

# KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

## A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Olaf Roynesdal, Senior Pastor  
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor  
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2650 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68131-3616  
402-341-7761  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

April 25, 2021

9:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY of EASTER



*The image of the good shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that gives the shepherd authority. The shepherd's willingness to lay down his life for the sheep shows his love. First John illustrates what it means to lay down our lives for one another by the example of sharing our wealth with any sibling in need.*

# GATHERING

## PRELUDE

*Mark Jones, organ*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*(stand)*

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

**P** Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God, Father, † Son, Holy Spirit, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we will confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C** Amen.

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P** Gracious God,

**C** have mercy on us.

**We confess that we have turned from you  
and given ourselves into the power of sin.**

**We are truly sorry and humbly repent.**

**In your compassion forgive us our sins,  
known and unknown,  
things we have done  
and things we have failed to do.**

**Turn us again to you,  
and uphold us by your Spirit,  
so that we may live and serve you in newness of life  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

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

**C** Amen.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> Good Christian friends, rejoice and sing!<br/>Now is the triumph of our king!<br/>To all the world glad news we bring:<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</p> <p><b>2</b> The Lord of life is ris'n this day;<br/>death's mighty stone is rolled away;<br/>let all the world rejoice and say:<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</p> | <p><b>3</b> Praise we in songs of victory<br/>that love, that life, which cannot die,<br/>and sing with hearts uplifted high:<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</p> <p><b>4</b> Your name we bless, O risen Lord,<br/>and sing today with one accord,<br/>the life laid down, the life restored:<br/>Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!</p> |
|--|--|

Text: Cyril A. Alington, 1872-1955, alt.

### EASTER GREETING

- P** Alleluia! Christ is risen.
- C** Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!
- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C** And also with you.

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P** O Lord Christ,
- C** good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

# WORD

(sit)

## FIRST READING

Acts 4:5-12

*Peter and John had been arrested the previous day because they were proclaiming the news of the resurrection to the people. In today's reading, Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can proclaim salvation in Jesus' name to the religious authorities.*

**T**he next day the rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup>with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup>When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" <sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup>if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup>let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. <sup>11</sup>This Jesus is

*'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;  
it has become the cornerstone.'*

<sup>12</sup>*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."*

📖 The word of the Lord.

🙏 Thanks be to God.

## PSALM 23 (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup>**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

<sup>3</sup>You restore my soul, O LORD,

and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>**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.**

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup>**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

## SECOND READING

1 John 3:16-24

*Jesus' death on our behalf is the clearest demonstration of divine love. This is the very love we share with others, not just through our words but especially through our deeds. In sharing such love we fulfill God's commandments.*

**W**e know love by this, that Jesus Christ laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. <sup>17</sup>How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

<sup>18</sup>Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. <sup>19</sup>And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him <sup>20</sup>whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup>Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; <sup>22</sup>and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

<sup>23</sup>And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup>All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

**L** The word of the Lord.

**G** Thanks be to God.

(stand)

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. John.

**G** Glory to you, O Lord!

## HOLY GOSPEL

**John 10:11-18**

*In language that recalls the twenty-third psalm, Jesus describes himself as the shepherd who cares for his sheep. He is willing to die for them, and he is able to overcome death for them.*

**J**esus said <sup>11</sup>“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

**P** The Gospel of the Lord.

**G** Praise to you, O Christ.

*(sit)*

## CHILDREN’S BLESSING

### SERMON

*Pastor Hall*

*(stand)*

### HYMN OF THE DAY

*“The Lord’s My Shepherd”*

**ELW 778**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>1</b> The Lord's my shepherd; I'll not want.<br/>he makes me down to lie<br/>in pastures green; he leadeth me<br/>the quiet waters by.<br/>He leadeth me, he leadeth me<br/>the quiet waters by.</p>                    | <p><b>3</b> Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,<br/>yet will I fear no ill;<br/>for thou art with me, and thy rod<br/>and staff me comfort still;<br/>for thou art with me, and thy rod<br/>and staff me comfort still.</p> |
| <p><b>2</b> My soul he doth restore again,<br/>and me to walk doth make<br/>within the paths of righteousness,<br/>e'en for his own name's sake;<br/>within the paths of righteousness,<br/>e'en for his own name's sake.</p> | <p><b>4</b> My table thou hast richly spread<br/>in presence of my foes;<br/>my head thou dost with oil anoint,<br/>and my cup overflows.<br/>My head thou dost with oil anoint,<br/>and my cup overflows.</p>                   |
| <p><b>5</b> Goodness and mercy all my life<br/>shall surely follow me,<br/>and in God's house forevermore<br/>my dwelling-place shall be;<br/>and in God's house forevermore<br/>my dwelling-place shall be.</p>              |  |

*Text: The Psalms of David in Meeter, Edinburgh, 1650*

## NICENE CREED

**☩ We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.**

**We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.**

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

(stand)

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**Response:**    **P** Lord, in your mercy,  
                  **C** 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:** Lois Andresen, Richard Bock, Kristin Boe, Don Burton, Mary Cook, great-aunt of Sarah Jewell, Sydney Dietrich, Carol Duncan, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Richard Holzer, Renee Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Marcie Lafleur, Ron Muchmore, Mary Olson, Dave Pafford, David Penning, Toby Rees, Gary Rodene, Al Schewe, Mark Sullivan, Helen Taylor, Donovan Thorell, Sheri Tipton, Dorothy Vancaster, John Waterman, Darlene White

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in the military* – Amy Dyer, Wyatt Johnson, Josh Kropenske, Michael McNeill, Daniel Milstead, Cody Ray, Sheldon Skovgaard, Michael Vutov, Joel Woosley

**Other Prayers:** *Those serving in mission* – Rev. Chandran Paul Martin, India; Dr. Stephen & Jodi Swanson, Tanzania; Rev. Rachel Ringlaben, Argentina; Meghan Brown Saavedra, Mexico; and Dan & Ginny Rath, international translators

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

## WE SHARE GOD’S PEACE

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

*As we share the peace today – and you do so in your home – You are invited you to contact a fellow member by phone, email or letter. You can do that today or any time during the week. Pick someone from the church directory. We could email each other or call each other during this time when we cannot meet. Then each week select another person to contact. Try to make it someone you don’t really know and get acquainted with them. Always be sure to leave your address, email, and phone number on your message in case they do not have a directory. Talk to people you know and get the names and addresses of those who might not have directories and try to contact them. By the time we meet again we will have made many new friends.*

# MEAL

(sit)

## THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

Please Support the overall ministry of Kountze Memorial during these difficult times. 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. If you are able, please mail in your offering or donate on-line. Thank you!



## OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*“Song of the Shepherd”*

by Douglas Nash  
Barb Carlsen, *soloist*

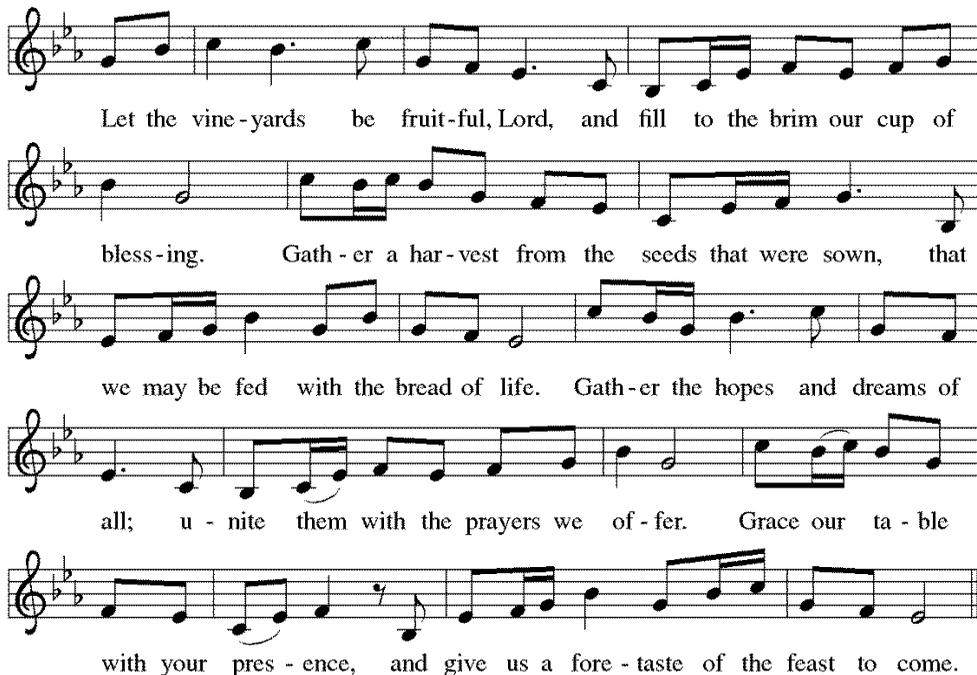
## THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

## OFFERTORY HYMN

*“Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”*

ELW 184

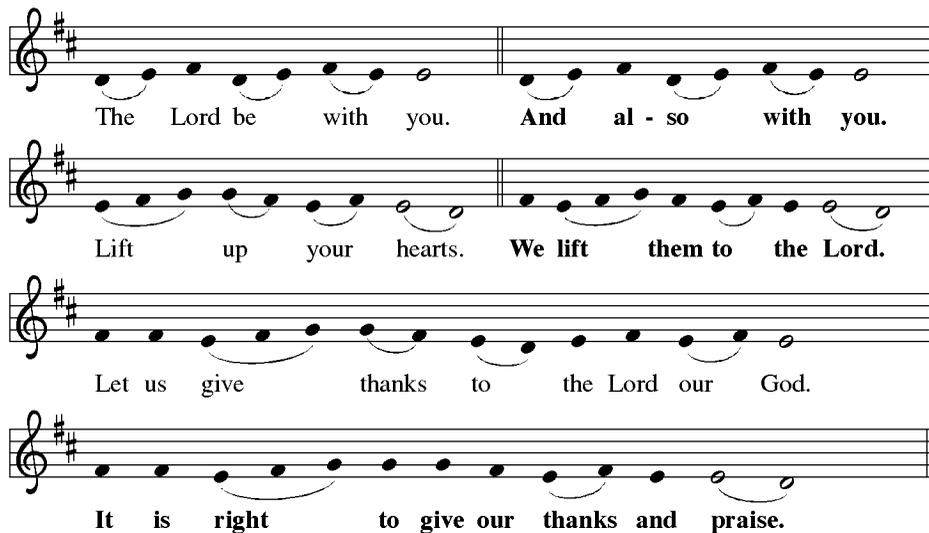


Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble  
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERING PRAYER

- P** God of love,  
**C** you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table. Receive our lives and the gifts we offer. Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world; for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. 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 FOR THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

### SANCTUS



Ho - ly. ho - ly, ho - ly Lord. Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### 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.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

- ☐ The risen Christ invites us to this table.
- ☑ **Come, eat and be satisfied.**

### 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 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.*

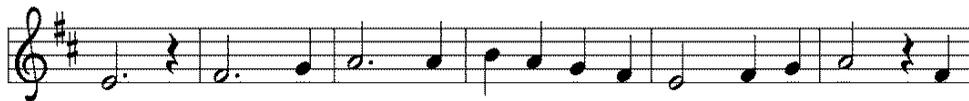
*Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.*

(sit)

# 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, grant us peace.

*marraig*

**HYMNS DURING COMMUNION***“At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”***ELW 362 vs. 1, 5-7**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>1</b> At the Lamb's high feast we sing<br/>praise to our victorious king,<br/>who has washed us in the tide<br/>flowing from his wounded side. Alleluia!</p> <p><b>5</b> Mighty victim from the sky,<br/>hell's fierce pow'rs beneath you lie;<br/>you have conquered in the fight,<br/>you have brought us life and light. Alleluia!</p> | <p><b>6</b> Now no more can death appall,<br/>now no more the grave enthrall;<br/>you have opened paradise,<br/>and your saints in you shall rise. Alleluia!</p> <p><b>7</b> Easter triumph, Easter joy,<br/>this alone can sin destroy!<br/>From sin's pow'r, Lord, set us free,<br/>newborn souls in you to be. Alleluia!</p> |
|---|---|

Text: Latin hymn, 17th cent.; tr. Robert Campbell, 1814-1868, alt.

*“Come, Let Us Join Our Cheerful Songs”***ELW 847**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> Come, let us join our cheerful songs<br/>with angels round the throne;<br/>ten thousand thousand are their tongues,<br/>but all their joys are one.</p> <p><b>2</b> "Worthy the Lamb that died," they cry,<br/>"to be exalted thus!"<br/>"Worthy the Lamb," our lips reply,<br/>"for he was slain for us!"</p> | <p><b>3</b> Jesus is worthy to receive<br/>honor and pow'r divine;<br/>and blessings, more than we can give,<br/>be, Lord, forever thine.</p> <p><b>4</b> Let all creation join in one<br/>to bless the sacred name<br/>of God who sits upon the throne,<br/>and to adore the Lamb.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

*(stand)***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

- ☞** Wellspring of joy,
- ☞** through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love will bring joy to the hearts of all people, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

# SENDING

## BLESSING

- ☞ May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus. The God of life, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

## THREE-FOLD AMEN

## HYMN

*“Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing”*

ELW 544

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1 Praise the Lord, rise up rejoicing,<br/>worship, thanks, devotion voicing:<br/>glory be to God on high!<br/>Christ, your cross and passion sharing,<br/>by this eucharist declaring<br/>yours the final victory.</b></p> | <p><b>2 Scattered flock, one shepherd sharing,<br/>lost and lonely, one voice hearing,<br/>ears attentive to your word;<br/>by your blood new life receiving,<br/>in your body, firm believing,<br/>we are yours, and you the Lord.</b></p> |
| <p><b>3 Sins forgiven, wrongs forgiving,<br/>we go forth alert and living<br/>in your Spirit, strong and free.<br/>Partners in your new creation,<br/>seeking peace in ev'ry nation,<br/>may we faithful foll'wers be.</b></p>   |   |

Text: Howard C. A. Gaunt, 1902-1983, alt.  
Text © Oxford University Press.

## DISMISSAL

- ☞ Alleluia! Christ is risen.  
☛ **Christ is risen indeed Alleluia!**
- ☞ The worship has ended. The service begins.  
☛ **Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

## POSTLUDE

*Mark Jones, organ*

## Special Notice

If you plan to attend Worship in person, please call/e-mail the church office no later than noon on the Thursday before the Saturday or Sunday you want to attend. Please note that the plans set forth are subject to immediate change. You may still join us for Worship on Cox channel 13 or live streamed at <https://www.kmlchurch.org/live-streaming/>



# KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street  
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131  
[www.kmlchurch.org](http://www.kmlchurch.org)

April 24 & 25, 2021

## Kountze Food Pantry

### Volunteers Needed

**Mondays, 7:30 - 9:00 AM**

**9:00 - 11:00 AM**

**11:00 AM - 1:00 PM**

**Fridays, 4:00 - 7:00 PM**

The Kountze Food Pantry is collecting the following items: reusable shopping bags, toilet paper, cereal, and full-sized hygiene products. Please place your donated items in the shopping cart as you enter for church, in the donation box in the Fellowship Hall, or in the church office. Your contributions are greatly appreciated! If you are able to volunteer, please sign up by using the link below:

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

## Faith is Inspired at Camp!

Summer Camp is an awesome faith-inspiring and confidence-building experience! Your child will explore God's call to live FEARLESS through Joshua 1:9. At Carol Joy Holling Camp, no child is turned away due to their inability to pay thanks to the support of congregations, families, and individuals across the state. Contact Jessica Weltz at [JWeltz@NLom.org](mailto:JWeltz@NLom.org) or 402-944-2544 for campership information. Click on the picture for the schedule and registration page. COVID-19 safety precautions will be followed. All campers and staff will be required to

wear a mask, and physical distancing will be practiced whenever possible. For the schedule and to register for camp, go to

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

## Home Devotion on Generosity for the 7 Weeks of Easter

During the Easter Season, the Live it Out resource from the Nebraska Synod and the ELCA Generosity Project, have provided a faith formation at home resource for you to use. It is provided to help in Growing God's Generous Generations. For seven weeks, a resource for you to work through on your own or with others in your home, will be provided. It centers our attention on God's generosity to us and our response to God's graciousness. Go to <https://www.elca.org/generosityproject> for more information. Go to: <https://files.constantcontact.com/8c919081201/0d9dc7d5-1f81-4288-874f-24651dd7f537.pdf> for week 3.

## Today at Kountze

**Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God in honor of Marsha Conroy, given by Melissa Conroy

## Youth Forum

**In-Person & Zoom on Sundays, 10:15 - 11:00 AM**

All 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Graders are invited to join us!

We will meet in person in the Youth Room and on Zoom each week

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday: Bible Ponderings
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday: High School Hang Out
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday: Serving in the World
- 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Host Middle School Hangout
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday: Adventures (if on Zoom, we will carry you along with us)

Contact Pastor Shari (402-341-7761 or [shari@kmlchurch.org](mailto:shari@kmlchurch.org) if you need the Zoom Link info. We will continue to be masked and physically distanced for all meetings in person at the church.

## Attendance and Giving

**Saturday Attendance:** 29

**Sunday Attendance: 9:00:** 114

**Total:** 143

**Streaming Attendance:** 103

**Cox Cable Attendance:** 363

**Pantry Guests Served:** 753

**Medical Clinic Guests Served:** 30

### Offering:

\$19,212.14 (Regular)      \$6,610.70 (Specials)

\$1,529.50 (Debt Reduction)

*As Jesus shepherds us, we shepherd one another.*

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

Sunday	John 10:11-18	The Good Shepherd
Monday	Acts 4:5-12	Peter and John before the council
Tuesday	1 John 3:16-24	Love one another
Wednesday	Genesis 49:22-28	Jacob blesses his sons
Thursday	Mark 6:30-44	Jesus the compassionate shepherd
Friday	Ezekiel 34:20-31	God the true shepherd
Saturday	Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Sunday	John 15:1-8	Jesus the true vine



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Go to [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org) for more faith-forming activities.

*I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. **John 10:11 (NRSV)***

## **PRAYERS AND BLESSING**

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

God, we thank you for pursuing us with your goodness and mercy all the days of our lives through Christ, our Good Shepherd. Amen.

### **Mealtime Prayer:**

God of abundance, as a shepherd you provide us with daily food; give us the faith and love to care that others have daily food on their tables, too. Amen.

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May Jesus the Good Shepherd pursue you with goodness and mercy all the days of your life.

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

- What does a shepherd do?
- What does Jesus do to shepherd us?
- How can we shepherd fellow Christians in the faith and in daily life?

*Read:* 1 John 3:16-24.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as the Good Shepherd Sunday. John 10 and Psalm 23 give clear attention to this shepherd theme. However, so does 1 John 3. Just as Jesus, as the Good Shepherd, lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:11), so we as brothers and sisters who follow Jesus are to lay down our lives for one another (1 John 3:16). We lay down our lives—we shepherd one another—by loving one another “in truth and action”—not just words (v. 18). We, as fellow shepherds, abide in the Good Shepherd by believing in Jesus Christ and loving one another with our whole being. As we give thanks for Jesus as the Good Shepherd, we also give thanks that we are surrounded by a community of faith that shepherds one another to believe in Jesus Christ and to lay down our lives for one another. Why is it important that Christians not only care for the needs of the world but also care for each other as followers of Jesus Christ?

*Pray:* **Almighty and living God, strengthen us in faith and love to shepherd one another to live with hope and good courage through Christ, the Good Shepherd. Amen.**

Be a servant this week by shepherding someone. Make a visit and listen to the person. Read Psalm 23 together. Talk about what it means to have Jesus as our shepherd and close with the Lord's Prayer.

The sheep listen to the voice of the shepherd. There will be one flock, one shepherd. (John 10:16) If there are children in your home, play “Follow the Leader.” Blindfold the followers and have the leader guide them by using only their voice. Think about what it means to listen to Jesus' voice and to follow him as sheep of the Good Shepherd.

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31  
1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8**