

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

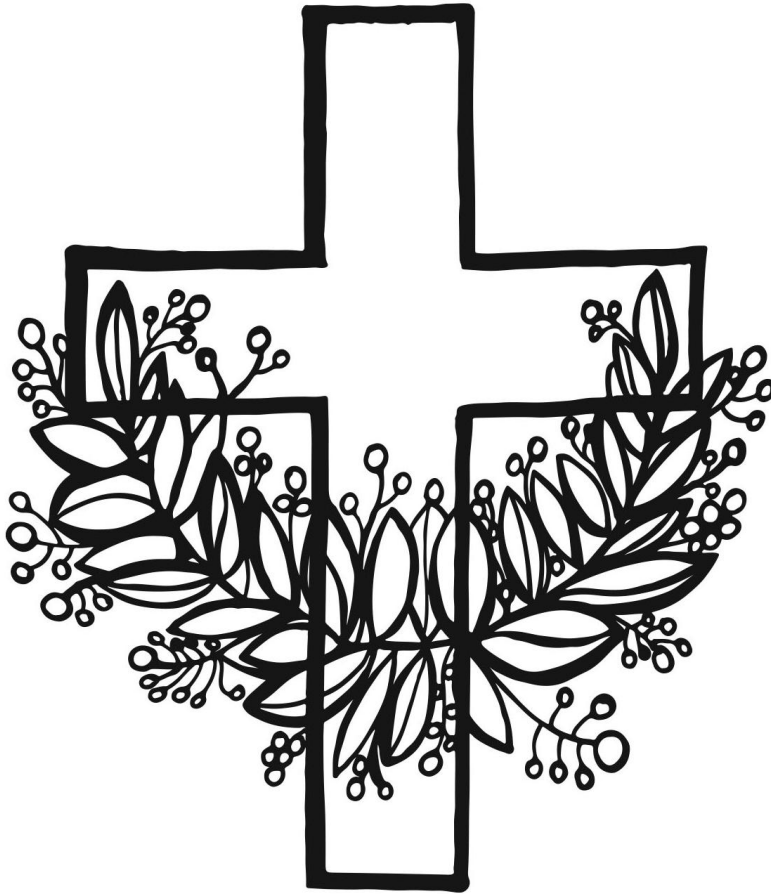
Lucy Wynard, Senior Pastor
Eric Haitz, Deacon
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor

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

March 22, 2026

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM

FIFTH SUNDAY in LENT



In today's gospel Jesus reveals his power over death by raising Lazarus from the dead. The prophet Ezekiel prophesies God breathing new life into dry bones. To those in exile or living in the shadows of death, these stories proclaim God's promise of resurrection. In baptism we die with Christ that we might also be raised with him to new life. At the Easter Vigil we will welcome the newly baptized as we remember God's unfailing promise in our baptism.

The Holy Spirit calls us together as people of God.

The **PRELUDE** allows time to prepare our hearts, bodies and minds for worship.

A worship leader – usually the **PRESIDER**, the ordained minister who will lead the Meal portion of the service – welcomes all and makes announcements for the good of all.

We begin by blessing the Triune God. ✠ indicates you make the **SIGN OF THE CROSS** – tracing a cross on the forehead or across the upper body. This is the sign marked on us in baptism.

We confess our sin and hear God’s word of forgiveness. The roots of this practice is a prayer that was said by the clergy before entering the sanctuary (the area around the altar). Luther’s innovation was to have this prayer said by the congregation as well. By pronouncing God’s general absolution for sin, Luther hoped to also encourage people to come to Holy Communion. During some seasons **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS** may be omitted or replaced by a **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**. Both rites center God’s mercy and remind us of our identity as God’s children.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(rise in body or spirit)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

☑ **Amen.**

☞ Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

☞ Gracious God,

☑ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

☞ For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,

☑ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

☞ For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit:
Gracious God,

☑ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

☞ For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdainning the living water Christ offers:
Gracious God,

☑ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

☞ For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,

☑ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**

- Ⓐ For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:
Gracious God,
- Ⓒ **have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.**
- Ⓐ God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.
- Ⓒ **Amen.**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service

ELW 712 vs. 1-3

- 1 Lord, whose love in humble service bore the weight of human need, who upon the cross, forsaken, worked your mercy's perfect deed: we, your servants, bring the worship not of voice alone, but heart; consecrating to your purpose ev'ry gift which you impart.**
- 2 Still your children wander homeless; still the hungry cry for bread; still the captives long for freedom; still in grief we mourn our dead. As you, Lord, in deep compassion healed the sick and freed the soul, by your Spirit send your power to our world to make it whole.**
- 3 As we worship, grant us vision, till your love's revealing light in its height and depth and greatness dawns upon our quickened sight, making known the needs and burdens your compassion bids us bear, stirring us to ardent service, your abundant life to share.**

Singing during the Gathering plays an important role in creating our common identity. These songs welcome us to the mercy of the Triune God and move us from our individual experiences into the communal purpose of worship.

The procession of worship leaders is merely a function of getting people from one place to another. As in life, we follow the Cross of Christ and the light of Christ in our midst. We turn to face the cross and follow its path to the altar. As the Cross passes participants in the pews, they may bow slightly in reverence for who it represents. In more formal/festival services, incense can be used in the Procession to represent the prayer of the assembled Church (Revelation 5:8).

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901-1984
Text © 1961 Oxford University Press.

A worship leader, usually an ordained minister, and the assembly greet one another in the name of the Triune God.

The **KYRIE** is a sung prayer. “*Kyrie*” is a shortened form of “*Kyrie eleison*” (KIH-ree-ay eh-LEH-ee-zon), Greek for “Lord, have mercy.” The *Kyrie* and the *Gloria* are two of the oldest parts of the service (see Psalm 51, Matthew 15:22; Luke 18:38; Luke 2:15, respectively). The *Gloria* may be omitted during the seasons of Advent and Lent.

In the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978), Lutherans added an alternative to the *Gloria*, “**This is the Feast**” for use in festive liturgies, (see Revelation 5:12-13 & St. Paul, 2 Corinthians 13:14).

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 above, 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 u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer 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

L Almighty God,

C your Son came into the world to free us all from sin and death. Breathe upon us the power of your Spirit, that we may be raised to new life in Christ and serve you in righteousness all our days, 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

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones is a promise that Israel as a nation, though dead in exile, will live again in their land through God's life-giving spirit. Three times Israel is assured that through this vision they will know that "I am the Lord."

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' ¹²Therefore prophecy and say to them: Thus says the Lord God: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the Lord when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord."

L Word of God, Word of Life.

C Thanks be to God.

The **PRAYER OF THE DAY** gathers the assembly into one, focusing on the main themes from the day's readings or observances. These prayers are assigned for each Sunday of the Church Year and are often centuries old, binding the Church throughout time and location.

God speaks to us in scripture, preaching and song.

Our readings come from a three-year calendar cycle called a **LECTIONARY** (specifically, the Revised Common Lectionary.)

You can see the calendar of assigned lectionary readings, as well as the Prayer of the Day, in the ELW starting on page 18. A, B, & C stand for each of the lectionary cycle years: A is the year we hear most from Matthew's gospel, B from Mark's, and C from Luke's. ELW pg. 28 has today's readings and prayer listed – Fifth Sunday in Lent, Year A.

The First Reading is most often from the Old Testament (also called the Hebrew Bible); the Second Reading is most often from the New Testament letters. In between we read or sing a Psalm. The Psalms are the bible's song book – written to be sung.

PSALM 130 (*cantor/choir will sing the verses, congregation will sing the refrain*)

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 160



I wait for you, O LORD; in your word is my hope.

¹ Out | of the depths

I cry to | you, O Lord;

² O Lord, | hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my | supplication.

³ If you were to keep watch | over sins,

O Lord, | who could stand?

⁴ Yet with you | is forgiveness,

in order that you | may be feared. *Refrain*

⁵ I wait for you, O Lord; | my soul waits;

in your word | is my hope.

⁶ My soul waits for the Lord more than those who keep watch | for the morning,

more than those who keep watch | for the morning.

⁷ O Israel, wait for the Lord, for with the Lord there is | steadfast love;

with the Lord there is plen- | teous redemption.

⁸ For the Lord shall | redeem Israel

from | all their sins. *Refrain*

SECOND READING

Romans 8:6-11

For Paul, Christian spirituality entails living in the reality of the Holy Spirit. The driving force behind our actions and values is not our sinful desire for self-satisfaction but the very Spirit by which God raised Jesus from the dead and will also raise us from the dead.

To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law—indeed, it cannot, ⁸ and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

☐ Word of God, Word of Life.

☑ Thanks be to God.

(rise in body or spirit)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Let your stead - fast love come to us, O Lord.



Save us as you prom - ised; we will trust your word.



Save us as you prom - ised; we will trust your word.

☐ The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

☑ **Glory to you, O Lord.**

HOLY GOSPEL

John 11:1-45

Children may follow along using the Spark Bible turning to page 440

Jesus is moved to sorrow when his friend Lazarus falls ill and dies. Then, in a dramatic scene, he calls his friend out of the tomb and restores him to life.

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. ² Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. ³ So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." ⁴ But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death; rather, it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it." ⁵ Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, ⁶ after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

⁷ Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." ⁸ The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?" ⁹ Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble because they see the light of this world. ¹⁰ But those who walk at night stumble because the light is not in them." ¹¹ After saying this, he told them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him." ¹² The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right." ¹³ Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." ¹⁶ Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."

¹⁷ When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb

We rise and sing to acclaim the living Word, Jesus Christ, present to us in the **GOSPEL** reading. The "Gospel Procession" (whether to the edge of the sanctuary or further into the nave) is a celebration of the Incarnation – of the Word of God moving dramatically into the very center of life. In more formal/festive services, incense can be used as the gospel is read. The reader of the gospel and the people may trace a cross on their forehead, lips, and heart just before the gospel is read as a reminder to be attentive ("May the Lord be on my mind, my lips, and my heart").

The word “**GOSPEL**” means “good news”. The first four books of the New Testament are all Gospel’s because they tell us the Good News of God’s salvation through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

four days. ¹⁸ Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, ¹⁹ and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. ²⁰ When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. ²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, ²⁶ and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.”

²⁸ When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary and told her privately, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.” ²⁹ And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. ³⁰ Now Jesus had not yet come to the village but was still at the place where Martha had met him. ³¹ The Jews who were with her in the house consoling her saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. ³² When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus began to weep. ³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!” ³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.” ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?” ⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.” ⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

⁴⁵ Many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did believed in him.

L 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, 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, in the back of the entrance hall, available to those who prefer to stay with their families. Once the service is over, please place the used activity bags in the baskets provided, so they can be sanitized and replenished for next week.

SERMON

Pastor Wynard

(rise in body or spirit)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery **ELW 334 vs. 1, 2, 5**

- 1 Tree of Life and awesome myst'ry,
in your death we are reborn;
though you die in all of hist'ry,
still you rise with ev'ry morn,
still you rise with ev'ry morn.**
- 2 We remember truth once spoken,
love passed on through act and word;
ev'ry person lost and broken
wears the body of our Lord,
wears the body of our Lord.**
- 5 God of all our fear and sorrow,
God who lives beyond our death,
hold us close through each tomorrow,
love as near as ev'ry breath.**

Text © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com.
800.442.3358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

The **SERMON** brings God's word of law and gospel into our time and place to awaken and nourish faith. It is crafted to make the Word a living and transforming reality in our lives.

The **CHILDREN'S BLESSING** does the same, briefly, for our youngest members before sending them to their age-appropriate exploration of scripture and faith.

God's word is further proclaimed by the assembly as we join in a song that illuminates ideas from our readings. This too is a proclamation of the word – this time by the whole gathered community.

That communal proclamation continues with the recitation of a **CREED**, as we confess our faith together, both as the gathered congregation and in agreement with the church throughout time and across the world.

The **APOSTLES' CREED**, the creed associated with baptism - titled such because it is an early church summary of the teachings and faith of the apostles, not because it was written by the apostles - is the creed usually chosen for Lent, and "Ordinary Time", the Sundays between Epiphany and Lent, and after Pentecost Sunday until Reformation Sunday. The Nicene Creed is usually chosen for festival days and sometimes during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Easter. However it is also appropriate to omit a creed altogether.

During the Creed, some people offer the following acts of reverence: bowing the head at the name of Jesus Christ (Philippians 2:10), bowing during the proclamation of the Incarnation ("who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary"), and making the sign of the cross in joyful embrace of God's promise as we proclaim "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting".

THE APOSTLES' CREED

- ℣ Let us confess together the faith of the Church.
- ☩ **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: **L** Hear us, O God.

C **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 Shirley Gersib (mother of Pat Studts) and Kevin Kochanowicz (nephew of Jenna Woster)

Prayers this week: Marvel Green (sister of Betty Callies), Janice Hansen, Jay Jacobson (son of Joan Jacobson-Trotter)

On-going Care: John Bodnar, Don Burton, Betty Callies, Irving Collett, Warren Cooke, Shirley Dietrich, Mike Edris, Kathy Englert, Wanda Frykberg, Tracey Gehringer-Steffen, Kevin Hertz, Larry & Michele Hunzeker, Chris Jensen, Linda Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Julie Knapp, Jack & Marie Kubat, Glenn Lindgren, Elizabeth Luczynski, Charles Martis, Phil Meyer, Sharon Miley, Ralph Morse, Dan & Ginny Rath, Joyce Wachal, Allyson White, Grant Williams, Michael Yount

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* –Mallory Hoogestraat, daughter of JD & Julie Hoogestraat, Wyatt Johnson, grandson of Ken & Linda Johnson; Tyler Johnston, son of Robert & Michelle Johnston, Daniel Milstead, nephew of Darlene Anderson; Cody Ray, grandson of Betty Callies; Dannika Rees & Takao Elliott, daughter & son-in-law of Eric & Toby Rees; Joel 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; our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

Other Prayers: *Seminarians* – Joseph Daffer, James Holzer

THE PEACE IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C **And also with you.**

The **PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**, sometimes called **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**, are our prayers for others, for both specific and wider concerns. These prayer petitions follow a pattern focusing on:

- the church
- all creation
- the nations of the world
- people in need
- our community and congregation
- and the saints who have died.

We draw our prayers from an online ELCA resource called “Sundays and Seasons”. These prayers are prepared in advance by writers from across the church and often draw on themes from scriptures assigned for the week. The preacher edits & adapts these prayers for our particular community & context. The prayers include times of silence and are deliberately slow enough to leave space for you to lift up your own specific prayers as we pray.

In the **SHARING OF THE PEACE** we affirm our reconciliation with one another as we prepare to offer our gifts and receive communion. See Matthew 5:23-24.

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

A collection of money or other material goods for the sake of the mission of our congregation and the wider church – including the care of those in need – is a sign of giving our whole selves in grateful response for all God’s gifts. During this time bread and wine for the meal are brought forward and the table is prepared for the meal. The offerings are a part of the riches God has given to us and we offer them back to God in thanksgiving.

Music is another kind of offering given to God as the gifts of the assembly are collected. This gives time for reflection and prayer as we prepare to receive the meal. On more formal/festive liturgies, incense can be used as the altar is prepared, a reference to the use of incense in the Temple and in joyful anticipation of Christ’s sacramental presence in the meal.

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. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. You may use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online or mail in your offering or donate online. Thank you!



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Thee We Adore arr. Ralph M. Johnson

(rise in body or spirit)

OFFERTORY HYMN

We Place upon Your Table, Lord

ELW 467

- 1 We place upon your table, Lord,
where you by grace have bid us dine,
these tokens of our daily work,
the food of life, the bread and wine.**
- 2 Within these simple things there lie
the height and depth of human life:
our pain and tears, our thoughts and toils,
our hopes and fears, our joy and strife.**
- 3 Accept them, Lord; they come from you;
we take them humbly from your hand;
put these your gifts to higher use:
the holy meal that you command.**

Text: M. F. C. Willson, 1884-1944, alt.

OFFERING PRAYER

- ☐ O God, maker of heaven and earth,
- ☑ **your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through these gifts of bread and wine, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

PREFACE

- 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 - er 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Before the Lord's supper is shared, the presiding minister leads the congregation into a time of thanksgiving.

“**EUCHARIST**” come from the Greek word “eucharistia”, meaning **THANKSGIVING**. In the prayers leading us to the table we celebrate and give thanks for God's saving acts, culminating in Jesus Christ.

“**SANCTUS**” is Latin for “**HOLY**.” This ancient hymn of praise joins our voices with the angels, expanding on the song of the seraphim in Isaiah 6 and the cry of the crowds on Palm Sunday in Matthew 21. In joyful anticipation of Christ's true and real presence in the Eucharist, it has been a tradition among some to make a sign of the cross at the phrase “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”

We use different **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYERS** in different seasons or for different occasions, mostly drawn from Evangelical Lutheran Worship resources. See ELW pg. 133 for the prayer we are currently using. There are eleven Eucharistic Prayers included in the ELW (see pgs. 130-133, 65-70) and more in other resources.

All the Eucharistic Prayers follow a similar pattern – beginning with giving thanks to God for God’s saving acts and revelation to God’s people. God is praised for the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ. The words recorded in Scripture that Jesus said over the bread and wine – called the **WORDS OF INSTITUTION** – are repeated. In these words we hear the command and promise of the sacrament Jesus himself instituted on the night when he was betrayed. See Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Finally we ask for the Holy Spirit to be among us in this meal and for God to send us out in mission and witness to the world.

One may bow after the consecration of the bread and wine, in affirmation that Jesus Christ is now truly present with us in, with, and under the elements of the Lord’s Supper. We conclude by praying together the prayer that our Lord Jesus taught us. See Matthew 6:9-13.

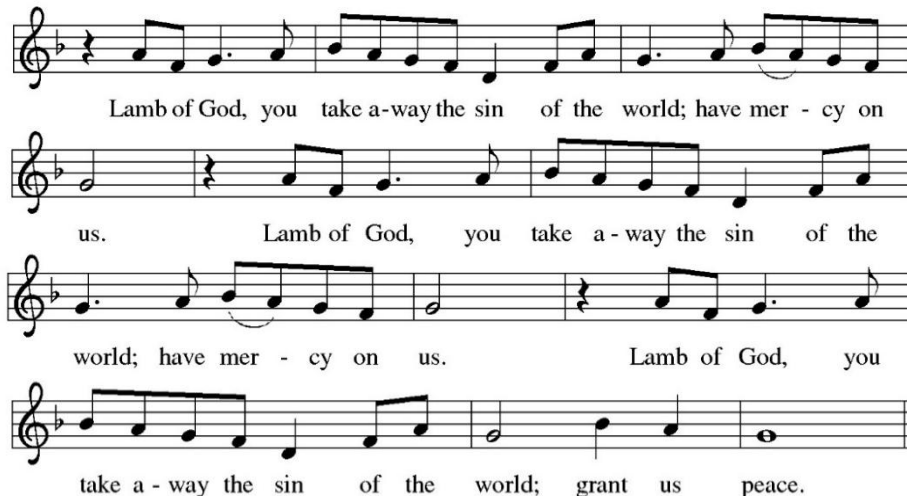
EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

- ☐ Blessed are you, O God of the universe. ...
... as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
- ☑ **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**
- ☐ O God of resurrection and new life ...
... Grace our table with your presence.
- ☑ **Come, Holy Spirit.**
- ☐ Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread. ...
... Send us forth, burning with justice, peace and love.
- ☑ **Come, Holy Spirit.**
- ☐ With your holy ones of all times and places, ...
... we praise you, O God, blessed and holy Trinity, now and forever.
- ☑ **Amen.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

- ☐ Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us all to pray.
- ☑ **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



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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- L** Come to the table.
- C** We feast on God's goodness and mercy.

(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. If you cannot or choose not to receive the wine, know that the sacrament and God's promised forgiveness are complete in either element.*

AGNUS DEI is Latin for "LAMB OF GOD." This threefold prayer reminds us that Jesus is the Lamb of God (see John 1:29). Here we are reminded that Christ is present in this bread and cup, and we are to behold his glory.

The act of breaking the bread recalls both Jesus breaking bread at the Last Supper, and Jesus' own body broken on the cross for us.

ALL ARE WELCOME at God's table. This meal is traditionally the meal of the baptized – those who have been baptized, in any tradition, are invited to receive. We do not check "credentials" in any form – if you hunger and thirst for the forgiveness God offers you in this meal, come and eat. Anyone who does not wish to receive is invited to come forward for a blessing.

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

Christ Is the Life

ACS 927



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
 3 Christ is the death of all that is, a bright, con - sum - ing
 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
 fire, whose flames re - quire our pri - or self as
 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
 kin - dling for the pyre. Christ is the death of dust - y
 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
 days of un - cre - a - tive strife, for out from
 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.
 fire we tread up - on the thresh - old of new life.
 ev - er - more shall bless the Source, the liv - ing Christ.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546, after Jan Hus, c. 1369–1415; tr. Martin A. Seltz, b. 1951, and Paul Westermeyer, b. 1940
 Text © 2020 Augsburg Fortress

- 1 The Word of God is source and seed;
it comes to die and sprout and grow.
So make your dark earth welcome warm;
root deep the grain God bent to sow.**

Refrain

**In the Lord let us rejoice,
in the Lord let us rejoice,
in the Lord let us rejoice!**

- 2 The Word of God is breath and life;
it comes to heal and wake and save.
So let the Spirit touch and mend
and rouse your dry bones from their grave. *Refrain***

- 3 The Word of God is flesh and grace,
who comes to sing, to laugh and cry.
So dare to be as Jesus was,
who came to live and love and die. *Refrain***

Text © 1983, 1993 Sisters of St. Benedict, St. Joseph, MN, admin. Augsburg Fortress.
Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

The communion meal
nourishes us for mission.
We thank God for the gifts
given to us in this meal,
and ask God to send us out
as witnesses in the world.

(rise in body or spirit)

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L God of our salvation,

C **we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☐ Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, † bless you now and always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

O God, Who Gives Us Life

ACS 1086



1 O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
 2 O God, who calls your peo - ple out to ven - ture and to dare,
 3 O God of cov - e - nant and law, re - vealed in cloud and flame,



who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
 to plumb the bleak a - byss of doubt and find you e - ven there:
 your might - y deeds e - voke our awe; we dare not speak your name.



de - liv - er us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
 when we de - spair in wan - der - ing through wastes of emp - ty lies,
 Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your peo - ple prove,



Help us to know your Spir - it still is mak - ing all things new.
 re - fresh us with the liv - ing spring of hope that nev - er dies.
 as on our hearts you write a - new the cov - e - nant of love.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944
 Text © 1990 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.
 All rights reserved.

DISMISSAL

- ☐ Go in peace. Believe the good news.
- ☑ Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Mark Jones, *organ*



God blesses and sends us in mission to the world.

We ask God's blessing on those who will take this consecrated meal to those who cannot be physically present with us in worship particularly the homebound and hospitalized.

The presiding minister blesses the assembly in the name of the Triune God.

“AMEN” is an ancient Hebrew-derived word meaning “truth” or “may it be so.” Three is a symbolic number in Scripture, representing the wholeness or divine perfection.

The **SENDING** brings our worship full circle. We join in singing a final song. We have been gathered, in all our diversity, and through word and meal shaped into a community – one body in Christ. Now with the blessing of God, we go out to live as Christ's body in the world.

We are sent out in mission, always anticipating to gather again soon around the Means of Grace – God's word and sacrament.

Worship with us during Holy Week:

**Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
March 30, 31, & April 1**

12:15 PM Eucharist in Rotunda Chapel

Maundy Thursday, April 2

11 AM Lunch (free-will offering)

12:15 PM Worship

5 PM Dinner (free-will offering)

6:30 PM Worship & First Communion

Good Friday, April 3

12-3 PM Ecumenical Good Friday Service: Seven Words from the Cross with Guest Speakers, String Quartet and Kountze Choir (Come and go as your schedule allows.)

First Word: *Father, Forgive Them*

Prof. Thomas Kelly

Professor of Theology and Director, Christian Spirituality Program Creighton University

Second Word: *Today, You Will Be with Me In Paradise*

The Rev. Carolyn Grice

Pastor, New Life Presbyterian Church

Third Word: *Woman, Behold Your Son*

The Rev. Andrew Mahoney

Pastor, First Baptist Church

Fourth Word: *My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?*

The Rev. Josh Janzen

Pastor, First Mennonite Church, Beatrice

Fifth Word: *I Thirst*

The Rev. Juliet Hemphill

Pastor, Bethel AME Church

Sixth Word: *It Is Finished*

The Rev. Andrew Nelson

Director of Campus Ministry and Community Service

Morningside University, Sioux City, Iowa

Seventh Word: *Father, into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit*

The Rev. Keith Winton

Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

6:30 PM Tenebrae (Veneration of the Cross and Service of Shadows) (Nursery)

Holy Saturday, April 4

10 PM Easter Vigil (Fire, Word, Water, Eucharist) (There will be no 5:00 PM Saturday service)

Easter Sunday, April 5

7:30 AM Festival of the Resurrection in the Link

8 - 10:45 AM Easter Breakfast

9 & 11:00 AM Festival of the Resurrection

10:10 AMish Easter Egg Hunt in the Link after the 9 AM service

KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Lucy Wynard	Senior Pastor
Dn. Eric Haitz	Deacon
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Kristin Boe	Director of Faith Formation
Jim Smejkal	Facility & Events Director
Toby Rees	Director of Kountze Commons
Sheila Valquier	Youth Director
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Danielle Fleming	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Dan Collett	Facility Assistant
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

March 21 & 22, 2026

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.

Today at Kountze Memorial

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 or anyone who does not commune will receive a blessing. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (for health or other reasons) have communed fully. Our form of distribution is Intinction, meaning you will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip it 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 plates 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>



Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of Kelcey Renee Fike given by Mary Jo Fike and family

Children's Choir & Children's Sermon

9:15 AM

Grades K-6

Children in grades K-6 are invited to join the Children's Choir with Barb Carlsen following the 9 AM Children's Blessing. Children in grades K-4 not wanting to participate in Choir may join Kristin Boe for a children's sermon in the Upper Rooms. All 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, fellowship, and conversation. All are welcome—bring your appetite! 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 AM

Ages 2 years-6th Grade

Join us in the 2nd floor Sunday school rooms where the children will see how Jesus taught his followers to live in God's word and spread that message to others through art, games, storytelling, and missions. The kids can enjoy the same breakfast upstairs that is being served in the Fellowship Hall while listening to the lessons of the day. 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 the breakfast.

Youth Forum

Sundays, 10:15 AM

Youth Center

Grades 7-12

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

Today at Kountze Memorial, *continued*

Adult Forum

Sundays, 10:10 AM

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

March 22: "What More Would You Like to Know about Worship?"

March 29: Fellowship (Palm Sunday)

We Need Sunday School Teachers!

Please use the link below or the QR Code to sign up to help lead the youngest members for Kountze in their Faith Formation. All the lessons are provided beforehand, scripted, and materials provided. Contact Kristin Boe at Kristin@kmlchurch.org for any questions you may have.

<https://tinyurl.com/8s4k6ax4>



SS Teachers

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 22 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
10:00 AM Scholarship Committee
10:10 AM Faith Formation Hour

March 23 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

March 24 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
12:30 PM Circle 3

March 25 Wednesday

9:00 AM Good News Assembly
11:00 AM Lenten Meal
12:15 PM Worship
5:00 PM Lenten Meal
6:30 PM Worship

March 26 Thursday

1:00 PM Circle 4
4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

March 27 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

March 28 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

March 29 Sunday

Passion/Palm Sunday
8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast
No Sunday School, Children's Choir, or Adult Forum—Fellowship
3:00 PM Palm Sunday Path

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

Children's Choir Singing

Palm Sunday, March 29

9 & 11 AM Worship Services

Practice on March 29 @ 8:35 AM

The children will be singing on Palm Sunday, March 29, at both the 9 AM and the 11 AM services. We will sing at the beginning of the 11 AM service so you will be able to leave immediately after they sing. We will practice in the sanctuary before the 9 AM service at 8:35 AM. We will be singing *Let the Rocks Cry Out!* The children will sing an anthem with the adult choir. Thank you for your support and participation. It is always a beautiful thing to see children involved in our worship services. If you have any questions, you may contact Barb Carlsen at carlsen.barbara18@gmail.com

Palm Sunday Path

Sunday, March 29, 3-5 PM

First United Methodist Church, Omaha 7020 Cass St (72nd & Cass St.)

This Palm Sunday we invite Christians and all people of goodwill to gather as a witness to Jesus' message of solidarity with our struggling neighbors. As Christians we stand for loving our neighbors: healing the sick, feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger. We stand for truth and dignity, and the worth of every child of God. This ecumenical event will include brief prayers from Bishop Scott Johnson (NE Synod, ELCA) and Bishop Scott Barker (Episcopal Diocese), and short remarks on food insecurity, healthcare access and immigration reform from pastors of the Omaha community. There will be music and lots



Palm Sunday Path

of time to connect with fellow Christians and community partners! Register using the QR code or at bit.ly/PalmSundayOmaha (registration ahead of time is not required, but helpful). If you are able, bring a palm branch to wave from Sunday morning worship (if that is your tradition), a sign, and a donation of cereal for the Clair Cares Food Pantry.

Camp Carol Joy Holling Heart of Camp Gala

Saturday, April 11

A View West Shores

110 S. 243rd Street, Waterloo, NE

5:30 – 10 PM

Save the date for Camp Carol Joy Hollings gala. The night promises fun, auction bidding wars (both live & silent), fellowship with friends, and great food. Bring a friend or two or a table's worth. The more the merrier. This year the gala features a fun theme & new ticket option. Do you have items to donate for the auction? You can fill out the Auction Donation Form by using the QR Code or email Allison at Ablatchford@NLOM.org. More information on the night and to buy tickets, go to

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

New Member Classes

April 12 & 19

10:15 AM

Considering membership at Kountze Memorial? Join us for our upcoming new member classes and learn more about becoming part of our church family. Both sessions are important, so

For Your Calendar/News & Notes, *continued*

please plan to attend each one. New members will be received during worship on Sunday, April 26. If you have questions or would like to sign up, contact the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org. We're excited to get to know you! In the meantime, you're invited to worship with us and join in any activities that interest you.

Kountze Food Pantry

Our Love Thy Neighbor Food Pantry is in need of your gifts and service. The current needs for the pantry are toothpaste, muffin mix, and pasta sauce. 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. Please join us as a volunteer in the pantry in the Kountze Commons volunteer as it fits your schedule. We have options for volunteers of all abilities. Please use the QR code or the following link to sign up and join our mission. We are always in need of gently used egg cartons and grocery bags.

<https://tinyurl.com/uausddd>

If you have questions about the Pantry, you can call Toby Rees at 402-979-1425.



Cinco de Mayo Saturday, May 2 6-8 PM

Come celebrate with an evening full of music, flavor, and fun! Join us in the Fellowship Hall for a festive Celebration the whole family can enjoy. Sample a delicious spread of authentic Mexican food and homemade desserts, sip on refreshing mock margaritas, and experience the lively sounds of Omaha's own Mariachi band, Mariachi Los Caballeros, performing live! Throughout the evening, try your luck with our raffle baskets as well. Whether you come for the food, the music, or the community, there will be something for everyone.

Ticket Prices at the door:

Adults (14+): \$25

Kids: \$10

Ages 5 & under: Free

Bring your friends, bring your family, and come celebrate together with great food, great music, and great company! Proceeds to benefit youth attending the Pittsburgh trip this summer!

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

Wednesdays, February 25, March 4, 11, 18, & 25

DUST TO DAWN:
A LENTEN JOURNEY TO THE EASTER VIGIL

- **Worship: 12:15 & 6:30 PM**
(6:30 PM is livestreamed)
- **Lunch: 11:00 AM – Noon**
(free-will offering)
- **Supper: 5:00 – 6:30 PM**
(free-will offering)

Holy Week & Easter at Kountze Memorial



Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, March 30, 31, & April 1
12:15 PM Eucharist in Rotunda Chapel

Maundy Thursday, April 2

11 AM Lunch (free-will offering)
12:15 PM Worship
5 PM Dinner (free-will offering)
6:30 PM Worship & First Communion

Good Friday, April 3

12-3 PM Ecumenical Good Friday Service: Seven Words from the Cross with Guest Speakers, String Quartet and Kountze Choir (Come and go as your schedule allows.)
6:30 PM Tenebrae (Veneration of the Cross and Service of Shadows) (Nursery)

Holy Saturday, April 4

10 PM Easter Vigil (Fire, Word, Water, Eucharist)
(There will be no 5:00 PM Saturday service)

Easter Sunday, April 5

7:30 AM Festival of the Resurrection in the Link
8 - 10:45 AM Easter Breakfast
9 & 11:00 AM Festival of the Resurrection
10:10 AMish Easter Egg Hunt in the Link after the 9 AM service



LENTEN MEAL MENU FOR MARCH 25

Lasagna Soup or Broccoli Cheese Soup
Italian Toasted Ciabatta's
Dessert

Come hungry and join us!

Lunch: 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Dinner: 5:00 - 6:30 PM
Worship: 12:15 PM and 6:30 PM
Cost: Free-will Offering

All KMLC children, youth, friends, and families
are invited to join us.

Attendance & Giving Thursday, March 12—Wednesday, March 19

Saturday: 29
Sunday: 9:00: 98 11:00: 49
Wednesday: 12:15: 43
Total: 266
Streaming: 103
Pantry Guests Served: 163 (inc. 42 children) (closed Monday)
Medical Clinic Guests Served: 10
Offering:
\$22,101.00 (Regular) \$8,027.98 (Specials)
\$1,252.65 (Debt Reduction)

Jesus' resurrection means new life now.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 11:1-45	The raising of Lazarus
Monday	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Valley of dry bones
Tuesday	Romans 8:6-11	Life in the Spirit
Wednesday	Romans 8:12-17	Wonderful future of God's people
Thursday	1 Peter 1:1-9	A real reason for hope
Friday	Colossians 3:12-17	New life in Christ
Saturday	Psalms 130	Trusting the Lord in times of trouble
Sunday	Matthew 21:1-11	Jesus enters Jerusalem



© 2024 Milestones Ministry, LLC. All rights reserved.
In addition to Taking Faith Home, celebrate milestones in your daily life
as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Jesus said to her [Martha], "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" **John 11:25-26 (NRSV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God of life and hope, we thank you for the promise of the resurrection and the power it brings to us each day through Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Son of God. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for the strength we receive through this food and the faith and hope we receive through Jesus our Savior and Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God free you from all burdens and give you peace.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

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

- What is something you are looking forward to do in the future?
- How does the promise of Jesus' resurrection influence your life today?

DEVOTIONS

Read: John 11:1-45.

With the story of the raising of Lazarus, Jesus makes it clear that he is not only the source of *"the resurrection on the last day"* (v. 24), but the source of life now. Jesus does not just say he is the resurrection. He says, *"I am the resurrection and the life"* (v. 25). In this story we gain understanding of what it means that Jesus is the *"Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world"* (v. 27). The future hope of the resurrection is so important and so real that it changes our life in the present. Even though Jesus weeps with his friends, grief does not control his—or our—life. Our lives are to be freed from the daily powers of sin, fear, and death. *"Unbind him and let him go"* (v. 44) is the message for us, too. Jesus comes to us when our burdens are many, to unbind us and set us free. Jesus says, *"[Everyone who lives and believes in me will never die]"* (v. 26).

Discuss: How does faith in Jesus impact your priorities, your values, your relationships?

Pray: **God of resurrection promise, remind us of the new life we are given each day 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 or support someone who is grieving a loss?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

During the fifth week in Lent, light five of the six purple candles on your Lenten Candle Cross. The acronym **ACTS** (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication) has been introduced as a way to pray. This week use this acronym (**ACTS**) as a guide for prayer.

Pray: **Dear God, I praise you for . . . , forgive me for . . . , I thank you for . . . , I pray for (name of people or situations) . . . , in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14—27:66