

Sermon Notes

Life Notes

Upcoming Week

Final Words - ETERNAL IMPACT #4:
"Claimed & Embraced"
Ephesians 1:3-5, 11-14; Isaiah 43:1-7

Opener:

Think about your family of origin. What is one "key marker" of what it means to be a *(insert last name of your family here)*?

Go Deeper:

- 1. Read the Ephesians verses. What is your initial thought about being "chosen by God before the creation of the world"?
- 2. When you hear that you've been lovingly handpicked by God, how does it affect your sense of identity? (Read Isaiah 43:1)
- 3. What does "adoption" as God's child say about your belonging?
- 4. What does it mean to be "holy and blameless" in God's sight?
- 5. How do you typically view God's disposition toward you—is He pleased with you, or is He disappointed? In what ways does this the Bible challenge or affirm those perceptions?

Live It:

- 1. Where do you see evidence of that father-child relationship in your life, and where might you still long to experience it more fully?
- 2. How does knowing the Holy Spirit seals and secures your future with God offer you hope today?
- 3. In what real-life situation do you most need that reassurance?
- 4. What do you think it means for God to "be near the brokenhearted" (Psalm 34:18)? How do you personally experience—or long to experience—God's nearness when you feel overwhelmed by life?"
- 5. Since you have been chosen and adopted by God through Jesus Christ, how can embracing this identity affect your response to everyday stress or negative self-talk this week?

Sunday, March 30
NOISY OFFERING

7-11am Morning Fellowship, FH
8am Worship & Communion, WC
9:30am Worship, WC
11am Contemporary Worship, WC
11am Children's Church, NR

Monday, March 31

9-11:30am Food Pantry
1-3:30pm Stephen Ministry Training, B7
4pm Confirmation Class, LR

Tuesday, April 1

11am Winter Women's Life Group, meet in home
6:30pm Women's Bible Study, LR
7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS

Wednesday, April 2

9-11:30am Food Pantry
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4
1pm Men's Bible Study, LR
1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, CH
4pm Lenten Worship, WC
5pm Soup Supper, FH
6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC
8pm AA Meeting, FS

Thursday, April 3

9:30am Women's Ministry Board Meeting, LR
10am Prayer & Praise Worship Service, CH
11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS
11:30am Stephen Ministry, C4
6pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event (off-site)
Barleen's Dinner Show, Bus leaves @ 4:45pm

Friday, April 4

Office Closed

Saturday, April 5
COMMUNION WEEKEND

8am Men's Bible Study, FS
4pm Worship, WC

CH = Chapel
FH = Fellowship Hall
FS = Fireside Room
LR = Luther Room
NR = Nursery
WC = Worship Center
C4 = Community Room

Victory Lutheran Church

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FINAL WORDS
ETERNAL
IMPACT



MARCH 29 & 30, 2025

CLAIMED & EMBRACED
Ephesians 1:3-5, 11-14



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



Connect with us!



We would love to hear your story!
If you have a story to share of healing, praise, gratitude, serving in a mission or ministry at Victory, share it at hello@victorylutheran.com. (300 word max)

Daily Bible Readings (March 30-April 5)

Sun: Luke 16:19-31 The Rich Man and Lazarus
Mon: Luke 16:1-13 Parable of the Dishonest Manager
Tues: Luke 16:14-18 The Law & the Kingdom of God
Wed: Luke 17:11-19 Jesus Cleanses Ten Lepers
Thurs: Luke 18:1-14 Two Parables
Fri: Luke 18:15-17 Jesus Blesses Little Children
Sat: Luke 18:18-30 The Rich Ruler

*The readings selected come from the Narrative Lectionary calendar.

GOD TIME: Celebration of Baptism

Hayden William Buckpitt

Parents: Sam and Isabelle Buckpitt

Sponsors: Jeff and Renee Bennett

March 22, 2025



Baptism, Biblically speaking, stands as a tender reminder that God reaches down to us with grace and mercy, not the other way around. Far from any human accomplishment, it is God's own saving action, drawing us into His loving embrace. Holy Baptism is first and foremost God's work for us, rather than our work for Him (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). When Scripture teaches about Baptism, it points us to God's initiative, pouring out His grace, love, and mercy upon us. Through the water and His Word (Matthew 28:19-20), He promises forgiveness of sins and new life in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38-39).

In Baptism, we are united with Christ's death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). We don't present ourselves before God with any merit of our own. Instead, we humbly receive the Holy Spirit's creating work (John 3:3-5). This sacrament anchors us in God's unfailing commitment to seek us out, assuring us that our salvation is rooted in His faithfulness rather than our own efforts (Philippians 1:6).

If you haven't been baptized and would like to be, please contact one of the pastors or the church office to get more information.



GATHER TIME: A Joyful & Loving Community

One of the greatest joys I witness here at Victory is how naturally people use the words "joyful" and "loving" when describing their encounters with one another. It's not a marketing pitch or a scripted tagline—it's an honest reflection of what happens when we gather as God's people. At Victory, we believe this authentic sense of joy and love is exactly what it means to live as a community under Christ. We're certainly not perfect, but there's no doubt that when God's grace transforms our hearts, we start to see each other with new eyes and treat one another with compassion, kindness, and genuine affection.

This is why we talk so much about "The 5% Life" and encourage everyone to spend at least 1% of their week in "Gather Time," worshiping together. That's about an hour and a half—roughly one Saturday afternoon or Sunday morning—spent praising God, connecting in fellowship, and being reminded of the greater story we're all part of. I firmly believe that as you invest in this sacred space, your walk with God and with God's people will flourish. You'll discover that the joy we have is rooted in something far deeper than mere happiness, and the love we share is both an overflow of God's love for us and a tangible expression of His presence among us.

There's something remarkable that happens when we come together under one roof, lifting our voices in worship, pausing to pray for each other's needs, and celebrating the faithfulness of God in big and small ways. The "5%" you give to God will shape the other "95%" of your life, changing you from the inside out. My prayer is that as you step into our joyful, loving community, you'll find God's grace meeting you right where you are, empowering you to know Him, befriend others, and make a real difference in the world.

With joy in love — *Pastor Todd Mathison*



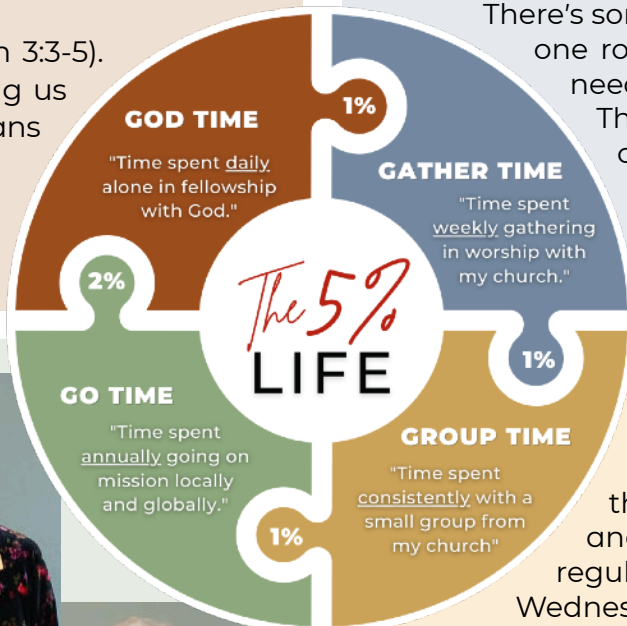
GO TIME: Choices Crisis Pregnancy Center Speaking life and spreading hope since 1983

Many of the young women and men served at Choices are at a crossroads in their lives due to an unplanned pregnancy. They face one of the most important decisions about life at a time when they feel theirs is unraveling. They fear rejection, condemnation, and isolation from their family, friends, and social circles. Choices provides a safe place to talk, explore options, seek medical services, learn about available resources and hear about the hope available to all of us for a better life.

Luann Flygare and **Darla Groat**, both from Victory, volunteer each week to support the ministry. Luann's journey began in 2017 when a friend invited her to help in the boutique when *Choices* was located in Tempe. When Covid hit, the Tempe site closed but she was asked to take over the Mesa site boutique. Now, she goes once a week to sort through donations and keep the boutique stocked with useful items and make it look attractive for their clients. Before each workday begins, the staff and volunteers gather for worship, prayer, and fellowship. Luann loves helping there because as one lady said, "what is the good of saving a baby if we don't save their souls?"

Darla got involved after hearing a *Choices* representative speak at a ladies' luncheon at Victory in 2023. Darla is able to offer a listening ear to those who often feel unheard, unseen, and as though they do not matter, and she is able to offer practical resources, an ultrasound, and education. Most importantly, she has an opportunity to be the hands, feet, and ears of Jesus. This opportunity has caused Darla to lean more on the Holy Spirit," she says, "because He alone can draw people to Jesus."

There are many volunteer opportunities which vary from writing thank you notes to helping in the boutique to meeting with clients one on one. It is a wonderful Christian ministry that offers practical help as well as the good news of Jesus. For more information on how you can volunteer, visit www.choicesaz.com.



GROUP TIME: The Ministry of Music

Victory is blessed to be a congregation who values quality music! And this is made possible by the commitment of so many people! Behind the scenes the members of the Bell Choir and Choir are rehearsing regularly, practicing on their own at home, and coming to additional rehearsals to prepare. Not only do they help lead in worship regularly, but they also are a part of special services such as Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and also learn additional music for special concerts, such as our Moravian Masterpieces concert! Thank you for the time, energy and love you put into the music ministry here, it's such a blessing and we couldn't do it without you!

Moravian Masterpieces: Sacred Music of Early America Sunday, March 30 @ 3pm

Please join us for a joyful afternoon of music! Presented by the choir of Victory, together with brass, woodwinds and strings, this concert features rare gems of choral music. The Moravians brought their love for music with them from Europe, and their settlements had the most sophisticated musical culture in early America. This concert features selections from the Moravian tradition, dating as far back as the 16th century, as well as contemporary compositions, all written to the glory of God!

