Week:

Holy God, help us to trust in your goodness and mercy and not our own strength and have faith that you save the ungodly through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear Lord, you who watch our going out and coming in each and every day, we thank you for protecting us and feeding us with this gift of food. Amen. (Psalm 121:8)

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with peace and joy, now and always.

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

- Do you think you deserve everything you have? Explain.
- God cares for us through a whole community of care. How has God cared for and protected you through family, friends, or mentors?

Read: Romans 4:1-5, 13-17.

Even though the Gentiles were not descendants through the Torah (the law), Paul is seeking to help Jews understand that Gentiles can also be descendants of Abraham. It is important to establish that God is reliable. The promise God made to Abraham—including Gentile nations—is reliable because the covenant with Abraham was established through faith, not the flesh. It is the very character of God to include all people, not just Jews. Whether Jew or Gentile, whether good or bad, God makes a solid, reliable, and saving relationship with us through faith. God saves the ungodly sinners. How can this be? It is because we have the God who creates out of nothing. God does not need to create children of God out of our goodness through the law. God takes our broken lives and makes something new because God *"gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist"* (v. 17). God does this so that all may know the love of God in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Discuss: Where have you seen God's love for others and does it surprise you that God saves the ungodly?

Pray: **Loving God, you who give life to the dead and bring into existence what does not exist, thank you for creating us as children of God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how can you offer God's protective care to others?

Lent is a period of forty days when we focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare for Easter. Almsgiving is the tradition or practice of giving money or food to those in need. This week consider an amount you might spend on yourself, and instead add that amount to the Almsgiving Box placed in your home. The collected money is to be donated at the end of Lent.

Pray: **Loving God, we often forget about the needs of others. Help us to remember to give generously to those in need. We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95
Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42