



BEHOLD: A  
**SAVIOR IS BORN**

**Candlelight Christmas Eve**

1pm, 3pm, 5pm with Choir  
7pm Contemplative Worship  
9pm with Communion

**Christmas Day**

10am with Communion

Scan to  
Learn More >



SCAN ME

**Dear Victory Family,**

I still remember that Christmas when I was a young boy, eyes wide with wonder and heart brimming with anticipation. Somehow, I just knew that the big box under the tree held the tabletop hockey game I'd been dreaming about all year. The nights leading up to Christmas seemed endless, each one filled with the excited hope of what was to come. And when the day finally arrived — oh! — the joy I felt tearing open that wrapping paper is something I'll never forget.

That sense of anticipation and fulfillment is at the very heart of Advent. For hundreds of years, God's people waited with hopeful hearts for the promised Messiah who would rescue and restore a broken creation. They clung to the prophecies, trusting that God would stay true to His promise. With each passing generation, the anticipation grew, much like a child waiting for Christmas to arrive.

Then, in a humble stable, the greatest gift of all was given. Jesus was born — not as a conquering king, but as a humble servant who loved everyone He encountered from the cradle to the cross. Through Him, the world would know the peace of God, who had come near. Behold, our Savior is born, and the world will never be the same.

This Christmas, let's embrace that same joy and anticipation. As we remember the fulfillment of God's promises, may our hearts be filled with the wonder of His love. Just as I felt overwhelming joy opening that hockey game, may we all experience the true joy that comes from the greatest gift of all — Jesus Christ!

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Todd Mathison*



Pastor Todd & Anne Mathison

 Merry  
Christmas



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor  
Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor  
Susan Westland, Chaplain  
Renee Bennett, Pastoral Intern

5946 E. University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85205  
480-830-5024 | Office Hours: M-Th, 8am-4pm  
VictoryLutheran.com



# FROM NASCAR TO PASTOR

**Thank you for the beautiful welcome.** I have been overjoyed and blessed by how incredible a reception my family and I have received. This truly is a loving and caring congregation. As we get to know one another better, I know God will do great things through our ministry.

I am originally from the central Piedmont area of North Carolina and spent the first four decades of my life there. Growing up, we rarely attended church. Yet, I spent my middle school years in a small Christian private school where God began to reveal Himself to me.

After spending the first three decades pursuing a career as a NASCAR driver, I hung up my helmet. As much as I loved auto racing, I couldn't help but feel that God was pulling me in a different direction.

Over the next several years, as I began to know Christ deeper and see the work God was doing in the lives of so many people – including my own – I found myself studying the scriptures and teaching His Word at every chance. I even hosted a small group study in the office of a pest control company! It took several people and a few surprise conversations to realize that Christ had placed a calling on my life to be a part of formal ministry. God had one more surprise for me in my journey into ministry. He would reveal to me the teachings of Martin Luther, and I would discover my home in the LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ).

Over the past twelve years, I have been blessed to lead and be part of many groups of devout and loving Christians. From being a preschool pastor (YES!) to leading AWANA for children and even



leading a children's inner-city bus ministry (we may have carried more kids than the vans allowed) to the senior pastor of two other churches, I genuinely am grateful for the ways God has allowed me to witness His power of redemption and promise.

That includes my own life. God has brought me through some terrible life experiences and continues to offer new life through the Cross of Christ. While both of us were in seminary, God introduced me to Jennifer. Together, we are blessed to be the parents of nine wonderful children. Most of them are adults now and have made their homes in North Carolina. However, Trae, Stephanie, and Luke live in Gilbert with us, along with Luther, the dog, and Dreamsicle, the cat.

God has allowed me to serve various congregations in North and South Carolina, Minnesota, and Colorado before bringing our family to you in Arizona. I look forward to the multiple ways that God will utilize my gifts in ministry to continue to help the people of Victory and our surrounding communities grow spiritually in their journey. I also hope our work together will bring more and more people to Christ!

Yours in Christ,

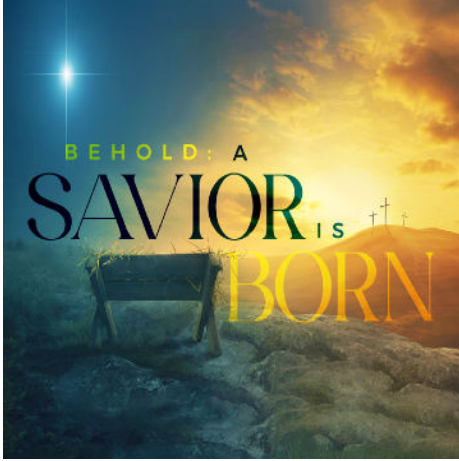


## Advent Communion Service Wednesday, December 11 @ 4:00pm

Set your heart at peace and join us for a midweek Advent Communion service featuring the beautiful melodies of the Holden Evening Prayer. This special worship experience offers a time of reflection and anticipation, including communion, as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

## Sermon Series: Behold A Savior Is Born

Christmas is the fulfillment of hundreds of years of prophetic predictions about the coming of the Messiah who would change the world. God's people waited for a Savior who would come to rescue and restore a broken creation. They held onto hope that God would stay true to his promise. With joy, they anticipated Christ's arrival. As a humble servant, Jesus' loved all he encountered from the cradle to the cross. The world would know the peace of God, who had come near. Behold, our Savior is born, the world will never be the same.



### **NOV 30 & DEC 1 – The Promised Hope – Isaiah 7:14, 53:1-11**

**(Communion at all Services)**

This sermon sets the foundation for the series by exploring the prophecies of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection. We will look at how the anticipation of the coming Messiah had been foreseen centuries before, giving hope to the people of God that salvation would come through Him.

### **DEC 7 & 8 – The Joy of Anticipation – Luke 1:39-56, 2:8-20**

We experience excitement and joy as Christmas approaches. But what about that first Christmas? We will dive into the emotions of Mary, the shepherds, and others involved in the anticipation of Jesus' birth, which parallels the anticipation of the prophecies being fulfilled and how it was a cause for celebration. We still experience the joy of anticipation as we await our Savior's second coming.

### **DEC 14 & 15 – The Servant Love of Jesus – Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 2:5-11**

Jesus came into the world in the most humble and unexpected manner. There is tremendous significance of God taking on human form as a vulnerable baby, emphasizing His humility and sacrificial love. Jesus' birth actually foreshadows His ultimate sacrifice on the cross.

### **DEC 21 & 22 – The Prophetic Peace – Isaiah 9:6-17; John 14:27**

The peace that is offered in Jesus is different from the peace the world offers. God's peace can help us face the troubles of the world without fear. Though this prophetic promise of peace took a long time coming, it was fulfilled through the birth of our Savior.

### **DEC 24 – The Gift of Waiting – Candlelight Christmas Eve Services 1, 3, 5, 7, & 9pm (Communion at 9pm)**

The peace that is offered in Jesus is different from the peace the world offers. God's peace can help us face the troubles of the world without fear. Though this prophetic promise of peace took a long time coming, it was fulfilled through the birth of our Savior.

### **DEC 25 – Confidence is Born – Matt. 1:18-25, 2 Cor. 3:4-6 – Christmas Day – 10am with Communion**

The day of promise has arrived as we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. We live confidently of God's promise as He delivers Jesus to us on earth. Doubt will always creep into our lives, challenging us at every opportunity. Jesus' birth reveals that God's love for us is assured, leading to a courageous life as a Christian.



### **Festival of Lessons & Carols Sunday, December 15 @ 3:00pm**

Dating back to the 19th century, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is a traditional service celebrated during the Christmas season. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is told in nine Bible readings interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, special music, and choir anthems. Please join us as the Victory choir and handbells, together with strings and soloists, share this precious story of a Baby, born in a manger, but coming for an even greater purpose! This concert is free, with a reception following, and is a wonderful opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to enjoy celebrating the true meaning of Christmas!



December 15, 2024 - 3pm

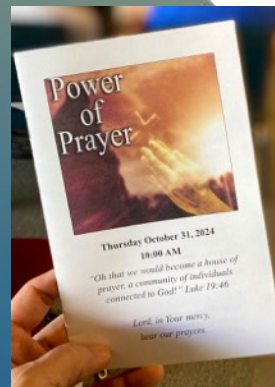
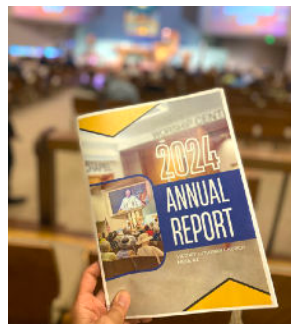
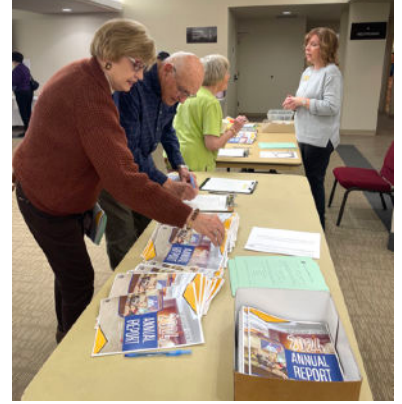
VLC CONCERT SERIES  
Festival of Lessons & Carols  
VLC Choir & Bells

We love welcoming our amazing community to show them just how they are making a difference.

This week we welcomed the congregation of Victory Lutheran Church for a tour of the Earl Day Center. They witnessed first-hand how their ongoing commitment to our mission is changing the lives of our families. 🏠

Want to take a tour and learn more about Family Promise? Go to the link in our bio to learn how you can get involved!

Family Promise of Greater Phoenix  
7447 E. Earll Dr., Scottsdale, AZ 85251  
(480) 659-5227 | [FamilyPromiseAZ.org](http://FamilyPromiseAZ.org)



SAVE  
THE DATE!



Legacy  
Grandparenting  
Summit • 2025

# GRANDPARENT, YOU ARE INVITED!

FRIDAY  
FEB 21  
2025

Victory  
Lutheran  
Church

### Speaker line-up

Dr. Jeff Myers | Dr. Rob Rienow | Trudy Cathy White  
Harvey Carey | Dr. James Banks | Dr. Crawford Loritts  
Anne Graham Lotz & Rachel-Ruth Wright

## CHRISTIAN GRANDPARENTING CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 21, 2025

*Experience the only national conference on  
Christian Grandparenting!*

Mark your calendars for Friday, February 21, 2025. Victory Lutheran Church is delighted to host the Christian Grandparenting Conference by the Legacy Coalition — a special simulcast event designed just for you.

Join us for a day of inspiration and practical advice on how to share your faith and love with your grandchildren. Learn how you can make a lasting impact on their lives and leave a legacy of faith for future generations. Stay tuned for conference details!



SCAN ME

**Early Bird Registration \$34**

Available until January 31, 2025

**Regular Registration \$39**

<https://brushfire.com/legacycoalition/simulcast/583031>



# FINISH STRONG



## YEAR-END APPEAL

**Dear Victory Church family,**

As Christmas approaches, we celebrate God's greatest gift — the arrival of His only Son, Jesus. I invite you to consider offering a gift of your own.

In my youth, I loved sprinting, especially the 4x100 relay. As the anchor — the final runner — I always ran my fastest during real races, perhaps spurred by adrenaline to finish strong.

I see a parallel between running and year-end giving. The Apostle Paul compared his Christian journey to a race: "Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one gets the prize? So run to win! They do it to win a temporary crown, but we do it for an eternal one." (1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

On behalf of Victory Lutheran Church, I ask you to prayerfully consider making an additional gift before the year ends. We are close to meeting our financial goals, and together we can finish strong.

You can make your year-end contribution by visiting our website VictoryLutheran.com, scan the QR code below, mail it in, or place it in the offering box during services. If you have questions or need help, please contact the church office.


Thank you for supporting Victory. May God richly bless you for sharing His love. Let's end this year strong, united in purpose and filled with the joy of Jesus.

In Christ's Love,

*Pastor Todd Mathison*



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>1</p> <p><b>COMMUNION WEEKEND</b>  <b>Pastor Denton Bennet</b>  <b>Installation at each service</b></p> <p>7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH            8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC            9:30am Worship, WC            11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7            2pm Memorial Service for Robert E. "Bob" Smith</p>	<p>3</p> <p><b>10am Christmas Decorating of the Church</b>  <b>Help Needed!</b></p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, LR            5:30pm Christmas Lights Bus Tour            6:30pm Women's Bible Study, LR            7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS</p> 	<p>4</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            9:30am Women's Ministry Board Meeting, FS            12:30pm Al-Anon, C4            1pm Men's Bible Study, LR            1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC            6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC            8pm AA Meeting, FS</p>
<p>8</p> <p>7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH            8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC            9:30am Worship, WC            11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7</p>	<p>10</p> <p><b>1pm Dementia Seminar, CH</b></p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, LR            5:30pm Christmas Lights Bus Tour            6:30pm Women's Bible Study, LR            7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            12:30pm Al-Anon, C4            1pm Men's Bible Study, LR            1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC  <b>4pm Advent Communion Service, WC</b>            8pm AA Meeting, FS</p>
<p>15</p> <p>7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH            8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC            9:30am Worship, WC            11am ContemporaryWorship,WC  <b>3pm Christmas Concert, WC</b></p> 	<p>16</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            12:30pm GriefShare, C4            1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7</p> 	<p>17</p> <p>3pm Council Meeting, FS            5:30pm Christmas Lights Bus Tour            7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            12:30pm Al-Anon, C4            1pm Men's Bible Study, LR            1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC            6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC            8pm AA Meeting, FS</p>
<p>22</p> <p>7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH            8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC            9:30am Worship, WC            11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            12:30pm GriefShare, C4            1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7</p>	<p>24</p> <p><b>CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP</b>  <b>1pm, 3pm, 5pm with Choir</b>  <b>7pm Contemplative Worship</b>  <b>9pm with Communion</b></p> 	<p>25</p> <p><b>FOOD PANTRY CLOSED</b>  <b>10am Christmas Worship, WC</b>            8pm AA Meeting, FS</p> 
<p>29</p> <p>7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH            8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC            9:30am Worship, WC            11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry            12:30pm GriefShare, C4            1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7</p>	<p>31</p> <p><b>1:30-3:00pm Book Club, B7</b></p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, LR            6:30pm Women's Bible Study, LR            7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS</p> 	<p>1-JAN</p> <p><b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>  <b>FOOD PANTRY CLOSED</b>            8pm AA Meeting, FS</p> 

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 10am PRAYER & PRAISE WORSHIP SERVICE, CH 11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS 11:30am Stephen Ministry, C4 12:30pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event Mesa Arts Center (off-site) 2pm Anne Epple Interment in the Columbarium 5:30pm Christmas Lights Bus Tour	6 OFFICE CLOSED	7 8am Men's Bible Study, FS 4pm Worship, WC
12 11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS 11:30am Stephen Ministry, C4 4:30pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event Bingo Night (off-site) 5:30pm Christmas Lights Bus Tour	13 OFFICE CLOSED	14 8am Men's Bible Study, FS 11am Women's Ministry Christmas Luncheon, FH 4pm Worship, WC 
19 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS 11am Stephen Ministry Christmas Party, FH 4:30pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event Christmas Dinner (off-site) Bus leaves Victory at 4pm	20 OFFICE CLOSED	21 8am Men's Bible Study, FS 4pm Worship, WC
26 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 8am Men's Bible Study, FS 4pm Worship, WC
2 - JAN 10am PRAYER & PRAISE WORSHIP SERVICE, CH 11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS 11:30am Stephen Ministry, C4	<b>ANNUAL COFFEE DRIVE</b> It's that time of year for our annual coffee drive! Please bring your donations (especially decaf) to the counter in the Fellowship Hall. We are unable to accept Kirkland brand coffee because the grind is too fine for our coffee machine. Thank you for keeping our fellowship coffee free of charge.	



**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- JANUARY 2**  
Prayer & Praise Service  
10am in the Chapel
- JAN 6-FEB 24**  
Winter Bible Study  
Mondays  
9:30am & 5:30pm
- JANUARY 7-9**  
LCMC 3 Days of Prayer
- JANUARY 8**  
Undecorate Church, 10am
- JANUARY 14**  
Dementia Seminar, 1pm
- JANUARY 19**  
East Valley Chorale  
Concert, 3pm
- JANUARY 21 & 22**  
Quilters, 8:30am
- JAN 26-FEB 2**  
Family Promise Host Week
- JANUARY 28**  
Book Club @ 1:30pm

**THE BOOK CLUB  
December 31  
1:30-3:00pm**

Love to read books?  
The Book Club meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday from 1:30-3:00pm. We will discuss this month's selection, "The Prayer Box" by Lisa Wingate. Please come prepared to discuss the monthly book selection.

- CH = Chapel
- CY = Courtyard
- FH = Fellowship Hall
- FS = Fireside Room
- LB = Lobby
- LR = Luther Room
- PC = Prayer Chapel
- WD = Welcome Desk
- WC = Worship Center
- C4 = Community Room



**VLC Women's Ministry**  
**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**  
**Saturday, December 14 @ 11am**

This year we are supporting Jacob's Hope. This critical care facility bridges the gap between the hospital NICU and home, offering immediate, short-term medical care for infants experiencing withdrawal symptoms at birth. Jacob's Hope is more than just a medical facility; it is a sanctuary designed to provide a home-like setting for healing. Purchase tickets before and after each worship service through December 8th.

Sign up online or welcome desk  
**November 12 @ 1pm**  
**Dementia | Alzheimer Care Partner Seminar**  
 Educational Series with Tools & Resources  
 Meets 2nd Tuesdays of the month @ 1pm  
 VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Dementia/Alzheimer Educational Seminar**

**Tuesday, December 10, 1:00-2:30pm**

Session 3: As a caregiver of a loved one with dementia, the days can seem long and go by slowly. Join us as we master three techniques that will make your days go by faster and will help you keep your loved one happy and entertained.

Adult day care is available for anyone you bring that will be needing an activity while you attend the seminar. Please sign up at the Welcome Desk so that we may plan appropriately for those who will attend.

**Christmas Lights BUS TOURS**  
**DECEMBER 3, 5, 10, 12, 17 @ 5:30PM**  
 LIMITED SEATING. COST \$5.  
 VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Christmas Lights Bus Tours**

**December 3, 5, 10, 12, 17 @ 5:30pm**

Join us as we tour some beautiful residential light displays! The bus will leave Victory at 5:30pm and return to have cookies and cider. Sign up and pay at the Welcome Desk. Limited to 28 seats on bus. Check for availability. Cost \$5.00.

**GRIEF SHARE**  
**MONDAYS 12:30PM**  
**DEC 16 - MARCH 17, 2025**  
 Get help and encouragement after the death of a loved one.

**Grief Support Group**

**Mondays 12:30-2:30pm**

**December 16-March 17, 2025**

Have you lost a loved one? Death looms in all our families and death carries with it so many stories. Simply acknowledging a loss of a loved one takes more physical and emotional pain than we can imagine. The GriefShare Program is a series of videos that we watch each week followed by discussion. We welcome everyone who has a loss; whether it be a child or a parent or spouse. Each session stands alone, so you can join anytime.



8-WEEK  
WINTER  
BIBLE STUDY  
BEGINS  
JAN 6-FEB 24  
MONDAYS

# FOUNDATIONS

EXCAVATING THE DEPTHS OF ROMANS

TWO OPTIONS:  
MORNINGS  
9:30-11:00AM  
with continental breakfast



EVENINGS  
5:30-7:00PM  
with light dinner



Sign up scanning the  
QR codes above or at  
the Welcome Desk.



## EXPLORING KEY THEOLOGICAL THEMES

**Justification by Grace Through Faith Alone:** Deepen your appreciation of the core teaching that we are justified solely by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by our own works.

**The Universality of Sin and Original Sin:** This is a critical starting point for our Christian faith: the reality that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory, highlighting our need for a Savior.

**Law and Gospel Distinction:** There are two words in all of scripture: law and Gospel. Understand Victory's emphasis on distinguishing between the Law, which reveals our sin, and the Gospel, which proclaims forgiveness and life.

**Simul Justus et Peccator (Simultaneously Saint and Sinner):** Explore the paradox of being declared righteous through faith while still wrestling with sin in our daily lives, and in this, find the freedom of the Christian life because of Jesus Christ!

**The Sacrament of Baptism and New Life:** Learn about baptism as a means of grace that unites us with Christ's death and resurrection, granting us newness of life.

**Assurance of God's Unconditional Love:** Be encouraged by the promise that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Life in the Spirit:** Discover how the Holy Spirit works within us to will and to act according to God's good purpose, empowering us to live out our faith.

Mark your calendars and prepare to deepen your understanding of these foundational truths. Through engaging discussions and reflections, we will grow together in faith and knowledge.



# Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service & Dinner November 27, 2024



**DECEMBER  
2024**

# S.A.F.E.

## SINGLES ACTIVITY FELLOWSHIP EVENTS



**SIGN UP REQUIRED FOR ALL EVENTS IN ORDER TO HELP WITH PLANNING AND SETUP.  
ALL TICKETED EVENTS MUST BE PAID AT TIME OF SIGN UP.**

### il Vinaio Restaurant (Off-Site)

#### Singles Christmas Dinner

**Thursday, December 19 @ 4:30pm | 270 W. Main Street, Mesa**

We have arranged a holiday treat for you in a private dining area, for a fixed cost which includes a salad, a choice of one of five specialty entrees (Chicken Saltimbocca, Linguine Bolognese, N'Awlin's Shrimp Risotto, Salisbury Steak, Vegetable Pasta), a dessert, fountain drinks, iced tea, *and tax and tip* for the price of \$34.00. We will have surprise gifts and a holiday game!

**Sign up deadline is December 2nd!**

Transportation provided. Bus leaves Victory at 4:00pm.



### Board & Card Games

We usually meet the 1st Tuesday of the month. However, we are taking a break in December and will resume Board & Card Games on January 7, 2025.



### Mesa Arts Center "Out to Lunch" - Free Concert Series (Off-Site)

**1 E. Main Street, Mesa**

**Thursday, December 5 @ 12:30-1:30pm**

The *Pickup Lines* band, known as real party starters, will be performing. Enjoy captivating live music in a beautiful, shady outdoor setting. Each week is a different sound, and style in this concert series. Lunch items available for purchase. Bring your favorite, comfortable folding chair or blanket. Our meeting place is at the Box Office on Center Street.



**MESA ARTS CENTER**

### Bingo Night (Off-Site)

**Thursday, December 12 @ 4:30pm | Sunland Village, 4601 E. Dolphin Street, Mesa**

Join us for the 2nd Thursday of each month. Doors open at 4:30pm for you to get a light meal, pick out your lucky seat and purchase your Bingo cards. Game begins at 6:30pm sharp! No admission after 6:30pm.



### Feed My Starving Children (Off-Site)

For December we will NOT be making our usual monthly visit, as our pre-arranged slot reservation falls on December 25th — we all know why we won't be there on that day! Join us again on January 22, 2025 at their new location. Note new timing: The bus will leave church at 8:00am. As usual, we will enjoy fellowship at a fast food restaurant.



*Have a Happy & Blessed Christmas! See You Next Year!*



## Candlelight Christmas Eve

1pm, 3pm, 5pm with Choir  
7pm Contemplative Worship  
9pm with Communion

## Christmas Day

10am with Communion



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SAVIOR is  
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SCAN ME

Scan the QR code with your  
phone's camera to connect with us  
on social media and subscribe!

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## WORSHIP SERVICES

SATURDAY 4pm Traditional  
SUNDAY 8 & 9:30am Traditional  
11am Contemporary