

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Dean W. Bard, Interim Senior Pastor
H. Ashley Hall, Associate Pastor
Paul H. Moessner, Interim Associate Pastor
Inba Inbarasu, Visitation Pastor

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

March 26, 2017

9:00 & 11:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT



Lent—We are on the way to Easter. Before that, however, we must go through Good Friday and the cruel cross. Our Lenten journey reminds us of what we must know if we are to walk as Jesus' disciples.

I) Matthew 4:1-11 – Will we respond to temptation with the strength Jesus gives?

II) John 3:1-17 – Will we let the Spirit renew us daily with life from above?

III) John 4:5-42 – Will we follow Jesus as he leads us to cross human-erected boundaries?

Today we are challenged: Will we let the Spirit of Jesus open in us eyes of faith, giving us true-vision?

PRELUDE

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION

- Ⓟ During the season of Lent we are called to return to the Lord with all our heart. Let us confess our sin and seek reconciliation with God and neighbor.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

- Ⓟ Merciful God,
- Ⓞ ***you sent Jesus Christ to save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from you and turned aside from your way. We fail in love, neglect justice, and ignore your truth. Have mercy on us and wash away our sin. Create in us clean hearts for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.***
- Ⓟ Behold, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation. Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.
- Ⓞ ***Amen.***

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

ELW 338

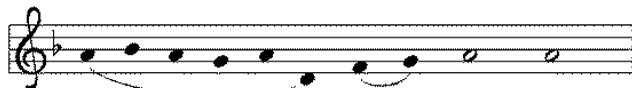
GREETING

- Ⓟ 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.***

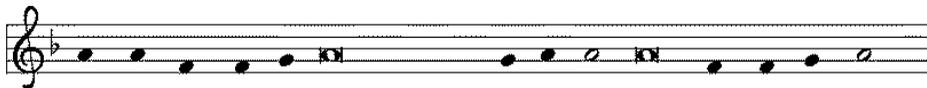
KYRIE



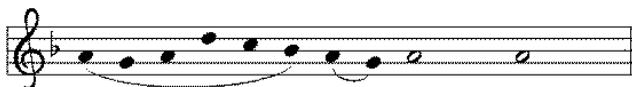
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



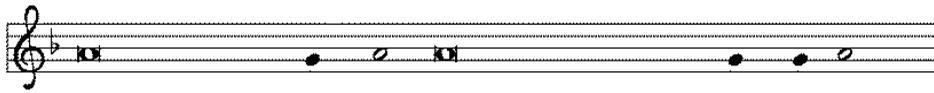
Lord, have mer - cy.



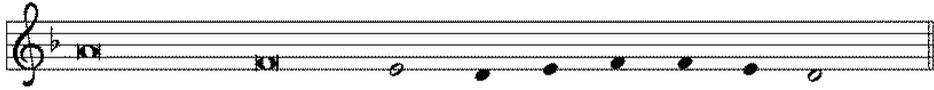
For the peace from a-b-ove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



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

- ☐ Bend your ear to our prayers, Lord Christ,
- ☑ **and come among us. By your gracious life and death for us, bring light into the darkness of our hearts, and anoint us with your Spirit, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

WORD

(sit)

READING

Ephesians 5:8-14

Located in present day Turkey, the ancient city of Ephesus had a famous library, a theater that could seat 25,000 spectators and, most importantly, the Temple of Artemis, also known as Diana, which is one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Saint Paul came through Ephesus [Acts 18, 19] proclaiming the free and life-giving Gospel of Jesus crucified. The folks in power realized this challenged the beliefs about Artemis. As a result, this would undercut the economic impact of the temple, including tourism and trinket-sales. Perhaps this is part of the darkness against which the Apostle writes in this letter, addressed to the Christ-followers in Ephesus and to us.

Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light—⁹for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true. ¹⁰Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹²For it is shameful even to mention what such people do secretly; ¹³but everything exposed by the light becomes visible, ¹⁴for everything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Sleeper, awake!

Rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

A The word of the Lord.

G *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 23 (read responsively)

¹The Lord is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

²*The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.*

³You restore my soul, O Lord,
and guide me along right pathways for your name’s sake.

⁴*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

(stand)

LENTEN VERSE

G *Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.*

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

G *Glory to you, O Lord.*

GOSPEL

John 9:1-41

The Gospel of John offers a style different from the other three Gospels. We find longer narratives, inviting us into reflection on details. The miracles are given as signs, that is, we ask what deeper insights about God's way of doing things are we to see. Today's reading raises a number of questions: Does Jesus' answer, in verse 3, about the effect of human sin on the difficulties in life, really satisfy us? We are grateful for people who work the night shift, so what does Jesus really mean in verse 4? Saliva was considered to contain the essence of the human—verse 6, see Mark 7:33, 8:23. Does that relate to our knowledge about DNA? Making a mixture of clay was considered work. Do religious regulations sometimes get in the way of God's purpose? In verses 16 and 28-34, can our assumptions get in the way of facts? How does faith grow—verses 12, 17, 25, 30, 38?

As [Jesus] walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. ²His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. ⁴We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, ⁷saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. ⁸The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" ⁹Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." ¹⁰But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" ¹¹He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." ¹²They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know."

¹³They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. ¹⁴Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. ¹⁵Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." ¹⁶Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. ¹⁷So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened." He said, "He is a prophet."

¹⁸The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight ¹⁹and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." ²²His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. ²³Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

²⁴So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." ²⁵He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" ²⁷He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" ²⁸Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. ²⁹We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." ³⁰The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. ³¹We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. ³²Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of

a person born blind. ³³If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” ³⁴They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?” And they drove him out.

³⁵Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” ³⁶He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” ³⁸He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him. ³⁹Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind.” ⁴⁰Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?” ⁴¹Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”

📖 The Gospel of our Lord

📖 **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(sit)

CHILDREN’S BLESSING (9:00 AM)

Children (aged 3 years through 5th grade) are invited to come forward for a blessing. Then, they may either follow the teacher upstairs for an extended children’s sermon (joining us again later in time for Communion) or they may return to their seat and use the Spark Bible and/or activity bags during the regular sermon.

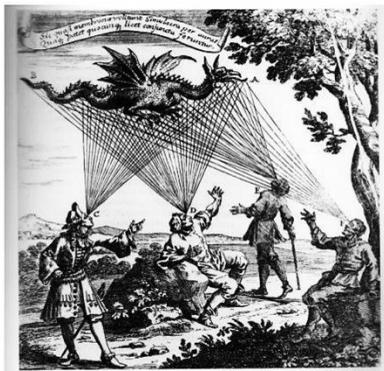
SERMON

Pastor Moessner

SERMON VISUALS

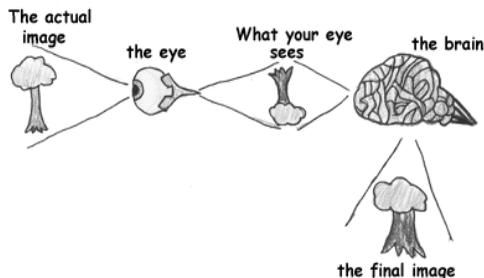
How do we see?

Emission Theory



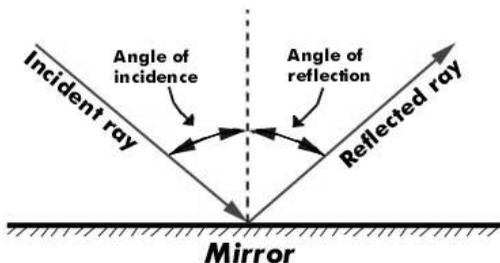
or

Extramission Theory

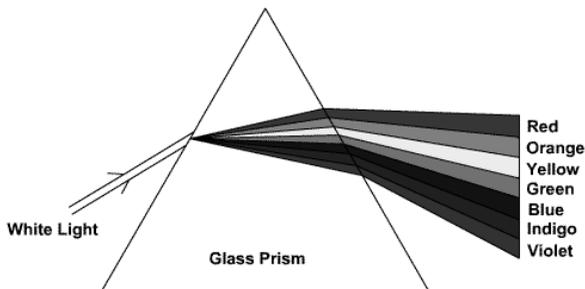


Reflection versus Refraction

Light Reflection



Light Refraction



(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

O Holy Spirit, Enter In

ELW 786

APOSTLES' CREED

☩ ***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.***

ORDER OF SAINT JOHN COMMISSIONING (11:00 AM)

See Insert

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

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

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

Illness: Rev. Dennis Anderson, Dorothy Cross, Alice Fitzgerald, Dee Hiatt, Norman How, Sandy Johnson, Dee Luchsinger

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

Other Prayers: *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Krystle Moraska & Ignacio Madrussan, Argentina; Lindsay Mack, Mexico; Justin Perkins (Young Adults in Global Mission), Argentina/Uruguay; Our sister congregation, the American Church in Berlin

THE PEACE IS SHARED

P The peace of Christ be with you always.
☩ ***And also with you.***

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

We glorify God in our giving. Our offering is an act of worship that makes the ministries of this church possible. We encourage everyone to give. If you are visiting with us today, please do not feel obligated to participate in this portion of worship. If you would like, use the QR code scanner on your smart phone to give online or use the giving kiosk in the Fellowship Hall.



THE TABLE IS PREPARED

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Keep God's Light

Mark Patterson

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

Create in Me a Clean Heart

ELW 188

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

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

OFFERING PRAYER

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: '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.', and 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.' The music features a simple, melodic line with some phrasing slurs.

(The Thanksgiving continues)

- It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...
...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.

The image shows five staves of musical notation in G major, 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: '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.', and 'Ho - san - na in the high - est.' The music features a simple, melodic line with some phrasing slurs.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

*Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those*

*who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.*

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☒ Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Happy are they who are called to his supper.

☒ *Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed. Amen.*

(sit)

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

Lamb of God

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.

(stand)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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

SENDING

BENEDICTION

- P** Jesus took on the form of a servant and was obedient to death, even death on a cross. May you follow his example and share in the resurrection.
C *Amen.*
P In faithfulness to God, Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many. May you walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.
C *Amen.*
P On the cross of Calvary Jesus bore our grief and carried our sorrows. May his passion bring us healing and peace.
C *Amen.*
P Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.
C *Amen.*

HYMN

God, Whose Almighty Word

ELW 673

DISMISSAL

- P** Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
C *Amen.*

POSTLUDE

✠ ✠ ✠

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Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church is a vibrant, historic faith community that welcomes all and provides ministries for all ages and walks of life. We are a "City-wide Church with a World-wide Ministry" and have been worshiping, growing, and serving in downtown Omaha for nearly 160 years. If you are new to Kountze Memorial, we invite you to visit the Welcome Desk in Fellowship Hall for more information about who we are and what we do.

WORSHIP + GROW + SERVE

HOLY COMMUNION All who



are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. Instructions will be provided during worship. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP We believe that all are welcome in worship and encourage families to worship together. Quiet activity bags, children's bibles, and bulletins are available, as well as a Quiet Room, just off the west side of the main sanctuary, that includes a TV and a variety of toys, games, and books for young children.

NURSERY is available from 9 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it.

ATTENDANCE CARDS All those attending worship are encouraged to fill out the card included in your bulletin and place in the offering plate.

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS AND LISTENING DEVICES Please speak to an usher if you would like a large print bulletin or an assisted listening device.

NEW MEMBER CLASS If you are interested in joining our congregation, the next class will be held April 30 & May 7 from 12—2 PM. Please plan to attend both sessions. Lunch will be served and childcare is provided. Please indicate your attendance plans on your attendance card.

PARKING is available immediately west of the church between Farnam and Douglas, across from the church at Farnam and 26th Avenue, and in the deFreese Manor Parking Lot on the northwest corner of Douglas and 26th Avenue.

E-NEWS & SOCIAL MEDIA If you would like to receive our weekly e-news and monthly e-newsletter, add your e-mail address to the card in your bulletin or text your e-mail address to 22828. You can also follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

KOUNTZE STAFF

- Pr. Dean W. Bard Interim Senior Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall Associate Pastor
Pr. Paul Moessner Interim Associate Pastor
Pr. Inba Inbarasu Visitation Pastor
Kristin Boe Interim Christian Education Coordinator
Ian Hartfield Director of Congregational Life
Debbie Bogue Office Manager
Amanda Zasada Administrative Assistant
Lauri Askew Staff Treasurer
Sheri Rose Financial Secretary
John Bogue Building Superintendent
Tim Walker Chef
Søren Johnson Assist. Bldg. Superintendent
Barbara Carlsen Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Danny Bos Handbell Director/Assist. to the Bldg. Superintendent
Mark Jones Organist
David Gerard Saturday Accompanist
Sheri Lynn Tipton Night Security Manager
Norma Pafford Nursery Superintendent
Joyce Palmer Urban Ministries Coordinator

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

SUNDAY, 9:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Tarna Kidder, Scott Henneman
Lector Danny Bos
Ushers Glenn Anderson, Dan Collett, Ted Kaasch, Mark Mahaffey, Gary Westerman, Bob Woodworth, Marcy Madison
Greeters Sharon Anderson, Shirleen Collett, Karen Wolf
Crucifer Courtney Cameron
Acolytes Carly Cameron, Kenyon Martis

SUNDAY, 11:00 AM

- Comm. Asst. Ashley Sum, Norm Sack
Lector Ashley Sum
Ushers Adam Klinker, Linda Hoagland, David Jesberg, Bryon Line
Greeters Julie King, Rosemary Tessin
Crucifer Nick Barrett
Acolytes Jackson Barrett, Grace Penrod

TODAY AT KOUNTZE

KOUNTZE CAFÉ Join us on Sundays for a hot, breakfast buffet served from 8-11 AM prepared by Chef Tim and his volunteers. The suggested donation for breakfast is, \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger.

ADULT FORUM Join us Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM.

THIS WEEK: Planned Giving, Pt. 2 **NEXT WEEK:** Building Update

YOUNG MOTHERS Join us on Sunday mornings for some fresh brewed fun in the Fellowship Lounge between worship services for "Frappy Hour." Come meet other young mothers in the congregation for coffee, conversation, fellowship and fun. For more information, contact Meeghan Hartfield at ma_hartfield@yahoo.com or call 402-212-8145.

ORDER OF SAINT JOHN COMMISSIONING AND BANQUET Sunday, 3/26. All current OSJ members, alums, parents, and sponsors will gather for a very special celebration. Acolytes will take part in a special commissioning during worship at 11 AM and then gather in Fellowship Hall for a luncheon at 12:30 PM. Attire is semi-formal. A group photo will be taken. Please plan to attend this event as we honor all those who participate in this very meaningful ministry.

ETERNAL CANDLE is given to the glory of God in memory of Kelcey Renae Fike from Randall & Mary Jo Fike & Family.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES TODAY

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

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

KOUNTZE GAME NIGHT Friday, 3/31. Dinner: 6-7:00 PM, Fellowship and Games: 7-9:00 PM. Nursery Care Provided. Cost: FREE Sponsored by the Congregational Activities Committee. All children, youth, adults, families, and friends of all ages invited! Bring your favorite snack and card/board/ video games and enjoy a night with family and friends. We'll have nutritious snacks and pizza for dinner, followed by some quality time playing your favorite card or board games. We might even play some bingo and there will be some surprises! Please RSVP to the Welcome Desk, Church Office or Ian Hartfield: ian@kmlchurch.org or 402-341-7761 by 3/26.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS Sunday, 4/2, 12-1PM. Children who are already communing or children interested in receiving Holy Communion, are invited to a First Communion class. We will begin with lunch in the conference room followed by instruction in the Nave with Pr. Hall. Participants will receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday, 4/13 at 7 PM. Please register with the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org.

YOUTH MINISTRY – WHAT'S HAPPENING? Parents: **Join the conversation!** Sunday, 4/2, 12:00 noon in the Meeting Rooms (off Fellowship Hall) and Sunday, 4/9, 10:10 in the Joyful Sounds Room, upstairs. With all the staff changes it is easy to think that youth ministry has been suspended. We trust you know that is not the case. There is always value in talking with parents about their expectations and challenges. For this

Lent at Kountze

Theme: We Are Church

Noon Eucharist and Evening Prayer - Individual Healing and Absolution following each service

March 29 - We Are Catholic - Pr. Hall

April 5 - We Are Apostolic - Pr. Inbarasu

April 13 (Maundy Thursday) - Pr. Moessner Confession and Absolution with Eucharist

Lunch - 11:15 - 12 PM Dinner - 6 - 7 PM

Cost - Free-will Offering

Worship - 12:15 PM and 7 PM

As children of the light of Christ, let your light shine.



DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These readings are related to the Lectionary readings for this Sunday. We invite you to take time each day to read the assigned Bible passages.

Sunday	John 9:1-41	The man born blind
Monday	Isaiah 42:10-17	God will heal the blind
Tuesday	Ephesians 5:8-14	Live as children of light
Wednesday	Matthew 20:29-34	Two blind men receive sight
Thursday	1 John 2:3-11	Warning against spiritual blindness
Friday	2 Peter 1:3-9	Avoiding spiritual blindness
Saturday	Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Sunday	John 11:1-45	The raising of Lazarus

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

You used to be like people living in the dark, but now you are people of the light because you belong to the Lord. So act like people of the light and make your light shine. **Ephesians 5:8-9a (CEV)**

PRAYERS AND BLESSING:

A Prayer for the Week:

Jesus, light of the world, please take away our blindness. Help us to see and believe in you. Amen. (John 9:5-6)

Mealtime Prayer:

Lord Jesus, you give sight to the blind and food to the hungry. We thank you for your kindness and praise you for your goodness. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the light of the Lord shine in your life. May the Holy Spirit fill you with what is good, right, and true. (Ephesians 5:8-9)

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home or small group:

- Tell about a time when you were in a very dark place. How did you feel? What did you do?
- Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 9:5). How does Jesus help us see in our daily lives?
- How can we shine as light for Jesus?

DEVOTIONS

Select a candle to serve as your "Christ Candle" and gather an additional candle for each person present. Read John 9:1-7 or read John 9:1-41 as a Readers Theater or by acting it out. Light the Christ Candle and say, "Jesus Christ is the light of the world." Then, have others take turns lighting their candles from the Christ Candle. As each one does this, say together, "You are a child of the light. Let your light shine before others." Close with the Lord's Prayer.

SERVICE

Since the time of Jesus and his healing ministry, the church has a long history of caring for people with disabilities and for others in need. The church has established hospitals, refugee centers, and orphanages around the world. Reach out to a family who cares for a person with special needs and offer support. You could also select a trusted organization that cares for people in need and make a contribution.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalms 23 is a foundational text for our life of faith. It equips us to live our life during the week. It is a psalm of trust that gives promises we cling to when we face challenges. Note that in verse 6, the word "follow" also means "pursue." We have a God who actively pursues us with goodness and mercy. Select a favorite translation of Psalms 23 and memorize it, using it daily this week.

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purpose, please come to one or both of the *conversations* listed above to express your hopes and hear information about Youth Ministry. If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact me. Oh! Of course we will have other opportunities for Youth members to talk as well. Watch for details.

NEBRASKA LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY Next Sunday, April 2nd, you are invited to join other Omaha area Lutherans as we come together for "Evensong: A Celebration of Ministry with College Students in the Omaha Metro." Evensong takes place from 3:00 to 5:30 PM, at St. Thomas Lutheran Church, 17007 "Q" St. Meet some of the 50 students who participate in this ministry, bid on Silent Auction Baskets, and worship with others who support this vital ministry. Please make plans to join us for this special celebration and support College Ministry in Omaha!

YESTERDAY'S YOUTH Please join us on Tuesday, April 4 at noon. We will be making Palm Crosses! They will be large enough to hang on your wall, or simply to have as a keepsake. You can make them yourself (we will show you how), or just visit and watch as we assemble them. Also hear cherished stories of how Palm Crosses were a beloved part of Kountze. A delicious lunch, scalloped potatoes and ham, will be served. Cost is \$4.00. Please RSVP to the church office by March 31. All ages are welcome. Don't miss out on having a beautiful Palm Cross for your home! Any questions, call Sheri Tipton (402-415-6033).

LENTEN RETREAT WITH BR. JAMES DOWD Saturday, 4/8. Matins (Morning Prayer), 8:15 AM. Program, 9 AM - Noon. The topic will be the connection between contemplative prayer and social action. Br. Dowd is a monk in residence at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. He is a popular speaker and preacher. All are welcome. Please register by calling the church office.

KOUNTZE PANTRY NEEDS This week we need: Pork 'n Beans, Pasta/Noodles, Pasta Sauce, Oatmeal, Corn, Pancake Syrup, Chicken, Tuna. Your time and monetary offerings are always welcome as well. Please talk to JP if you have questions. Thanks.

THIS WEEK AT KOUNTZE

March 26 Sunday

7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
10:10 AM Young Mom's "Frappy Hour"
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
11:00 AM OSJ Commissioning
12:00 PM Stephen Ministry
12:30 PM OSJ Banquet
9:00 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

March 27 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry
6:00 PM Christian Education Committee

March 28 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting
6:00 PM Congregational Activities Committee
7:00 PM Circle 3
7:00 PM Clinic Board

March 29 Wednesday

11:15 AM Lenten Lunch
12:15 PM Worship
6:00 PM Lenten Dinner
6:00 PM Handbell Choir Rehearsal
7:00 PM Worship

March 30 Thursday

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

March 31 Friday

6:00 PM Kountze Game Night

April 1 Saturday

Homebound Communion
4:30 PM Blood Pressure Checks
5:00 PM Worship

April 2 Sunday

Homebound Communion
Mission Trip Payment Due (\$50)
7:45 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal
8:00 AM - 11:00 AM Breakfast
9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship
9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)
10:10 AM Adult Forum
10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 9-12)
10:10 AM Young Mothers "Frappy Hour"
10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-8th gr)
12:00 PM First Communion Class
12:00 PM Youth Ministry Parent Meeting
9:00 PM LCM Worship @ CU (Halley Chapel)

Next Weekend's Lessons

Ezekiel 37:1-14
Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11
John 11:1-45

Saturday Attendance: 62

Sunday Attendance: 9:00: 267 11:00: 135

Midweek - Noon: 50 **Evening:** 62

Total: 576

Pantry Guests Served: 334

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 37

Offering (last week):

\$23,675.01 (Regular) \$1,113.00 (Specials)
\$8,177.33 (In the City for Good)