

KOUNTZE MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CITY-WIDE CHURCH WITH A WORLD-WIDE MINISTRY

Stephen Griffith, Transition Senior Pastor
Shari Duminy, Associate Pastor
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2650 Farnam Street
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March 27, 2022

9:00 & 11:00 AM

FOURTH SUNDAY in LENT



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

GATHERING

PRELUDE

- Two Scriptural Contemplations
1. *Wherefore, Comfort One Another...*
2. *We Have Peace with God...*

by Lester. H. Groom
1 Thessalonians 4:18
Romans 5:1
Mark Jones, *organist*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

(stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

- P** In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness,
walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage.

C Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

- P** Holy One,

- C** we confess that we have wandered far from you:
we have not trusted your promises,
we have ignored your prophets in our own day,
we have squandered our inheritance of grace,
we have failed to recognize you in our midst.

Have mercy on us!

Forgive us and turn us again to you.

Teach us to follow in your ways,

assure us again of your love,

and help us to love our neighbor.

Amen.

- P** Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you, and all who call out to God shall be saved. In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love. In † Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven. God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love.

C Amen.

1 Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory
fills my heart with joy and love,
teach me ever to adore thee;
may I still thy goodness prove.

2 Here I raise my Ebenezer:
"Hither by thy help I've come";
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wand'ring from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.

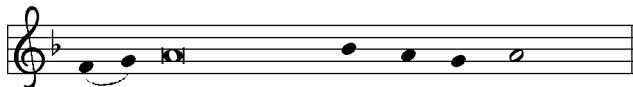
3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be;
let that grace now like a fetter
bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it;
seal it for thy courts above.

Text: Robert Robinson, 1735-1790, alt.

APOSTOLIC GREETING

- ☐ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
☑ And also with you.

KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



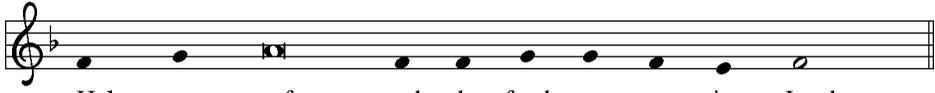
For this ho-ly house, and for all who of-fer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



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



A - men.

GLORIA



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace to earth be
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, the on - ly Son of God, cre - a - tion's
3 To you a - lone, O God, we cry, the Ho - ly One we



giv - en! Let an - gels sing, let all re - ply; good -
au - thor, O Lamb of God, your death a - lone takes
name you; for you a - lone are God most high, one



will breaks forth from heav - en! Lord God Al - might - y,
sin a - way for - ev - er. Stretch out your arms to
liv - ing God we claim you: we wor - ship you, Lord



heav - en's king, we wor - ship you, our thanks we sing, we
ev - 'ry land, and, as you reign at God's right hand, re -
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it ev - er blest, in



praise you for your glo - ry.
ceive our prayer; have mer - cy.
God the Fa - ther's glo - ry. A - - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

- ☐ God of compassion,
☑ you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

(sit)

FIRST READING

Joshua 5:9-12

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

The Lord said to Joshua, “*Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.*” And so that place is called Gilgal to this day.

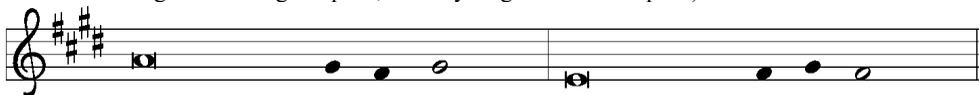
¹⁰While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. ¹¹On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. ¹²The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

☒ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

PSALM 32

(Choir/cantor sings lines in regular print, All may sing lines in **bold** print)



¹Happy are they whose transgressions¹ are forgiven,
and whose sin is¹ put away!

²**Happy are they to whom the LORD im-¹putes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there¹ is no guile!**

³While I held my tongue, my bones with-¹ered away,
because of my groaning¹ all day long.

⁴**For your hand was heavy upon me¹ day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the¹ heat of summer.**

⁵Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not con-¹ceal my guilt.

I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” Then you forgave me the guilt¹ of my sin.

⁶**Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you in¹ time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they¹ shall not reach them.**

⁷You are my hiding-place; you preserve¹ me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts¹ of deliverance.

⁸**“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that¹ you should go;
I will guide you¹ with my eye.**

⁹Do not be like horse or mule, which have no¹ understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle, or else they will¹ not stay near you.”

¹⁰**Great are the tribulations¹ of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust¹ in the LORD.**

¹¹Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice¹ in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are¹ true of heart.

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

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

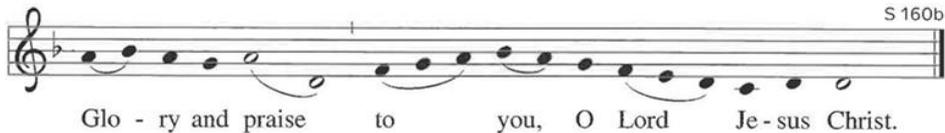
From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. ¹⁷So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! ¹⁸All this is from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

☒ The word of the Lord.

☑ Thanks be to God.

(stand)

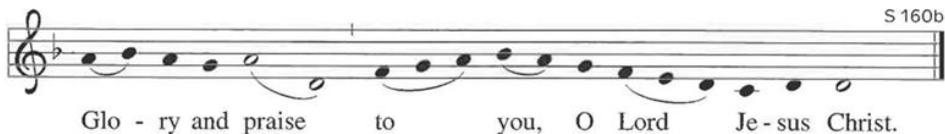
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ. S 160b



Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.



Glo - ry and praise to you, O Lord Je - sus Christ. S 160b

☒ The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

☑ Glory to you, O Lord!

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

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

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

³So he told them this parable: ^{11b}“*There was a man who had two sons.* ¹²*The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them.* ¹³*A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.* ¹⁴*When he had spent everything, a severe famine took*

place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."'²⁰So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'²²But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

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

☐ The Gospel of the Lord.

☑ Praise to you, O Christ.

(sit)

CHILDREN'S BLESSING (9:00 AM)

Children (aged 3 years through 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 Griffith

(stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“Our Father, We Have Wandered”

ELW 606

**1 Our Father, we have wandered
and hidden from your face;
in foolishness have squandered
your legacy of grace.**

**But now, in exile dwelling,
we rise with fear and shame,
as, distant but compelling,
we hear you call our name.**

**2 And now at length discerning
the evil that we do,
behold us, Lord, returning
with hope and trust to you.**

**In haste you come to meet us
and home rejoicing bring,
in gladness there to greet us
with calf and robe and ring.**

**3 O Lord of all the living,
both banished and restored,
compassionate, forgiving,
and ever-caring Lord,
grant now that our transgressing,
our faithlessness may cease.
Stretch out your hand in blessing,
in pardon, and in peace.**

Text: Kevin Nichols, 1929-2006
Text from *Resource Collection
of Hymns and Service Music for the Liturgy*
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THE APOSTLES' CREED

**☐ God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ.
Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.**

**☑ I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response: **P** Merciful God,
 G receive our prayer.

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

Illness: Richard Bock, Judy Boelts, Karen Buchholz, Don Burton, Myrna Carter, Mike Edris, Rodney Edwards, Philip Frye, Richard Holzer, Renee Johnson, Jason Klonglan, Rosanne Klug, Laura McCormick, Norma Pafford, John Waterman, Darlene White

Other Prayers: *Those serving in the military* – Brenden Frerck, Wyatt Johnson, 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.
G And also with you.

MEAL

(sit)

THE OFFERING IS RECEIVED

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



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

“Lead Me Back”

Pepper Choplin
Steve Hinrichs, *solist*

Lead me back to my home. I have wandered far away.
I’ve been gone for far too long; will you welcome me today? Lead me back to my home.
I have wandered far away. I’ve been gone for far too long; will you welcome me today?

Is it possible you can hear me after the way I turned from you?
Is it possible that you’re near me, that you never went away and you’ll lead me back today?

The life I’ve spent, the days I’ve lost. I have lived them all in vain.
Now I hold nothing to show but a life that is full of pain.

Lord, I know that you will hear me although I turned away from you.
Lord, I see that you were near me and you never went away and you call me back today.

Lead me back to my home. I have wandered far away.
I've been gone for far too long; will you welcome me today? Now I come to you today.

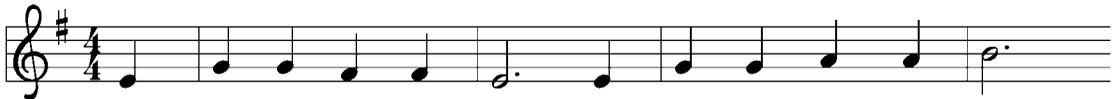
THE TABLE IS PREPARED

(stand)

OFFERTORY HYMN

“Lord Jesus Think on Me”

ELW 599 vs 1&3



1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;
3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;



from self - ish pas - sions set me free and make me pure with - in.
through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point out your cho - sen way.

OFFERING PRAYER

- P** Extravagant God,
- C** you have blessed us with the fullness of creation. Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** And also with you.

- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** We lift them to the Lord.

- P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C** It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE FOR LENT

- P** It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace. And so, with all

the choirs of angels. With the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS



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



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



Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.



Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

...we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

...be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



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

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

☐ Here is food and drink for the journey.

☑ **We take and will be filled.**

AGNUS DEI

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

(sit)

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 you may then dip it in the wine.
Gluten free bread is available; simply request it.*

HYMNS DURING COMMUNION

"What Wondrous Love Is This"

ELW 666

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 What wondrous love is this,
O my soul, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this
that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse
for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul?</p> <p>2 When I was sinking down,
sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down
beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown
for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul.</p> | <p>3 To God and to the Lamb
I will sing, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb,
who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme,
I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme, I will sing.</p> <p>4 And when from death I'm free,
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on;
and when from death I'm free,
I'll sing God's love for me,
and through eternity
I'll sing on, I'll sing on;
and through eternity I'll sing on.</p> |
|--|---|

Text: North American folk hymn, 19th cent., alt.

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- 1 God, when human bonds are broken
and we lack the love or skill
to restore the hope of healing,
give us grace and make us still.**
- 2 Through that stillness, with your Spirit
come into our world of stress,
for the sake of Christ forgiving
all the failures we confess.**
- 3 You in us are bruised and broken:
hear us as we seek release
from the pain of earlier living;
set us free and grant us peace.**
- 4 Send us, God of new beginnings,
humbly hopeful into life.
Use us as a means of blessing:
make us stronger, give us faith.**
- 5 Give us faith to be more faithful,
give us hope to be more true,
give us love to go on learning:
God, encourage and renew!**

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929
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“I Come with Joy”

- 1 I come with joy, a child of God,
forgiven, loved, and free,
the life of Jesus to recall
in love laid down for me,
in love laid down for me.**
- 2 I come with Christians far and near
to find, as all are fed,
the new community of love
in Christ's communion bread,
in Christ's communion bread.**
- 3 As Christ breaks bread and bids us share,
each proud division ends.
The love that made us, makes us one,
and strangers now are friends,
and strangers now are friends.**
- 4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,
unseen, but ever near,
is in such friendship better known,
alive among us here,
alive among us here.**
- 5 Together met, together bound
by all that God has done,
we'll go with joy, to give the world
the love that makes us one,
the love that makes us one.**

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936
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(stand)

COMMUNION BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

- ☞ Blessed Jesus,
☞ **in the rich meal of grace, you have fed us with your body, the bread of life.**
Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope to a world in need. Amen.

SENDING

BLESSING

- ☞ You are children of God, anointed with the oil of gladness and strengthened for the journey.
Almighty God, motherly, majestic, and mighty, ✠ bless you this day and always.

THREE-FOLD AMEN

RECESSIONAL HYMN

“O God of Every Nation”

ELW 713

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 O God of ev'ry nation,
of ev'ry race and land,
redeem your whole creation
with your almighty hand;
where hate and fear divide us
and bitter threats are hurled,
in love and mercy guide us
and heal our strife-torn world.</p> <p>2 From search for wealth and power
and scorn of truth and right,
from trust in bombs that shower
destruction through the night,
from pride of race and station
and blindness to your way,
deliver ev'ry nation,
eternal God, we pray.</p> | <p>3 Lord, strengthen all who labor
that all may find release
from fear of rattling saber,
from dread of war's increase;
when hope and courage falter,
Lord, let your voice be heard;
with faith that none can alter,
your servants undergird.</p> <p>4 Keep bright in us the vision
of days when war shall cease,
when hatred and division
give way to love and peace,
till dawns the morning glorious
when truth and love shall reign,
and Christ shall rule victorious
o'er all the world's domain.</p> |
|--|--|

DISMISSAL

- ☞ Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.
☞ **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“And Can It Be?”

✠ ✠ ✠

Thomas Campbell
arr. John Innes
Mark Jones, *organist*

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KOUNTZE STAFF

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Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Kayla Slaight	Housekeeper
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Norma Pafford	Nursery Superintendent
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director



KOUNTZE

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www.kmlchurch.org

March 26 & 27, 2022

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 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.

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. 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 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.

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 or text your e-mail address to 22828.

Today at Kountze

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God in memory of Gary Rodene given by his wife, Nancy Rodene; The candle last weekend was given by Mary Jo Fike and Family in memory of Kelcey Renae Fike

Television Broadcast last weekend was sponsored by Laurine Savine in celebration of her 97th birthday

Sharing of the Peace

As we return to worship practices, we encourage you to begin again sharing the peace in a way that is comfortable for you. Please be mindful that your way might not be for everyone. Handshakes, elbow or fist bump, a bow, a nod, a wave all work. Take this time to connect with others in a way that allows for the Peace of Christ to flow through and amongst us.

Children's Choir

Ages K-6th Grade

Barb Carlsen is leading the singers during the 9:00 AM sermon. Those interested in participating in choir will come forward for the Children's blessing and then go to the upstairs choir room for practice before returning for Communion.

Sunday School

Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

Join us on Sundays on the 2nd floor for Sunday School. Preschool 1 (2-4 yrs) meets from 9:00—10:00 AM (child care for those too old for the nursery).

Youth Forum

Sundays, 10:10 - 10:50 AM

All 7th - 12th Graders are invited to join us!
This Sunday—Summer Trip Planning

Today at Kountze, *continued*

Adult Forum

Sunday, 10:10

This Sunday—Peacemaking

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall

First Communion

Sundays, March 27 & April 3

12:15 PM

A good guide for determining when your children are ready to receive Communion is when they begin to ask about receiving it during the liturgy. Participants will receive their First Communion on Maundy Thursday, April 14, at 6:30 PM. The course is geared toward second graders but all ages are welcome; Please register with the church office at 402-341-7761 or info@kmlchurch.org.

Compline – A Lenten Offering

Held at Kountze Memorial Church

Sunday, March 27, 7:30 PM

Meditation and contemplation, folded in prayer, chant, and music are the essence of Compline – one of the monastic prayer services of the Christian Church, and the last religious observance (office) sung at the end of the day. The entire service will be sung, unaccompanied, by a small group of liturgical musicians (schola) from First-Plymouth Church of Lincoln, Nebraska, on behalf of the congregation. Compline provides worshipers the time and space for silence, meditation, and mystic communion with the Divine. We welcome you to join us for this half hour, unique time, set apart for prayerful worship. Please enter the sanctuary reverently, in silent prayer, through our 4 main doors at the front of the church.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 27 Sunday

Lent 4

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

12:15 PM First Communion Class

7:30 PM Compline Service

March 28 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

March 29 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

March 30 Wednesday

11:00 AM Lenten Lunch

12:15 PM Worship

5:30 PM Lenten Dinner

6:30 PM Worship

March 31 Thursday

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

April 1 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

April 2 Saturday

Homebound Communion

5:00 PM Worship

April 3 Sunday

Lent 5

Homebound Communion

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

10:10 AM Sunday School (2yr-6th gr)

10:10 AM Youth Forum (gr 7-12)

10:10 AM Adult Forum

12:15 PM First Communion Class

Sunday School Talking Points

After Jesus spent 40 days and nights in the desert and was tempted by the Devil, he returned to Jordan to do his work. But, what was his work exactly? In “The Faces of Easter, Lesson 5” we will be learning about what that work was. Jesus interacted with people who were outsiders and touched them, changing them forever. Jesus also told parables, moral lessons that gave his disciples direction.

As the Sunday school students recently concluded a section on parables, review what those parables were. Which one was their favorite? Why? What was Jesus saying in that parable? Who were the outsiders of the community that Jesus sought out and spent time with? How can you practice Jesus’ actions in your life today?

Spring Spruce-Up

Saturday, April 9

9:00 AM -12:00 PM

(Lunch Provided)

All children, families, singles, everyone of all ages, are invited to a Kountze spring spruce-up. It’s time to give our beautiful facility some TLC as we head into Holy week. With a 52,000 sq. ft. building, it’s hard for the staff to do everything, so once in a while we need to rally the troops and pitch in and do some deep cleaning, polishing, dusting, etc. We will gather in the fellowship hall at 9:00 AM where you can pick from a list of areas that need some attention. Dusters, furniture polish, buckets, towels, etc. will be provided but if you have a favorite, please bring it. At noon we will return to the Fellowship Hall and enjoy lunch before departing. So that we can make sure we have enough food please call the office or email Jim (jim@kmlchurch.org) if you plan on attending.

LENT

Diaper Drive

We are having a diaper drive for the Bowari family. They need diapers size 1 and up (no newborn sizes please). If you would like to provide diapers, please bring them to church and put them in the large brown box next to the box for the Pantry box. Your donations will be appreciated.

Lutheran Disaster Response

Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying our companions in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, as well as such ecumenical partners as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water and hygiene kits. Links to our giving page and Lutheran Disaster Response can be found in the Friday e-news or a checked marked "Eastern Europe Crisis Response can be given to Kountze Memorial and we will make sure it gets to the right place. Your gifts designated for "Eastern Europe Crisis Response" will be used entirely (100%) to provide support for people impacted by conflict in the region.

Kountze Food Pantry

Thank-you for your donations of hats and gloves for our Pantry guests! Even in this mild weather they were greatly needed and appreciated. In March, we are in need of toilet paper and toothbrushes. As always, we need volunteers!

Pantry Volunteers Needed:

Mondays: 7:30 - 9 AM; 9 - 11 AM; 11 AM - 1 PM

Fridays: 4 - 7 PM

If you would like to help, please sign up to volunteer using the following link:

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

Usher Sign-up for Holy Week and Easter

If you will be available during Holy Week and Easter, we could use your help as Ushers. There is a sign-up sheet in the back of the Nave for you to add your name according to your availability.

Communion Assistants and Lectors Needed

We need you for Holy Week and Easter - and Sundays in general. If you are already serving as a Communion Assistant and/or Lector, please sign up on Servant Keeper or call the church office to sign up according to your availability. If you aren't currently serving as a Communion Assistant or Lector but would like to, please contact Debbie in the church office to sign up or to get a link to the Sign-up Genius Page. We will walk you through a training session before you serve.

Our Lenten Focus

Worship times each Wednesday of Lent are at 12:15 PM and 6:30 PM in the sanctuary. Music will be provided at both service.

The following five weeks, For The Peace of the Whole World exploring our call to Just Peacemaking will be our theme. Each week we will consider a specific component in the formation of a just peace theology.

March 30 Love Your Enemies

April 6 Peace

It is the hope you will consider gathering in community and worship for these times, to grow and deepen our faith, through the Lent season.

Lenten Meals

Lunch Served 11:00 - Noon

Supper served 5:30 - 6:30 PM

All meals served with choice of water, iced tea or coffee (decaf at supper) and dessert.

Meals are free will offering.

Menu for March 30

Choice of minestrone or creamy potato soup, ham or chicken salad sliders.

If you would like to help in the kitchen, please contact Jim Smejkal (402-341-7761 or jim@kmlchurch.org).

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 35

Sunday: 9:00: 126 **11:00:** 55

Wednesday: 12:15: 29 **6:30:** 52

Total: 297

Streaming: 66

Cox Cable: 193

Pantry Guests Served: 1442 (inc. 341 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 16

Offering:

\$8,964.00 (Regular)

\$3,534.69 (Specials)

\$797.50 (Debt Reduction)

Confessing our need for God brings joy

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

Sunday	Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32	Parable of the forgiving father
Monday	Joshua 5:9-12	Passover at Gilgal
Tuesday	2 Corinthians 5:16-21	The ministry of reconciliation
Wednesday	Psalms 103:1-12	Thanksgiving for God's goodness
Thursday	Genesis 45:1-28	Joseph reveals himself
Friday	Luke 15:3-7	The parable of the lost sheep
Saturday	Psalms 32	The joy of forgiveness
Sunday	John 12:1-8	Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany



Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the LORD. Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart. Psalm 32:10-11 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, we thank you for your love that reunites us to you through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Be present at our table, Lord; be here and everywhere adored; your mercies bless and grant that we, may strengthen for your service be. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of grace bless you with the joy of forgiveness and new life.

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

- Talk or think about a time you forgave a person or a person forgave you. How did you feel?
- How does faith in God help you resolve differences you have with others?

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21.

Recognizing our sin and need for God is foundational to the Christian faith. Lent is a time to acknowledge our sin, our separation from God. As the psalmist notes, *"Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven"* (Psalm 32:1). Naming our need for forgiveness and receiving forgiveness leads to joy. The prodigal son experiences the surprise of his total acceptance and the waiting father experiences the delight of the return of a son who had been lost (Luke 15:20-32). We also experience the joy of the truth that in Christ we have been reconciled—reunited—back to God. We have been given the life-giving ministry and joy of telling the good news of God's reconciling power in Christ to all people. The challenge, of course, is that, like the older brother in the parable of the prodigal son, we may not want God's love and undeserved kindness to bless people who we might see as less deserving than ourselves.

Discuss: How does forgiveness lead to joy?

Pray: **Dear God, help us to be people of joy, glad that you forgive us and reconcile us to you and to all you create through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how might you bring joy to someone others see as less deserving?

Lent is a time to focus on prayer. We all have photo albums, whether printed or digital. Not all of our friends and family may know of God's reconciling power and forgiveness that leads to joy. While looking at pictures of family and friends, think about your relationships. Pause and pray for that person. Light a candle and say: **Jesus Christ is the light of the world. The light no darkness can overcome.** Close with the Lord's Prayer.

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