

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor

Shari Duminy, Transitional Associate Pastor

H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

2650 Farnam Street

Omaha, NE 68131-3616

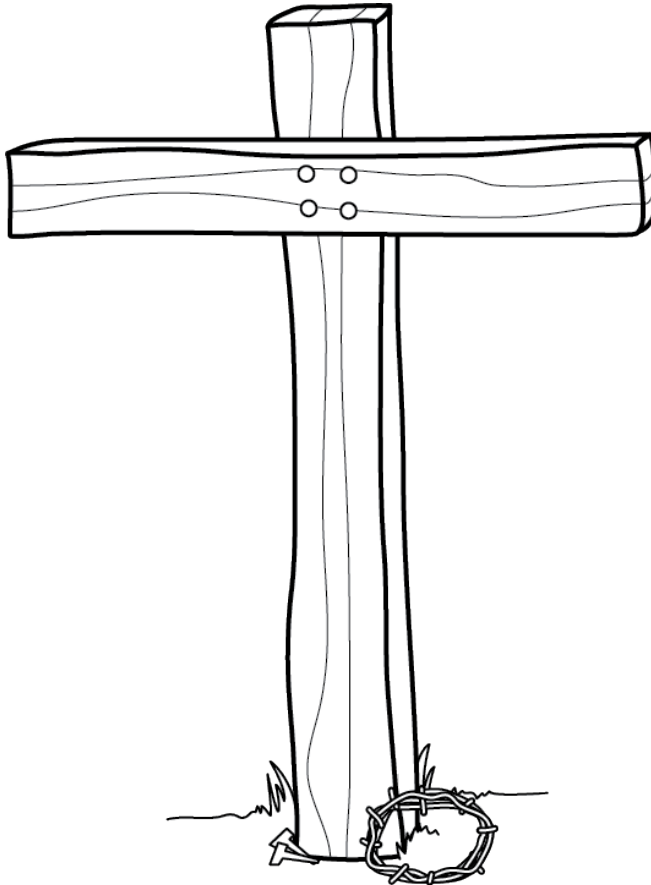
402-341-7761

www.kmlchurch.org

March 10, 2024

9:00 AM & 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.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who writes the law on our hearts, who draws all people together through Jesus.
- C** **Amen.**
- P** Held in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P** Holy God,
- C** **we confess that we are caught in snares of sin and cannot break free.**
We hoard resources while our neighbors are hungry and cold.
We speak in ways that silence others. We are silent when we should speak up.
We keep score in our hearts. We let hurts grow into hatred.
For all these things and for sins only you know, forgive us, Lord. Amen.
- P** Hear this flood of grace:
Out of love for the whole world, God draws near to us, breaks every snare of sin,
washes away our wrongs, and restores the promise of life through † Jesus Christ.
- C** **Amen.**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 O Christ, our hope, our hearts' desire,
creation's mighty Lord,
redeemer of the fallen world,
by holy love outpoured,
by holy love outpoured:</p> <p>2 How vast your mercy to accept
the burden of our sin,
and bow your head in cruel death
to make us clean within,
to make us clean within.</p> | <p>4 Oh, let your mighty love prevail
to purge us of our pride,
that we may stand before your throne
by mercy purified,
by mercy purified.</p> <p>5 All praise to you, ascended Lord;
all glory ever be
to Father, Son, and Spirit blest
through all eternity,
through all eternity!</p> |
|---|--|

Text: Latin hymn, c. 8th cent.; tr. John Chandler, 1806-1876, adapt.

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

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

Lord, have mer - cy, have mer - cy.

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.

From 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. ⁵The 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.” ⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The 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. ⁸And 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.” ⁹So 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.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 (read responsively)

¹Give thanks to the LORD, for the LORD is good,
for God’s mercy endures forever.

²**Let the redeemed of the LORD proclaim
that God redeemed them from the hand of the foe,**

³gathering them in from the lands;
from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.

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

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

¹⁹**Then in their trouble they cried to the LORD
and you delivered them from their distress.**

²⁰You sent forth your word and healed them
and rescued them from the grave.

²¹**Let them give thanks to you, LORD, for your steadfast love
and your wonderful works for all people.**

²²Let 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.

You were dead through the trespasses and sins ²in 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. ³All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of flesh

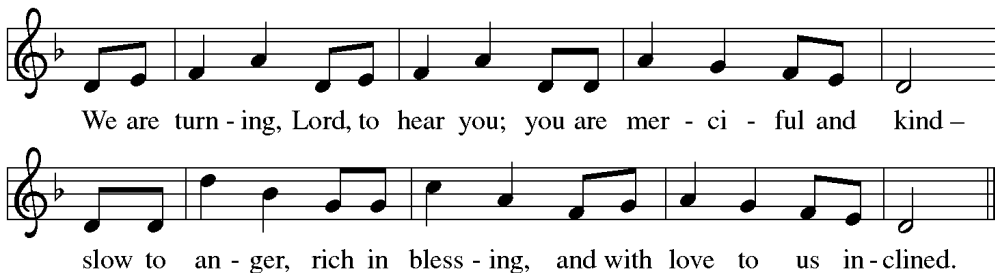
and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us ⁵even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—⁹not the result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

(stand)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



P The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

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: ¹⁴“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. ¹⁸Those 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. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But 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 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 Wynard

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

O God of Mercy, God of Light

ELW 714 vs. 1,2,6

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 O God of mercy, God of light,
in love and mercy infinite,
teach us, as ever in your sight,
to live our lives in you.</p> | <p>2 You sent your Son to die for all,
that our lost world might hear your call;
oh, hear us lest we stray and fall!
We rest our hope in you.</p> |
| <p>6 And may your Holy Spirit move
all those who live to live in love,
till you receive in heav'n above
all those who live in you.</p> | |

Text: Godfrey Thring, 1823-1903, alt.

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: **P** Hear us, O God.

G Your mercy is great.

(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 Julie Woster, sister-in-law to Alan and Jenna Woster

Prayers This Week: Barb Carlsen, Myrna Carter, Martha Eckmann, Marie Kubat, Bob Woodworth

On-going Care: Cheri Biggs, John & Jane Bodnar, Don Burton, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Jessica Hannon, Richard & Betty Holzer, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Nita Mueller, Linda Peltz, Jim Perkins, Marce Picha, Kathy Preininger, David Samaria, Evelyn Sueper, Gary Westerman, Deb Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – 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, Colombia; Rev. Bridget Gautieri, 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*— James Holzer, Katie Larson, Giselle Loucks

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

by John Stainer

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Lord, Speak to Us, That We May Speak

ELW 676 vs. 2 & 3



2 Oh, lead us, Lord, that we may lead the
3 Oh, teach us, Lord, that we may teach the



wan-d'ring and the wa - v'ring feet; oh, feed us, Lord, that
pre - cious truths which you im - part; and wing our words, that



we may feed your hun - g'ring ones with man - na sweet.
they may reach the hid - den depths of man - y•a heart.

OFFERING PRAYER

- P** Jesus, you are the bread of life and host of this meal.
- C** Bless these gifts that we have gathered that all people may know your goodness. Feed us not only with this holy food but with hunger for justice and peace. We pray this in your name. 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.

PREFACE FOR SUNDAYS

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav-en and earth are full, full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est, 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

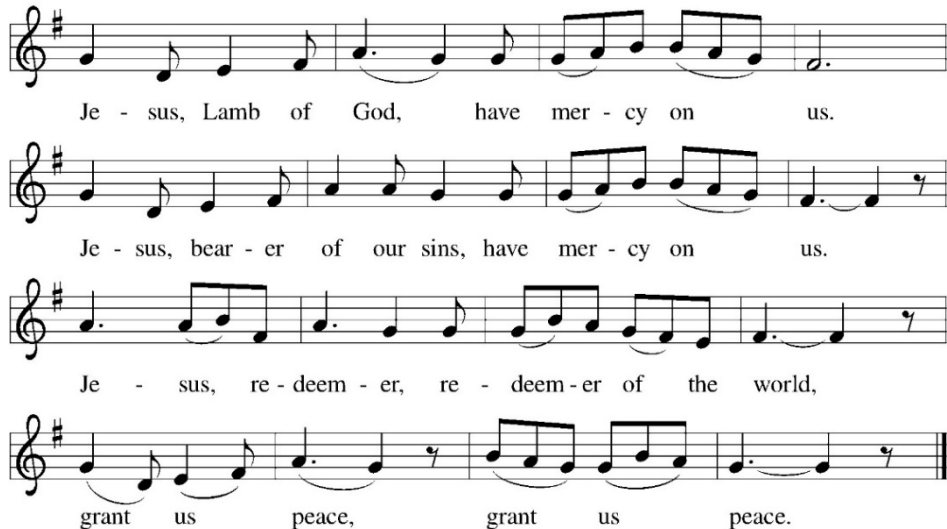
- P** Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting and your faithfulness endures from age to age.
- With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's passover
from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:
- C** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- 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



Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, bear - er of our sins, have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus, re - deem - er, re - deem - er of the world,

grant us peace, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P A feast for hungry hearts. Come!

C **We come to receive bread for the journey.**

(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.

- 1** For by grace you have been saved
and even faith is not your own,
it's the gift of God for you
and not the works that you have done.
Don't let anybody boast,
for this is God's great gift. Amen.
- 2** "So my grace is all sufficient
for each child who is my own,
for my strength is now made perfect
for each child who is my own.
When you're weak, then you are strong,
for this is God's great gift." Amen.
- 3** So this weakness with contentment
I'll accept now in myself,
all my hardships, pains, and griefs
that still lie deep within myself.
When I'm weak, then I am strong,
for this is God's great gift. Amen. Amen.

Text: Kari Tikka, b. 1946; tr. Michael Harper
Text © Fennica Gehrman, admin. Boosey & Hawkes, Inc.

Give to Our God Immortal Praise!

ELW 848

- 1** Give to our God immortal praise!
Mercy and truth are all his ways.
Wonders of grace to God belong;
repeat his mercies in your song.
- 2** God sent his Son with pow'r to save
from guilt and darkness and the grave.
Wonders of grace to God belong;
repeat his mercies in your song.
- 3** Give to the Lord of lords renown;
the King of kings with glory crown.
His mercies ever shall endure
when lords and kings are known no more!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

(stand)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- P** Generous God,
G at this table we have tasted your immeasurable grace. As grains of wheat are gathered into one bread, now make us one loaf to feed the world; in the name of Jesus, the Bread of life.
Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☐ Beloved, we are God's own people, holy, washed, renewed. God bless you and keep you, shower you with mercy, fill you with courage, and ✠ give you peace.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Christ Is the Life

ACS 927 vs. 1,2,4



1 Christ is the life of all that is, God's pure cre - a - tive
2 Christ is the death of all that is; a broad and beck - 'ning
4 Christ is the life of all that is, Be - gin - ning and the



Word, whose pow'r be - yond and through all space the
tomb, who wel - comes us from well - worn ways to
End; cre - a - tive force, most peace - ful death, trans -



worlds to Be - ing stirred. Christ is the life be - yond all
dark - ness of the womb. Christ is the death, the sink - ing
form - ing burn - ing brand. Christ is the life, in whose wise



time, cre - a - tion's birth and breath, whose la - bor
down past all de - sire and fear, whose prom - ise
love cre - a - tion lives and dies and thus for -



brings all things to be and brings all things to death.
in the gen - tle dark bids new - ness to ap - pear.
ev - er - more shall bless the Source, the liv - ing Christ.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953
Text © 1989 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. Share your bread.
☑ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

Mark Jones, *organ*

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Worship with us this Lenten Season!

Wednesdays in Lent

12:15 PM	Lenten Worship
11:00 - Noon	Lenten Lunch (free-will Offering)
6:30 PM	Lenten Worship (in person and Livestream)
5:00 – 6:30	Lenten Dinner (free-will Offering)



KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Transitional Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Barrett	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
Jill Conway	Director of Kountze Commons



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

March 9 & 10, 2024

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 the Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.

Holy Communion

All who are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. 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. Offering plates are located by the doors in the Nave.

Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices

Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

E-news & Social Media

If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the attendance card in your bulletin.

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



Today at Kountze Memorial

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.

Faith Formation

Children's Choir

9:15 AM (following 9:00 AM Children's Blessing)

Grades K-6

Join Amy Pignatore on the 2nd floor in the Sunday School Music Room

Sunday School

10:10 AM

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

Join us in the 2nd Floor Sunday School Rooms.

Youth Forum

10:10 AM

Grades 7—12

Lower Level Youth Room

Grab your breakfast and meet each Sunday. Join us for time to grow our relationships with God and each other.

This Week: Spiritual Practices

Next Week: "Created to Be" Bible Study

Adult Forum

Join us at 10:10 AM on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall. **This Week:** Council Structure & Goals Presentation

Next Week: Council Structure & Goals, cont'd.

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

Movie Night!

Sunday, March 10

3:35 PM

High School, College, and Young Adults

We will meet at Twin Creek Theaters (3909 Raynor Pkwy, Bellevue) for the movie Kung Fu Panda 4. We'll have time to get tickets, concessions are on your own, and get settled to enjoy the movie. You are welcome to bring a friend.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 10 Sunday

Lent 4
Daylight Savings—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-6)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour
12:15 PM Book Group
5:00 PM Night Out at the Movies
High School, College, and Young
Adults

March 11 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

March 12 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

March 13 Wednesday

9:00 AM Sewing Group
11:00 AM Lenten Meal
12:15 PM Worship
1:00 PM Devotions @ deFreese Manor
4:00 PM Executive Committee
5:00 PM Lenten Meal
6:30 PM Worship

March 14 Thursday

Council Reports Due
9:30 AM WELCA Board
11:30 AM Property Committee
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

March 15 Friday

Good News Deadline
5:00 PM Pantry

March 16 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

March 17 Sunday

Lent 5
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-6)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour
12:15 PM First Communion Class

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Wednesdays in Lent

"Created for Community"

Wednesdays, March 6, 13, & 20

- Worship: 12:15 & 6:30 PM (6:30 PM is live-streamed)
- Lunch: 11 AM – Noon (free-will offering)
- Supper: 5 – 6:30 PM (free-will offering)

Join us for a meal followed by Worship each Wednesday during Lent. Everyone is welcome.

Menu for March 6

Choice of Chili or
Creamy Potato Soup
Ham or Chicken Salad Sliders
Dessert

Love Thy Neighbor Food Drive

Now through March 31

The Kountze Food Pantry will hold a spring food drive this Lenten season to show how we Love Thy Neighbor. The Love Thy Neighbor food drive is also to honor Wayne Simmonds and the generosity of Sherri Labedz and Terri Gogetap, who named the pantry Love Thy Neighbor to honor their father. Sherri, Terri, and their father, Wayne, have been faithful and generous members of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church. Wayne loved the Kountze Food Pantry and made it a priority to volunteer at this very special ministry to help "the least of these" in our community. The Pantry is in need of unexpired, nonperishable foods in cans, boxes, and plastic jars (no glass jars please). Possible donations may include canned beans, meats (chicken or tuna), vegetables, fruits, and soups/stews - pop-top cans are a plus, boxes of crackers, granola bars,

oatmeal, pasta, rice, instant potatoes, and plastic jars of peanut butter or pasta sauce. There are pantry drop off locations in the Fellowship Hall, the accessible entrance, and the Narthex. Please encourage your fellow parishioners, family, friends, coworkers, and social circles to help in this wonderful cause! We would love the support from clubs and troops as well. Questions or need to arrange a delivery of food? Please contact Jill Conway at 402-341-7761, ex. 222 or

jill@kmlchurch.org or jill@kountzecommons.org.

First Communion Classes

Sundays, March 17 & 24

12 PM (after 11:00 AM Worship)

Students that have shown an interest in receiving Communion are welcome to join. Around 2nd grade is encouraged. First Communion will be held on Maundy Thursday, March 28. Please see Kristin Boe or email Kristin@kmlchurch.org to register your child for this class. You can also register at the Welcome Desk or online at:

<https://form.jotform.com/240464462505150>

Johann Sebastian Bach Birthday Concert and Reception

Sunday, March 17

3 PM

St. Cecilia Cathedral

Free admission

We have been invited...Celebrate JS Bach's birthday and the 20th anniversary of the Martin Pasi organ with a concert presented by Cathedral Arts Project and the St. Cecilia Institute featuring Nathan Laube, one of the world's elite organ

performers and pedagogues. A "Meet the Artist" and Bach Birthday Reception will follow the concert in the Cultural Center.

Bach Birthday Trivia:

<https://www.cathedralartsproject.org/copy-of-2024-flower-festival#bach-quiz>

Watch and listen to one of Mr. Laube's performances:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDf0pipkW6U>

11th Annual Heart of Camp Gala

April 6, 2024

A View West Shores

We are invited to the eleventh annual Heart of Camp Gala to bring Faith: Alive! by celebrating the work done through Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Your participation and generosity at this year's Gala will enable NLOM to provide opportunities to campers no matter where they are in life. All are welcome here, in these places where we live out faith in ways that show everyone they belong and are unconditionally loved by God. Mark your calendar! **RSVPs are due by March 15.** For auction, sponsor, and ticket information go to:

<https://www.caroljoyholling.org/gala>

Men's Lunch

Thursday, March 21

11:30 AM

Fellowship Lounge

Cost: \$10.00

Join us in the link for a post St. Patrick's Day celebration with corned beef, cabbage, and baby potatoes. The desert may not be the only thing green! Wear green and bring your favorite Irish jokes to share. Please sign up at the welcome desk, call the church office or email: jim@kmlchurch.org to reserve your seat by Tuesday, March 19.

Lenten Potluck

Saturday, March 23

6 PM (after Worship)

Bring a dish to share and join us after Worship for a Lenten potluck.

New Member Classes

April 14 & 21

10:15 AM

Explore the potential of joining Kountze Memorial by attending our upcoming new member classes. Please plan to attend both sessions. We will welcome new members on Sunday, April 28. Questions or planning to attend? Call the church office – we look forward to connecting with you!

Eucharistic Ministers

A monthly visit and sharing communion with one of our members is an opportunity for you to consider. We have members waiting to see you, hear the news of the church, and receive the gift of grace that we receive each week. If you are curious, please let the office know. You will find that bring this grace to another adds gifts to your spiritual walk as well.

Summer Bible Camp at Carol Joy Holling

If you didn't get a chance to register for camp by the Early Bird pricing deadline (January 31), Kountze Memorial will still cover the cost of the Early Bird pricing, but you will need to pay the additional cost. Kountze Camp Week is June 16-21, but you can attend camp whenever it is convenient for you. Check out the schedule for the different camp opportunities for grades K-12 as well as day camps and leadership training for high school-age youth and Special Needs camps at <https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

- In order for the church to pay the fee, choose
- to mail your payment,
- select "Pay items in Full"
- then "Pay by Check/Money Order"
- Email a copy of the receipt to shari@kmlchurch.org

We will then submit the Early Bird portion of the payment on behalf of your youth. You'll need to mail in your portion. If you have any questions, please reach out to church staff. To register go to

<https://www.caroljoyholling.org/register>

Camp Firelight VBS

St. Timothy's Church (510 N 93rd St)

July 8-11

5:15 PM: Family Dinner

6—8 PM: Class

Have an adventure with God this summer! Make plans now to attend VBS. Registration is open now to register for VBS youth and volunteers. Sign up with the following link:

<https://kountze.mycokesburyvbs.com/>

Volunteer opportunities include kitchen clean up, teachers, assistants, and more. We would love to see you there!

Kountze Food Pantry

Thank-you to everyone who donated so generously to the Kountze Food Pantry. The gloves, hats, scarves and socks were greatly appreciated and needed by our guests in the frigid weeks of January. Your donated toothbrushes, toothpaste and other personal care items are always needed and welcomed. Currently the greatest and most urgent need is for volunteers. A small group of dedicated faithful are receiving, moving and restocking almost 10,000 lbs. of goods every Monday morning. If you or anyone you know can assist us in our mission of "Feeding the Poor, in Christ's Name", please sign up at the link below.

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

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, 2/29/2024—Wednesday, 3/6/2024

Saturday: 35

Sunday: 9:00: 146 11:00: 68

Wednesday: 12:15: 41 6:30: 69

Streaming: 52

Pantry Guests Served: 853 (inc. 328 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 23

Offering:

\$19,384.40 (Regular) \$3,899.76 (Specials)

\$546.00 (Debt Reduction)

God is rich in mercy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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	Romans 9:6-18	God's choice of Israel
Thursday	Isaiah 30:18-22	God's promise to Zion
Friday	Titus 3:1-8	Maintain good deeds
Saturday	Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Sunday	John 12:20-33	The hour has come



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Written by Pr. Greg Priebbenow and edited by Vibrant Faith Ministries.
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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved. Ephesians 2:4-5 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of mercy, your love for us is more than we deserve but all that we need and want through Jesus Christ, your Son who came to give us eternal life. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, your kindness to us is everlasting; we thank you for your daily love for us that includes this gift of food. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the mercy of God be your everlasting joy.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- When is a time you needed to ask for help with something because you could not do it alone?
- A relationship with God is a gift that only God can give us. How is this a challenge to our desire to control our own destiny?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Ephesians 2:1-10.

These verses are packed with powerful themes, some of which pose a challenge to make-it-on-your-own individualism and flawed self-confidence. Ephesians points out that 1) we were spiritually dead because of our brokenness, 2) our misguided passions for pleasure lead us away from God, 3) only God's mercy, grace, and love can intervene to renew our lives in Christ, and 4) God's intervention gives us a new and God-focused passion to do good works, not to earn anything but to simply live as we were created to be. Once we get beyond a sense of making it on our own in life—including making it spiritually with God—we are set free to experience lives that *"God prepared beforehand to be our way of life"* (v. 10). God's nature is love and mercy. In the language of Psalm 107:1, God is good and God's *"steadfast love endures forever."* Similarly, Ephesians 2:8 summarizes much of our biblical faith: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God."*

Discuss: How does God's mercy and grace make a difference in your daily life?

Pray: **Almighty and merciful God, we thank you for your love that never ceases to reach out to us with your saving grace through Jesus Christ. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you show love and mercy to someone who is hurting?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The cross is an ancient symbol of the Christian faith. It reminds us Jesus died that we may live with God forever and is a reminder of a way of life for Jesus' followers. Light four candles of the seven votive candles shaped like a cross being used for Lent. Sit in silence for a moment while looking at the cross. *Then pray:* **Merciful God, we thank you for your love for us that calls us out of darkness and into the light of Christ so that we may not perish but have eternal life. Amen.** (John 3:16)

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