

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

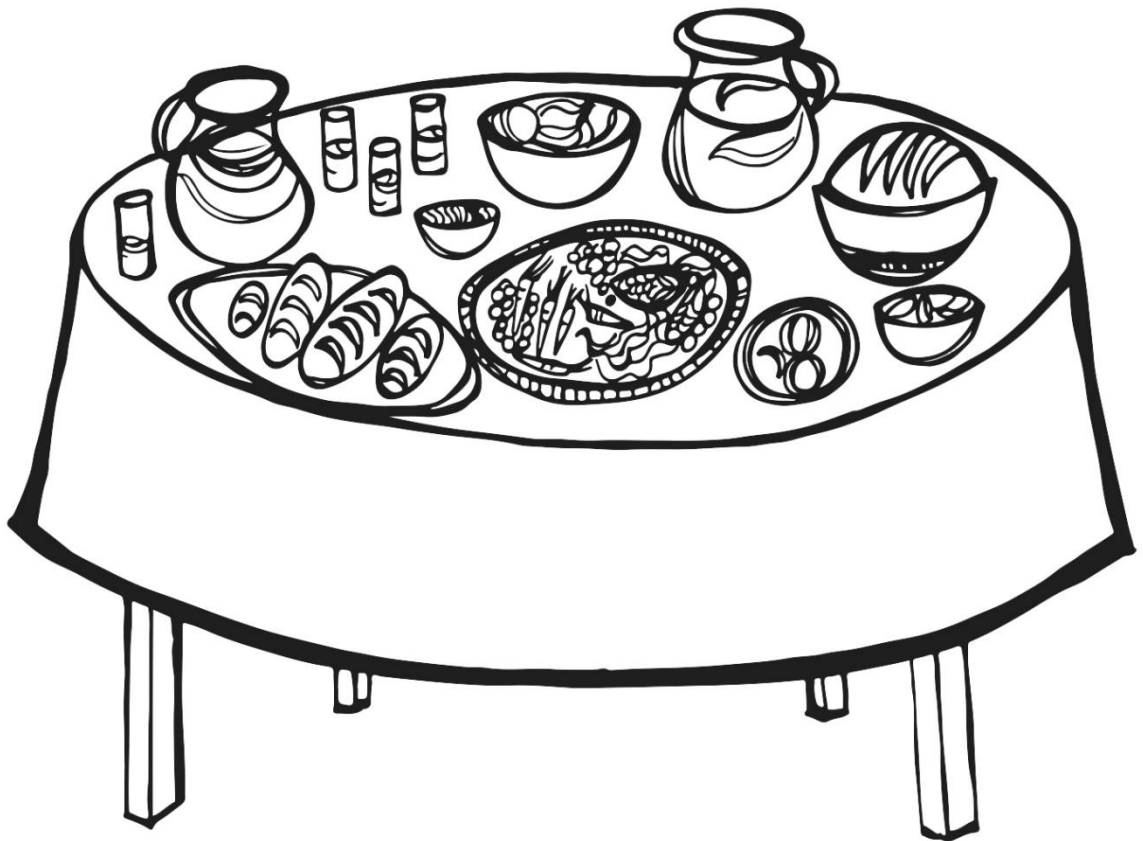
Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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www.kmlchurch.org

March 30, 2025

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT



The psalm sets the tone this day: "Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away!" Happy are those who have "become the righteousness of God" in the merits of Christ Jesus. Happy are those for whom the forgiveness of God has "rolled away . . . the disgrace" of former times. Happy is the father at the return of his prodigal son. Happy are we that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake. Rejoice!

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from who 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.

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 God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your heart through faith.

C Amen.

- 1 Come, thou almighty King,
help us thy name to sing;
help us to praise;
Father all-glorious,
o'er all victorious,
come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.
- 2 Come, thou incarnate Word,
merciful, mighty Lord;
our prayer attend.
Come and thy people bless,
and give thy word success,
and let thy righteousness
on us descend.

- 3 Come, holy Comforter,
thy sacred witness bear
in this glad hour!
Thou who almighty art,
rule now in ev'ry heart,
never from us depart,
Spirit of pow'r.
- 4 To thee, great One in Three,
eternal praises be
hence evermore!
Thy sov'reign majesty
may we in glory see,
and to eternity
love and adore.

Text: source unknown, c. 1757, alt.

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



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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.



Lord, have mer - cy.



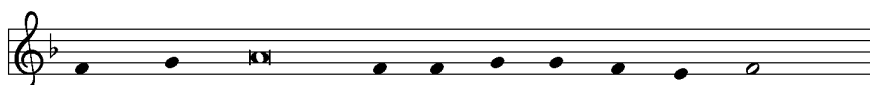
For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** God of compassion,
C you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of 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

Joshua 5:9-12

By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.

The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm 32 (read responsively)

- ¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!
- ² **Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**
- ³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.
- ⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**
- ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.
- ⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**
- ⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
- ⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.**
- ⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”
- ¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.**
- ¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ's resurrection. This is Paul's strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

G Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P Return to the Lord your God,

G for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

G Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 378

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this

son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 6th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children’s Choir with Barb Carlsen. Children in grades K-4 who are not wanting to participate in Choir, may join Kristin Boe for a children’s sermon in the Upper rooms. All children will return to the sanctuary in time to receive communion. There are Children’s Bibles and activity bags available to those who prefer to stay with their families.

SERMON

Pastor Hall

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

ELW 588 vs. 1, 3, 4

1 There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment giv'n.

3 For the love of God is broader
than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness
with a zeal God will not own.

4 'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;
it is something more than all:
greater good because of evil,
larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful;
let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.

ORDER OF SAINT JOHN COMMISSIONING (11:00 AM)

- P** The following people have been enrolled in the Order of Saint John to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and mutual mission as a congregation.

9:00 AM

Bently Baker	Amanda Groenjes
Carson Burton	John Groenjes
Grace Dey	Lilly Kassal
Evelyn Drickey	Miles Munderloh
Daylan Fleming	Henry Schweiger

11:00 AM

Emilie Erkes
Sheyenne Glasgow
Reno Hansen
Mia Valquier
Alexis Yates
Michaela Yates

Sponsors

Jill Gittler
Jeff Perkins
Robin Perkins

(rise in body or spirit)

- P** People of God, I ask you:
Will you support these young men and women, members of the Order of Saint John, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?
- C** We will, and we ask God to help us.
- P** I now declare you installed members of the Order of Saint John of this congregation. Almighty God bless you and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.
- C** Amen.

THE APOSTLES CREED

- P** With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- C** 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** God, in your mercy,
 G 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 Jan Bowder

Prayers this week: Charles Allner; father of Robin Perkins, Wanda Frykberg, Julie Hoogestraat

On-going Care: Sharon Ambler, Cheri Biggs, John Bodnar, Don Burton, Betty Callies, Mike Cswercko, Marilyn Dichsen, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Jessica Hannon, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Jack & Marie Kubat, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Jane Meyer, Lynn Meyer, Nita Mueller, Diane Nickeson-Ray, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, Dan & Ginny Rath, Donna Reinig, David Samaria, Joyce Wachal, Gary Westerman, Allyson White, Deb Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Wyatt Johnson, grandson of Ken and Linda Johnson; Tyler Johnston, son of Robert and Michelle Johnston, Daniel Milstead, nephew of Darlene Anderson; Cody Ray, grandson of Betty Callies; Dannika Rees, daughter of Eric and Toby Rees; Joel Woosley, son of Debbie Woosley, nephew of Steph Stephens

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; Rev. Robert & Kathy Moore, Leipzig, 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: *Seminarrians* – Joseph Daffer, James Holzer, 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

Lead Me Back

Pepper Choplin

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359 vs. 1-3



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.

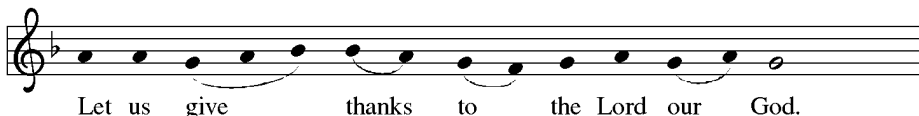
Text: Latin hymn, 9th. cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.

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OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ Gracious Provider,
☑ you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

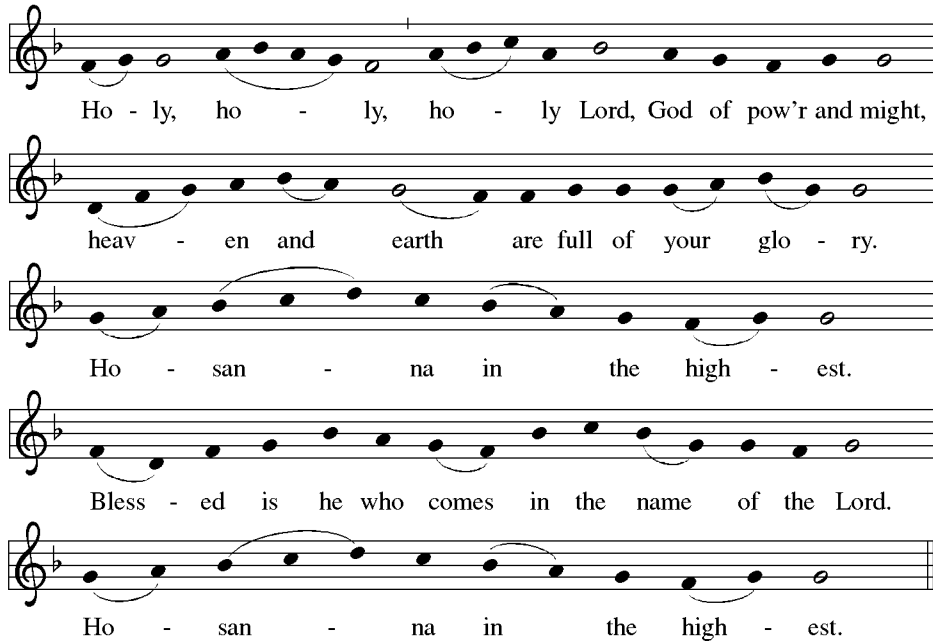
HOLY COMMUNION



PREFACE FOR LENT

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

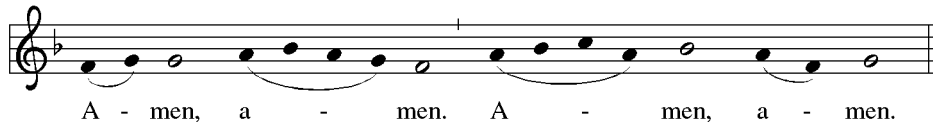
SANCTUS



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

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: ...
... For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
- C** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- P** Therefore, O God, ... to share with us the great and promised feast.
- C** **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, ... with all your saints in light.
- C** **Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**
- P** Join our prayers with those of your servants ...
... almighty Father, now and forever.



A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

☐ Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

AGNUS DEI

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☐ All who are hungry, come!

☑ The feast of grace is spread.

(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 Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin;
from selfish passions set me free
and make me pure within.
- 2 Lord Jesus, think on me,
by anxious thoughts oppressed;
let me your loving servant be
and taste your promised rest.

- 3 Lord Jesus, think on me,
nor let me go astray;
through darkness and perplexity
point out your chosen way.
- 4 Lord Jesus, think on me,
that, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see
and share your joy at last.

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375-430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808-1896, alt.

All Who Believe and Are Baptized

ELW 442

- 1 All who believe and are baptized
shall see the Lord's salvation;
baptized into the death of Christ,
they are a new creation;
through Christ's redemption they will stand
among the glorious heav'nly band
of ev'ry tribe and nation.

- 2 With one accord, O God, we pray,
grant us your Holy Spirit;
help us in our infirmity
through Jesus' blood and merit;
grant us to grow in grace each day
by holy baptism, that we may
eternal life inherit.

Text: Thomas H. Kingo, 1634-1703; tr. George T. Rygh, 1860-1943, alt.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Generous Host,
- G** you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

God, When Human Bonds Are Broken

ELW 603 vs. 1, 3-5

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 God, when human bonds are broken
and we lack the love or skill
to restore the hope of healing,
give us grace and make us still. | 4 Send us, God of new beginnings,
humbly hopeful into life.
Use us as a means of blessing:
make us stronger, give us faith. |
| 3 You in us are bruised and broken:
hear us as we seek release
from the pain of earlier living;
set us free and grant us peace. | 5 Give us faith to be more faithful,
give us hope to be more true,
give us love to go on learning:
God, encourage and renew! |

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

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DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

✠ ✠ ✠

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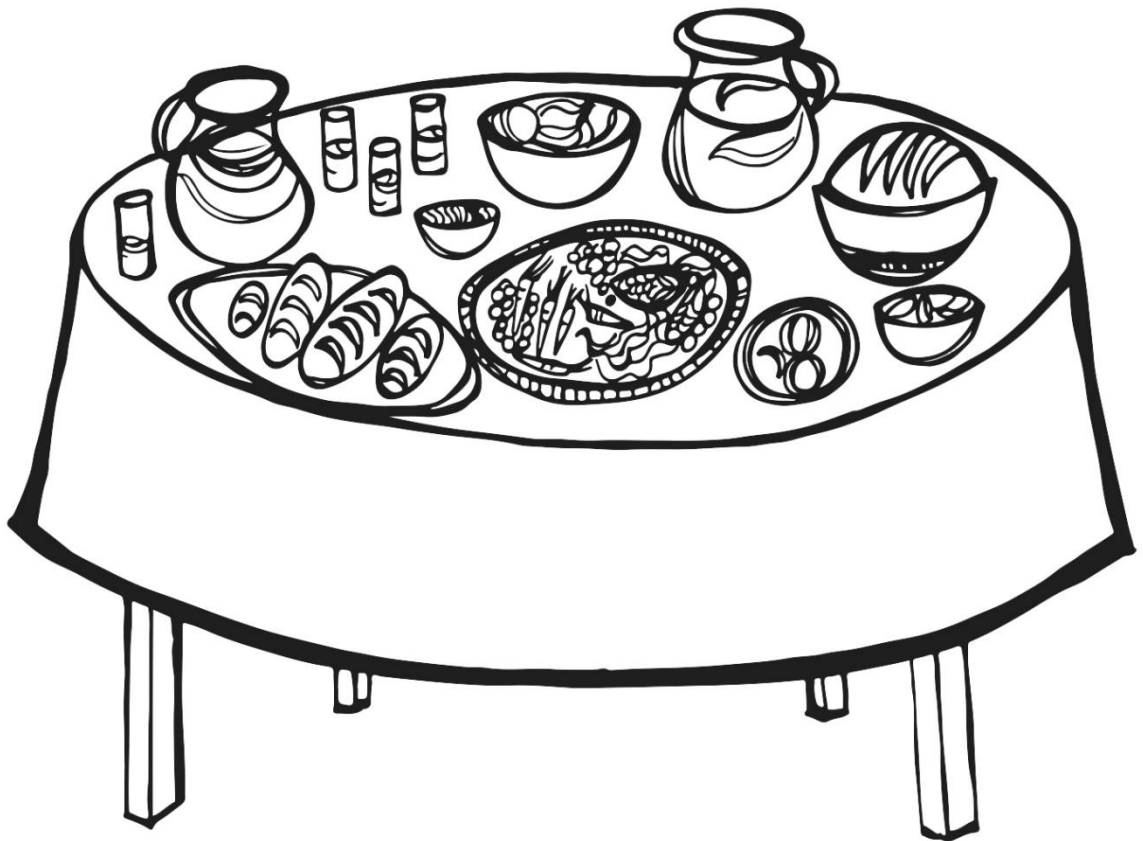
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GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C Amen.

P Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from who 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.

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 God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your heart through faith.

C Amen.

- 1 Come, thou almighty King,
help us thy name to sing;
help us to praise;
Father all-glorious,
o'er all victorious,
come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days.
- 2 Come, thou incarnate Word,
merciful, mighty Lord;
our prayer attend.
Come and thy people bless,
and give thy word success,
and let thy righteousness
on us descend.

- 3 Come, holy Comforter,
thy sacred witness bear
in this glad hour!
Thou who almighty art,
rule now in ev'ry heart,
never from us depart,
Spirit of pow'r.
- 4 To thee, great One in Three,
eternal praises be
hence evermore!
Thy sov'reign majesty
may we in glory see,
and to eternity
love and adore.

Text: source unknown, c. 1757, alt.

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



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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.



Lord, have mer - cy.



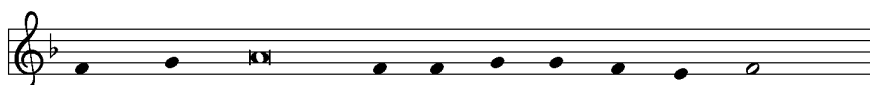
For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their wor - ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** God of compassion,
C you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of 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

Joshua 5:9-12

By celebrating the Passover and eating the produce of the promised land instead of the miraculous manna that had sustained them in the desert, the Israelites symbolically bring their forty years of wilderness wandering to an end at Gilgal.

The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. ¹⁰ While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹ On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹² The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

Psalm 32 (read responsively)

- ¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!
- ² **Happy are they to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**
- ³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.
- ⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**
- ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.” Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.
- ⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**
- ⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
- ⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.**
- ⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will not stay near you.”
- ¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the Lord.**
- ¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the Lord;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

One way to describe the gospel is the promise that in Christ everything is transformed into newness. All mistakes, all deliberate sins, all old history is reconciled with Christ's resurrection. This is Paul's strong message to the congregation in the city of Corinth.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷ So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. ²⁰ So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

L Word of God, Word of Life.

G Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P Return to the Lord your God,

G for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

G Glory to you, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 378

Jesus tells a parable about a son who ponders his father's love only after he has spurned it. The grace he receives is beyond his hopes. That same grace is a crisis for an older brother who believes it is his obedience that has earned his place in the father's home.

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus.] ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ^{11b} “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. ¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ ²² But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this

son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ ³¹ Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’ ”

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING 9:00 AM

Children (aged 3 years through 6th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children’s Choir with Barb Carlsen. Children in grades K-4 who are not wanting to participate in Choir, may join Kristin Boe for a children’s sermon in the Upper rooms. All children will return to the sanctuary in time to receive communion. There are Children’s Bibles and activity bags available to those who prefer to stay with their families.

SERMON

Pastor Hall

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

ELW 588 vs. 1, 3, 4

1 There's a wideness in God's mercy,
like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice
which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows
are more felt than up in heav'n.
There is no place where earth's failings
have such kindly judgment giv'n.

3 For the love of God is broader
than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the Eternal
is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow
by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness
with a zeal God will not own.

4 'Tis not all we owe to Jesus;
it is something more than all:
greater good because of evil,
larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful;
let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving
for the goodness of the Lord.

Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863, alt.

ORDER OF SAINT JOHN COMMISSIONING (11:00 AM)

- P** The following people have been enrolled in the Order of Saint John to positions of leadership. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these sisters and brothers will lead us in our common life and mutual mission as a congregation.

9:00 AM

Bently Baker	Amanda Groenjes
Carson Burton	John Groenjes
Grace Dey	Lilly Kassal
Evelyn Drickey	Miles Munderloh
Daylan Fleming	Henry Schweiger

11:00 AM

Emilie Erkes
Sheyenne Glasgow
Reno Hansen
Mia Valquier
Alexis Yates
Michaela Yates

Sponsors

Jill Gittler
Jeff Perkins
Robin Perkins

(rise in body or spirit)

- P** People of God, I ask you:
Will you support these young men and women, members of the Order of Saint John, and will you share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?
- C** We will, and we ask God to help us.
- P** I now declare you installed members of the Order of Saint John of this congregation. Almighty God bless you and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.
- C** Amen.

THE APOSTLES CREED

- P** With the whole church, let us confess our faith.
- C** 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** God, in your mercy,
 G 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 Jan Bowder

Prayers this week: Charles Allner; father of Robin Perkins, Wanda Frykberg, Julie Hoogestraat

On-going Care: Sharon Ambler, Cheri Biggs, John Bodnar, Don Burton, Betty Callies, Mike Cswercko, Marilyn Dichsen, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Jessica Hannon, Joan Jacobson-Trotter, Jason Klonglan, Orville & Julie Knapp, Jack & Marie Kubat, Ruth & Charles Martis, Lara McCormick, Jane Meyer, Lynn Meyer, Nita Mueller, Diane Nickeson-Ray, Linda Peltz, Kathy Preininger, Dan & Ginny Rath, Donna Reinig, David Samaria, Joyce Wachal, Gary Westerman, Allyson White, Deb Woosley

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Wyatt Johnson, grandson of Ken and Linda Johnson; Tyler Johnston, son of Robert and Michelle Johnston, Daniel Milstead, nephew of Darlene Anderson; Cody Ray, grandson of Betty Callies; Dannika Rees, daughter of Eric and Toby Rees; Joel Woosley, son of Debbie Woosley, nephew of Steph Stephens

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; Rev. Robert & Kathy Moore, Leipzig, 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: *Seminarists* – Joseph Daffer, James Holzer, 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

Lead Me Back

Pepper Choplin

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359 vs. 1-3



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
2 With grate - ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th. cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt.

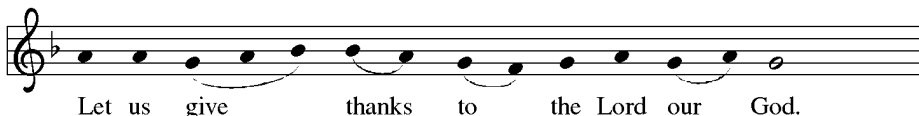
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OFFERING PRAYER

P Gracious Provider,

C you set your immense treasures among us, opening your heart to the world. As we prepare to feast on your bountiful love, deepen our commitment to sharing those treasures with others, through our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

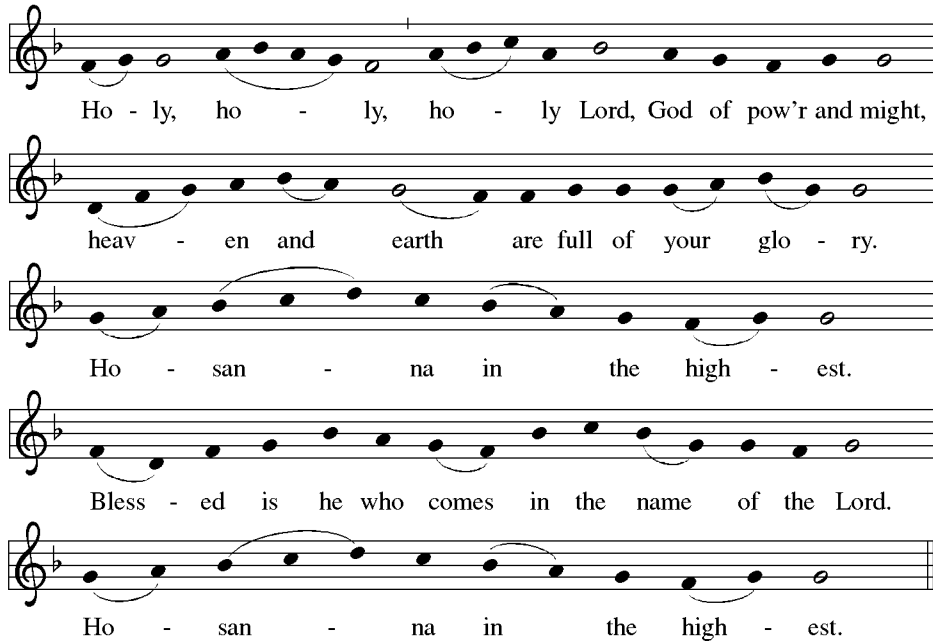


PREFACE FOR LENT

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

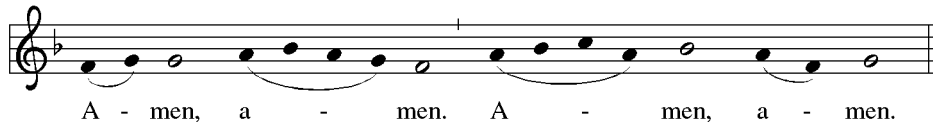
SANCTUS



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

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- P** Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: ...
... For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
- C** **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- P** Therefore, O God, ... to share with us the great and promised feast.
- C** **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**
- P** Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, ... with all your saints in light.
- C** **Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**
- P** Join our prayers with those of your servants ...
... almighty Father, now and forever.



A - men, a - men. A - men, a - men.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

☐ Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

AGNUS DEI

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☐ All who are hungry, come!

☑ The feast of grace is spread.

(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 Lord Jesus, think on me,
and purge away my sin;
from selfish passions set me free
and make me pure within.
- 2 Lord Jesus, think on me,
by anxious thoughts oppressed;
let me your loving servant be
and taste your promised rest.

- 3 Lord Jesus, think on me,
nor let me go astray;
through darkness and perplexity
point out your chosen way.
- 4 Lord Jesus, think on me,
that, when the flood is past,
I may the eternal brightness see
and share your joy at last.

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375-430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808-1896, alt.

All Who Believe and Are Baptized

ELW 442

- 1 All who believe and are baptized
shall see the Lord's salvation;
baptized into the death of Christ,
they are a new creation;
through Christ's redemption they will stand
among the glorious heav'nly band
of ev'ry tribe and nation.

- 2 With one accord, O God, we pray,
grant us your Holy Spirit;
help us in our infirmity
through Jesus' blood and merit;
grant us to grow in grace each day
by holy baptism, that we may
eternal life inherit.

Text: Thomas H. Kingo, 1634-1703; tr. George T. Rygh, 1860-1943, alt.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- P** Generous Host,
- G** you have shared your feast with us and made us new. Send us now to set tables of love and grace in our communities, that your liberating love might nourish the world into freedom, in the name of the crucified one, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ God our tender parent, God the crucified one, God the reconciling Spirit, ✠ bless you now and forever.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

God, When Human Bonds Are Broken

ELW 603 vs. 1, 3-5

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 God, when human bonds are broken
and we lack the love or skill
to restore the hope of healing,
give us grace and make us still. | 4 Send us, God of new beginnings,
humbly hopeful into life.
Use us as a means of blessing:
make us stronger, give us faith. |
| 3 You in us are bruised and broken:
hear us as we seek release
from the pain of earlier living;
set us free and grant us peace. | 5 Give us faith to be more faithful,
give us hope to be more true,
give us love to go on learning:
God, encourage and renew! |

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

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DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Care for others as God cares for you.
☞ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

✠ ✠ ✠

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KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Fleming	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slight	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director
Toby Rees	Director of Kountze Commons



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

**2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761**

**Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org**

March 29 & 30, 2025

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 over 165 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.

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.

Large Print Bulletins and Listening Devices

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

Scan to Give Online



Thank you for supporting the ministries

of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.

Connect with Pr. Lucy

Schedule a time to meet with Pastor Lucy by following the link or QR Code. <https://calendly.com/pastor-lucy/45min>



Today at Kountze Memorial

Children's Choir

9:15 AM

K-6th Grades

Following the 9 AM Children's Blessing, children are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen or join Kristin Boe for a Children's Sermon. Children will return to their seats in time to receive communion. Thank you to our Children's Choir this morning for sharing their musical talents with us.

Children's Sermon

9:15 AM

Grades K-4

Following the 9 AM Children's Blessing, children not wanting to participate in Choir, may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper rooms. The children will return to their seats in time to receive communion.

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.

Sunday School

10:10 - 10:50 AM

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

The kids can enjoy the same breakfast upstairs while listening to the lessons of the day (the same breakfast that is being served in the Fellowship Hall). If you would like to support the Sunday School with donations of juice boxes or individual milk cartons, we would appreciate it and will be serving those with breakfast.

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

Youth Forum Youth Center 10:10 AM Grades 7—12

You are invited to join us each week in the Youth Center during the Sunday Faith Formation hour.

3/30 Join the adult forum at the youth table

4/6 Meet Deacon Korra during the Adult Forum

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall for a lite breakfast and then stay for Adult Forum.

3/30 God as Father, Creator, and Almighty (Nicene Creed)

4/6 Meet Deacon Korra

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 30 Sunday

Lent 4

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

12:00 PM OSJ Appreciation Lunch

March 31 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

April 1 Tuesday

Voting at KCCOC

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

April 2 Wednesday

11:00 AM Lenten Meal

12:15 PM Worship

5:00 PM Lenten Meal

6:30 PM Worship

7:30 PM Adult Choir Rehearsal

April 3 Thursday

No Pantry

2:00 PM Cards with Friends

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

6:30 PM Worship

April 4 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

April 5 Saturday

Homebound Communion

Meet Deacon Korra

5:00 PM Worship

6:00 PM Potluck—Bring a dish to share

April 6 Sunday

Lent 5

Homebound Communion

Meet Deacon Korra

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 Café - Breakfast

10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour

12:15 PM First Communion Class -
Attend April 6 or 13

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Carol Joy Holling 12th Annual

Heart of Camp Gala

Saturday, April 5

5 - 10 PM

A View West Shores

110 S 243rd St

Waterloo, NE

Join the camp to bring Faith: Alive! by celebrating the work done through Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries. Our participation enables NLOM to provide opportunities to campers no matter their ability to pay for camp. All are welcome here. This will be an evening of fun, auction bidding wars, fellowship with friends, and great food. To find out how to donate items for the silent auction, how to become a sponsor, to buy tickets, or any other information about the Gala, go to:

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

Meet Deacon Korra

Saturday, April 5 (Potluck), 5 PM

Sunday, April 6, 9 & 11 AM

Adult Forum, 10:15 AM

See the insert in this week's bulletin for more information. Join us!

First Communion Classes

Sundays, April 6 & 13

12:00 PM (after 11:00 AM Worship)

Students that have shown an interest in receiving Communion are welcome to join. Around 2nd grade is encouraged. Please see Kristin Boe or email her at Kristin@kmlchurch.org to sign your child up for this class. First Communion will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 17.

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

New Member Classes

April 27 & May 4

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, May 18. Questions or planning to attend? Contact the church office (info@kmlchurch.org) or 402-341-7761. We look forward to connecting with you!

KMLC Camp Week

Camp Carol Joy Holling

June 15-20

Join your Kountze friends at Camp Carol Joy Holling. Spend the week making new friends, spending time in nature, and growing in faith through song, lessons, and testimonies. If you didn't register by the Early Bird registration date, you will need to pay the additional cost and Kountze Memorial will cover the rest of the registration for any Kountze Memorial child/youth. Kountze Camp Week is June 15—20, 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. 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 info@kmlchurch.org and we will submit the Early Bird payment on behalf of your youth.

If you have any questions, please reach out to the church office. To register, use the link below and follow the directions above:

<http://NLOM.org/caroljoyholling/register>

Youth Mission Trip

Kountze Memorial will join other high school youth and leaders from around the Nebraska Synod this summer on mission in Nashville. The 2025 Journey to Nashville will feature service learning throughout the Nashville area, worship, fellowship and other activities throughout the city.

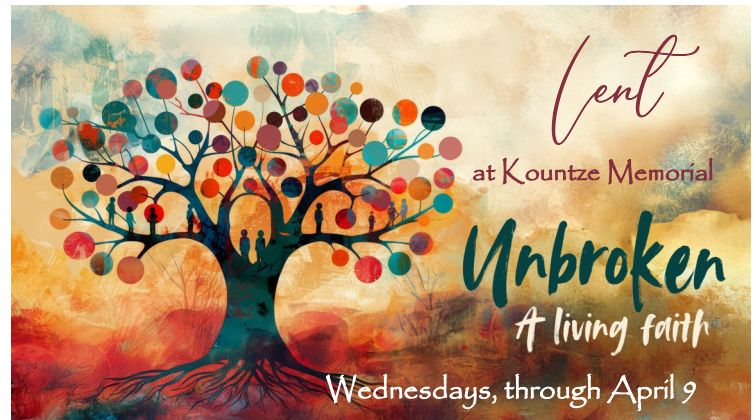
- Date: July 6-12, 2025
- Location: Nashville, TN
- Cost of event: \$680/person

To help with fundraising for this trip, there are envelopes in the Fellowship Hall. We ask you to support our youth by taking an envelope and putting a donation inside matching the number on the envelope before returning it. Checks/envelopes should be made out to Kountze Memorial and clearly marked "Youth Mission Trip" in the memo line. Many, many thanks!

Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is need of your gifts and service. The current needs this month for the pantry are cereal, razors, and shaving cream. You may leave your donation in the box marked "Food Pantry," located in the Fellowship Hall. Tax deductible slips are available on the inside pocket of the box. Also, if you get cards, calendars, pens, etc. in the mail that are taking up room in your "junk drawer," you might consider donating those items to the pantry as well. Please join us as a volunteer in the pantry in the Kountze Commons Community Outreach Center. You are welcome to volunteer as it fits your schedule. We have options for volunteers of all abilities. We are using a new sign up format, so please use the link or QR code to sign up (even if you are a regular volunteer or signed up on the old form) and join our mission.

<https://tinyurl.com/uausdddp>



Menu for April 2 (Free-will offering)

Ham & Bean Soup
Broccoli Cheese Soup
Italian Sliders

Dessert

Everyone is welcome. Join us!

Attendance & Giving

Thursday, March 20—Wednesday, March 26

Saturday: 26

Sunday: 9:00: 154 11:00: 64

Wednesday: 12:15: 98

Total: 342

Streaming: 59

Pantry Guests Served: 759 (inc. 225 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 12

Offering:

\$29954.18 (Regular) \$4900.12 (Specials)

\$537.15 (Debt Reduction)

God's generosity and forgiveness is for all.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Parable of the forgiving father
Monday	Joshua 5:9-12	The passover at Gilgal
Tuesday	2 Corinthians 5:9-12	The ministry of reconciliation
Wednesday	Proverbs 11:24-25	Be generous
Thursday	Luke 15:1-7	Parable of the lost sheep
Friday	Colossians 1:15-23	The work of Christ
Saturday	Psalms 32	The joy of forgiveness
Sunday	John 12:1-8	Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany



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SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

Luke 15:32 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Merciful God, thank you for restoring us to a loving relationship with you and for sending us out to extend your love to others.
Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, your goodness is beyond belief; may we receive this food and your love for others with thankful hearts through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with a generous heart.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- Have you ever felt judged for a choice you made? Explain.
- How would you describe God's generosity?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

People can easily identify with this reading. It is one of Jesus' best-known parables. In Jesus' day there was a culture of shame and honor. The shaming in this parable is clear. The father is shamed by the request of the younger son to take his inheritance early, and the younger son is shamed by his returning home as a failure. He has done so many things wrong. The older son might be shamed because the father is spending the older son's inheritance on an unworthy brother. He is angry. In our own context, shaming is still a reality but so is anger and family divisions. This parable challenges us to examine the generosity of God, let go of our shaming, anger, and judgmentalism. We are to welcome those who in our eyes are not seen as worthy and celebrate with them that God's generosity is for them as well as for us.

Discuss: How does God's generosity and forgiveness challenge your judgment of a friend? a family member? a neighbor?

Pray: **Gracious God, you lavish your love on us in ways we cannot see and do not earn; help us to celebrate your goodness to us and to all through Christ our Lord. 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 help someone who has been judged unfairly?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Prayer is an important spiritual practice for Christians. During this Lenten season, take time to focus on the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, the Lord's Prayer (Luke 11:2-4). This fourth week in Lent we reflect on "*And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us*" (v. 4a). Add this verse to verses 2a, 2b, and 3 from the first, second, and third weeks in Lent by writing it around the outside of the cross drawn on the paper the first week. Take a moment to think or talk about what this verse means to you.

Pray: The Lord's Prayer.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8