

Sermon Notes

We would love to hear your story!

If you have a story to share in The Pulse about healing, praise, gratitude, serving in a mission or ministry at Victory, share it at hello@victorylutheran.com. (300 word max)

Daily Bible Readings (June 1-7)

Sun:	Galatians 3:1-9, 23-29	A Church Divided
Mon:	Genesis 15:1-6	God's Covenant with Abraham
Tues:	Galatians 3:15-18	Abraham Remembered
Wed:	Galatians 3:19-22	The Purpose of the Law
Thurs:	Galatians 4:8-20	Paul Reproves the Galatians
Fri:	Galatians 4:21-31	Hagar and Sarah
Sat:	Galatians 5:1-15	Christian Freedom

*The readings selected come from the Narrative Lectionary calendar.

Life Notes

Eyewitness News #7: "Blind No More"

Acts 9:1-16

Opener:

Share a moment in your life when your perspective about someone or something completely changed. What caused that shift?

Go Deeper:

1. How did Saul's background and actions make him seem like an unlikely candidate for God's grace? Discuss specific examples from the text.

2. In what ways did God's intervention on the road to Damascus change Saul's life immediately and completely?

3. What role did Ananias play in Saul's transformation? How did his obedience to God's call demonstrate faith?

4. Reflect on the significance of Jesus' words, "Why do you persecute me?" What does this reveal about Jesus' connection to His followers?

5. How does Saul's story challenge our preconceived notions about who is deserving of grace and redemption?

Live It:

1. Think about someone in your life whom you've written off as beyond redemption. How might God be calling you to see them differently?

2. In what areas of your life do you need to trust God's vision over your own fears and prejudices?

3. How can you be an "Ananias" to someone who is in need of grace and support? What practical steps can you take this week?

4. Reflect on your own journey of faith. How has God's grace interrupted and transformed your life?

5. Consider the risky obedience shown by Ananias. In what ways can you demonstrate similar faith and courage in your daily life?

Upcoming Week

Sunday, June 1

COMMUNION WEEKEND

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

Monday, June 2

9-11:30am Food Pantry
12:30pm GriefShare, C4

Tuesday, June 3

6:30pm Women's Bible Study, LR
7pm AA Men's Meeting, FS

Wednesday, June 4

9-11:30am Food Pantry
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4
1pm Men's Bible Study, LR
8pm AA Meeting, FS

Thursday, June 5

10am Prayer & Praise, CH
11am Al-Anon Meeting, FS
4:30pm S.A.F.E Singles Event (off-site)
Venezia's Pizzeria

Friday, June 6

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, June 7

PENTECOST WEEKEND

Remember to wear red!

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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WiFi

VictoryLutheran_Guest
Password: Victory_46

EYEWITNESS NEWS

MAY 31 & JUNE 1, 2025

"Blind No More"

Acts 9:1-16

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

Connect with us!

GOD TIME: Jesus Took His Place... and Ours
Rev. Julie Smith – LCMC Service Coordinator

My nephew has had a resurgence in his interest in faith as the result of a major car crash. During a drive, he asked if I'd ever heard of Barabbas. I smiled — I've been studying the Bible for 35 years — and he proceeded to play a TikTok sermon about the crowd choosing to release Barabbas instead of Jesus.

After listening in silence, he turned to me and said, "I had no idea that Jesus chose to die for us." I was a little stunned. He's heard me preach countless times, but something in that simple sermon broke through. The truth of the Gospel—the idea that Jesus willingly took our place—landed in his heart in a fresh, powerful way.

The world saw Barabbas walk free because of a public vote. But the truth is deeper. Pilate didn't save Barabbas. The crowd didn't either. Jesus did. He placed Himself into the hands of sinners and took the punishment meant for the guilty. It wasn't just Barabbas who walked away that day—it was all of us. That moment in the courtyard wasn't an accident of politics or mob pressure. It was mercy, deliberate and divine. The innocent was condemned, so that the guilty could go free. That's the Gospel.

For Reflection:

- Why would the crowd release Barabbas?
- Have you ever seen God's hand after the fact — in something you thought was in your control?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, we often find sinners more relatable than our sinless Savior. Forgive us. Help us recognize your grace, even when we fail to understand it. Teach us to cling to you, the one true Savior. Amen.

GATHER TIME: Grateful for Our Church Family in Mission

When Victory Lutheran Church joined *Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ* (LCMC) in 2010, it wasn't just a denominational decision—it was a discipleship declaration. The name says it all: we are congregations *in mission* for Christ. It's a reminder that our foundation is God's grace, our focus is Jesus, our calling is mission, and our strength is found together.

LCMC is a church body that values the local congregation as the frontline of ministry. That's why at Victory, we don't wait for someone else to reach our neighborhood—we go. We serve, give, pray, and proclaim because the Gospel is too good to keep to ourselves.

We are also blessed to share in this journey with other like-minded congregations across the country and world—1,000+ strong and growing.

And now, we give thanks for the new leadership God has provided in Rev. Julie Smith, LCMC's new Service Coordinator as of May 1. Pastor Julie is no stranger to Victory—she presided at Pastor Todd's installation and shares pastoral roots with Pastor Denton in Minnesota. Her heart for mission, love for teaching, and deep commitment to the Gospel make her a gift to our larger church family.

Please join us in praying for Pastor Julie as she steps into this vital role. And as you do, take a moment to thank God for the larger body of Christ of which we are a part—imperfect, but empowered by grace, united by Jesus, and always on mission.



"We, though many, are one body in Christ." —Romans 12:5

GO TIME: Snapshots of Service – Victory's Global Impact

Victory was just featured as a Photo Contest Winner in the **LCMC 2025 Spring Newsletter!**

Our two photos—taken during our 2024 Mission Trip to South Africa—were chosen to highlight how churches are *making a difference in the lives of others*. We're honored to represent the hands and feet of Jesus across the world.

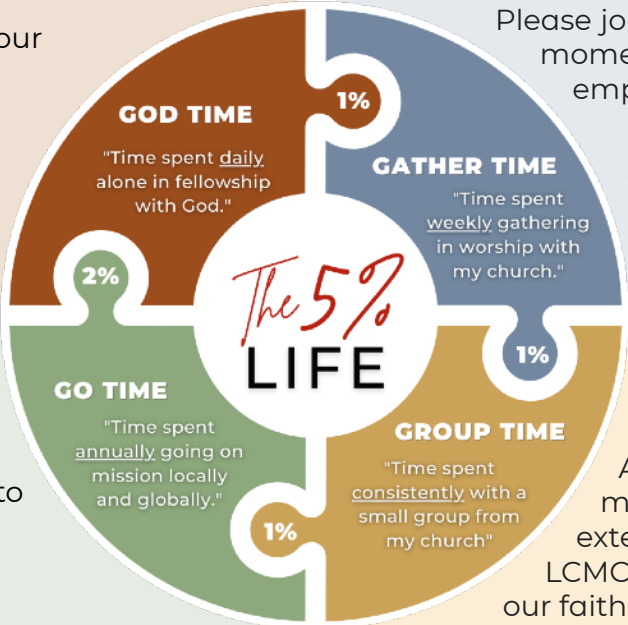
Scan the QR code to see the feature.



Photo 1: The mission team visited and spent the morning at a preschool playing, practiced writing the alphabet and singing songs with the children. (Pictured Mel Lepler Stager)



Photo 2: Pastor Joseph & Pastor Todd walking and holding hands.



GROUP TIME: AZ LCMC Church Fellowship
Pr. Denton Bennet

As we have been discussing small groups within the Victory Lutheran Church family more and more, I wanted to take a moment to share with you how that same mindset extends even to the life of the larger church within LCMC. As a church, Victory belongs to LCMC, an international association of congregations that share the same goal: to live out our faith in the freedom of Christ, as best represented through the Lutheran Confessions. This is a different mindset for many who grew up in the Lutheran church, as we no longer belong to a "synod" that groups congregations together geographically under a larger organizational structure.

However, districts and fellowships are two of the vehicles that congregations can use to initiate cooperation and mutual support. Congregational leaders can come together to share ideas, resources, and support in ways that are most beneficial to one another's mission. Victory is part of the Arizona Fellowship, a group of LCMC congregations whose pastors and ministry leaders meet monthly at a rotation of host churches. So far in 2025, Victory has hosted this event twice, with guest speakers Mike Bradley, the outgoing LCMC service coordinator, in February, and Julie Smith, the newly appointed LCMC service coordinator, in May. You can read more about LCMC districts and fellowships on their website www.lcmc.net/districts-fellowships.

