

KOUNTZE STAFF

Pr. Stephen Griffith	Transition Senior Pastor
Pr. Shari Duminy	Associate Pastor
Pr. Ashley Hall	Associate Pastor
Gretchen Olson Kopp	Vicar
Kristin Boe	Christian Ed Coordinator
Debbie Bogue	Office Manager
Sarah Jewell	Administrative Assistant
Noni Cambridge	Staff Treasurer
Judi Boe	Financial Secretary
Jim Smejkal	Bldg. Super./Dir. of Cong. Activities
Louis Flake	Night Manager
Kayla Slaight	Janitorial Staff
Barbara Carlsen	Dir. of Music & Fine Arts
Mark Jones	Organist
David Gerard	Saturday Accompanist
Shannon Picha	Nursery Director
Susann Henry	Food Pantry Director

Holy Communion

All who are baptized and trust in Christ's presence in Holy Communion are invited to commune at the Lord's Table. Children not yet communing will receive a blessing. It is the understanding of the universal Church that those who wish to commune with bread only (especially for health reasons) have communed fully. Our form of distribution is Intinction. You will receive the wafer in your hand and then dip into the wine.

Children in Worship

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

Nursery

Our nursery is available from 8:45 AM—noon for children 0—2 years. Please ask an usher if you are unsure as to where our nursery is and would like to use it

Attendance Cards

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

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.

Thank you for supporting the ministries of Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church.



KOUNTZE

Memorial Lutheran Church

2650 Farnam Street
402-341-7761

Omaha, NE 68131
www.kmlchurch.org

March 18 & 19, 2023

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 worshipping, 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.

Today at Kountze

Eternal Candle is given to the glory of God by the Jensen family in memory of our Aunt Nancy Jensen.

Kountze Café
9:30—11:00 AM

Join us each Sunday for breakfast. The suggested donation is \$5 adults, \$2.50 children 12 and younger for the hot breakfast and a free-will donation for the continental breakfast.

Children's Choir
Second Floor Music Room
Sundays, 9:15 AM—(after the 9:00 AM Children's Blessing)
Grades K-5 - Choir
Grades 6-8 - Director's Assistants

The choir will rehearse immediately after the children's blessing at the 9:00 AM service (9:15 AM). If you have any questions, please contact Barb at 402-341-7761.

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).

Sunday School Focus:

Through the month of March, the Sunday School students will continue to learn of Jesus' life and his progression to the cross. Over the four weeks of March, the children will hear of Jesus' temptation in the desert, learn of Christ as a healer and parable-maker, study the time Jesus enters Jerusalem and shares bread and wine with the disciples, ending with the culmination of Jesus on the cross and the meaning of Easter.

Youth Forum
Grades 7—12

7th - 12th graders meet each Sunday from 10:10 to 10:50 AM in the Youth Room. Join us for this time of community, learning and serving. **This week:** Bible Study **Next week:** Fun and games

Adult Forum
Fellowship Hall
10:10 AM

Join us on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall from 10:10-10:50 AM. **This week:** Pondering the Crucifixion, Part 2 **Next Week:** Pondering the Crucifixion, Part 3

Today at Kountze, *continued*

First Communion Classes

Sundays, March 19 & 26

12:00 PM (following 11:00 AM service)

A light lunch is served before the hour long class.

If your child is around second grade, or has expressed a curiosity about what it means to receive Communion, they are encouraged to join this class. First Communion will be taken on Maundy Thursday, April 6. Please RSVP to Kristin Boe at Kristin@kmlchurch.org.

March Service Project

The Sunday School is collecting items for the Nebraska Humane Society for the March service project. Items can be brought to church and left in front of the Sunday School office. A list of donations can be found on the Humane Society website and include standard items of food, treats, toys, blankets, and more. Items to be gathered also include many recyclable items such as cereal boxes, paper towel and toilet paper tubes, egg cartons, and plastic coffee containers.

This Week at Kountze Memorial

March 19 Sunday

Lent 4

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)

9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast

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

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

10:10 AM Adult Forum

12:00 PM First Communion Class (1 of 2)

March 20 Monday

10:00 AM Pantry

March 21 Tuesday

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

1:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group

6:00 PM Congregation Council

March 22 Wednesday

11:00 AM Lenten Lunch

12:15 PM Worship

5:00 PM Lenten Dinner

6:30 PM Worship

March 23 Thursday

1:00 PM Circle 4

4:00 PM Healing Gift Free Clinic

March 24 Friday

5:00 PM Pantry

March 25 Saturday

5:00 PM Worship

March 26 Sunday

Lent 5

8:00 AM & 10:00 AM Adult Choir Rehearsal

9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Worship

9:00 AM Nursery (0-2 yrs)

9:15 AM Children's Choir (K-5)

9:30 AM Kountze Cafe - Breakfast

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

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

10:10 AM Adult Forum

12:00 PM First Communion Class (2 of 2)

For Your Calendar/News & Notes

First Communion Classes

Sundays, March 26

12:00 PM (following 11:00 AM service)

A light lunch is served before the hour long class.

If your child is around second grade, or has expressed a curiosity about what it means to receive Communion, they are encouraged to join this class. First Communion will be taken on Maundy Thursday, April 6. Please RSVP to Kristin Boe at Kristin@kmlchurch.org.

Journey to Denver

The NE Synod Youth trip for 8th – 12th graders will take place July 10-15, 2023. Registration is extended until **March 25** for \$500.00. Our home base will be at Colorado Christian University, with lodging offered in suite style dorm rooms. Each day we will be doing service projects, sharing in community building activities, bible study and worship. Mark your calendars and plan to join the Nebraska Synod ELCA high school making the journey together this coming summer! Friends are welcome to join our group.

Our Lenten Focus "Unfinished"

UNFINISHED – Discovering God's Call in Not Yet is written by Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox and will be our focus for Sundays of Lent. She writes, "The church by its very nature, and we as people of faith, live our whole lives in the space between no longer and not yet. Cross-marked and Spirit-sealed, we dwell in the space between the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and the final fulfillment of God's hope-filled promises. In this space between, we dwell in the unfinished as unfinished people. As John reminds us, "we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed." But we are not left alone in this space between no longer and not yet. We are not left alone to navigate this unfinished life by ourselves. God is here - present-tense, each and every day - calling to us, accompanying us, renewing and recreating us - over and over again."

We will be using the lectionary readings to focus on the following themes:

March 19 Called to Attentiveness

March 26 Called to Regret

April 2 Palm/Passion Sunday, Called to Experience God's Presence

April 9 Easter Sunday, Called to Resurrection

UNFINISHED – Out of the Depths is written by Dr. Michael J. Chan and will be our focus for Wednesdays in Lent on the book of Jonah. He says, “Jonah walks a Lenten path. Like all human beings, he is prone to wander from his Creator in favor of determining the shape and scope of his own future. This temptation is especially powerful when God calls us to take on risky ventures, travel to strange places, and confront things inside of us that prevent us from seeing one another as God does. God meets us in those liminal, Lent-like spaces when we find ourselves somewhere between trust and doubt, courage and fear, anger and empathy.” Join us as we explore these themes:

March 22 Jonah 4; Faithful and Unfinished

March 29 Matthew 8:23-27 (cf. Mark 4:34-41; Luke 8:22-25); Jesus, a New Jonah

UNFINISHED Digital Devotions are also available on our church website, through links in the weekly e-news or use the QR code here. There are a few options that you might find helpful:



- Weekly Wednesday Jonah – Children and Family Ideas
- Weekly Sunday Lectionary – Children and Family Ideas
- Near and Now Weekly Bible Study
- Daily Unfinished Devotional
- Weekly Vocare Guided Meditations and Videos

You won't want to miss the chance to honor the space between no longer and not yet!"

Wednesdays in Lent

Meals Served 11:00 AM – Noon & 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Worship—12:15 & 6:30 PM

All meals served with choice of water, iced tea or coffee (decaf at supper) and dessert. Meals are free will offering. Please remember that there is **No Parking** in the Methodist parking lot to the north of our handicapped entrance on Wednesdays - or any week day - from 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM. You may park on Farnam Street at the meters for 25 cents per hour, in our parking lot on the west side of the building, or in the deFreese parking lot.

Menu for March 22

Minestrone or Creamy Potato Soup
Ham or Chicken Sliders
Dessert

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

Omaha Lutheran Young Adults Trivia

LOCAL Beer, Patio, and Kitchen at Village Point

17305 Davenport St

Tuesday, March 28

7:00 PM

Come be a part of an OLYA trivia team in this social outing! RSVP to Greta at OmahaLutheranYoungAdults@nelcm.com.

Holy Week & Easter Worship Assistants are Needed

We are in need Communion Assistants, Lectors, and Ushers for Holy Week and Easter - and Sundays in general. If you are already serving as Communion Assistants and/or Lectors, please sign up on SignUp Genius or call the church office (402-341-7761) to sign up according to your availability. If you are willing to serve as an Usher, please contact Jim (jim@kmlchurch.org or call the church office. If you aren't currently serving as a Communion Assistant or Lector but would like to, please contact the church office to sign up or to get a link to the SignUp Genius Page. We will be glad to walk you through a short training session before you serve. Thanks in advance for serving in this way.

Camp Sunday

Sunday, March 26

Staff from the camp will be present during the Christian Education hour (10:00 to 11:00 AM) to share information and lead camp activities. We encourage parents to attend with their youth. We will start our time together in the Link. It is the hope that youth from KMLC (K-12th grade) will attend camp at Carol Joy Holling this summer. Due to a gift to our church, we are able to pay for the cost of camp at Carol Joy Holling this year. Register your child for camp and let the church office know so we can get the payment to the camp on behalf of those attending. Please speak with a pastor if you need more information.

Mission Investment Fund & Baptismal Ministry

A new Baptismal Ministry is happening through the gift of the late Rev. Robert Johnson and Mary Ann Johnson. Each child that is baptized at KMLC will be receiving a \$100.00 Savings Account through the Mission Investment Fund. This account will be established by the church and then handed over to their parents with the hopes that investing in their child's future is just one more way the church can show support and care beyond our spiritual offerings.

Kountze Pantry

Thanks to all of you who helped us save receipts from Family Fare! The good news is we raised thousands of dollars. The bad news is the program has ended, so we no longer need the receipts. The Kountze Food Pantry is in the process of partnering with Family Fare in a new reward program. We are still collecting hygiene products for our guests, especially feminine supplies and shaving razors and cream. If you, or someone you know would like to volunteer, please sign up at the link below:

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

Parking Citation

If you received a parking citation when parked at the meters on Farnam Street and shouldn't have, please call 402-444-7275 M-F from 8:00 AM—4:30 PM to dispute the citation. The meter attendant is new and will be receiving more training. If you put coins in the meter and it doesn't register, call the number above and let them know. If the meter has no coin slot, says "failed" or "out of order", use the Park Omaha app or move to another spot.

Attendance & Giving

Saturday: 30

Sunday: 9:00: 124 **11:00:** 71

Wednesday: 12:15: 28 **6:30:** 58

Total: 311

Streaming: 54 (inc. Wednesday)

Pantry Guests Served: 1,285 (inc. 302 children)

Medical Clinic Guests Served: 21

Offering:

\$14,366.70 (Regular) \$116,522.05* (Specials)

\$922.00 (Debt Reduction)

*Includes Bonfante estate gift

Faith sees while absolute certainty blinds.

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

Sunday	John 9:1-41	The man born blind
Monday	1 Samuel 16:1-13	David is anointed king
Tuesday	Ephesians 5:8-14	Living as people of light
Wednesday	Jeremiah 1:4-19	Jeremiah's call
Thursday	Proverbs 15:1-5	The Lord sees everything
Friday	Luke 19:1-10	Jesus and Zacchaeus
Saturday	Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Sunday	John 11:1-45	The raising of Lazarus



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Jesus 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." John 9:39 (NRSV)

A Prayer for the Week:

God of justice and mercy, heal us of our blindness that keeps us from loving you and our neighbor through Jesus Christ, the one who came that we may see. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, we thank you for this food that reminds us of your overflowing goodness and mercy through Christ Jesus, our shepherd. Amen. (Psalm 23)

A Blessing to Give:

May Christ's love shine on you with all that is good and right and true. (Ephesians 5)

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

- Think or talk about a time you were in a conversation and convinced you were right.
- How is faith in Jesus something different than being sure that you are right and others are wrong?

Read: John 9:1-41.

This story addresses extreme contrasts between sight and blindness, between those who see and those who do not see. Jesus heals a man born blind. The certainty of the Pharisees becomes their blindness. They try to refute the fact that the man was born blind. They despise him and drive him out for stating both the truth of the Jewish faith and saying that he was blind and now sees. Both the truth of the tradition and his experience are totally rejected. Jesus points out that it is the leaders' absolute certainty that shows how blind they are to the truth. There are times in our own lives when being absolutely certain about something and not seeking other possibilities shows our blindness. This story reminds us that faith and trust in Jesus is wiser and more honest than arrogant, self-confidence. Faith sees Jesus and his ability to create light and life. Human certainty is always in danger of being blind to who Jesus is and what he means for the world that God loves.

Discuss: How might your pride, sense of certainty, and arrogance get in the way of caring about others?

Pray: **God of truth, help us to let go of anything that blinds us to your love and work in the world so that we may see Jesus and follow him with faith, hope, and love. Amen.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you address others with humility and the ability to learn from them?

Lent is a period of forty days when we focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving as we prepare for Easter. Almsgiving is the tradition or practice of giving money or food to those in need. This week think or talk about the needs of those who are blind or cannot see well. Some are unable to pay for glasses or receive medical care. Add a donation to the Almsgiving Box placed in your home. The collected money is to be donated at the end of Lent.

Pray: **Loving God, help us to care for those in need of good eyesight. We pray in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, amen.**

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130
Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45