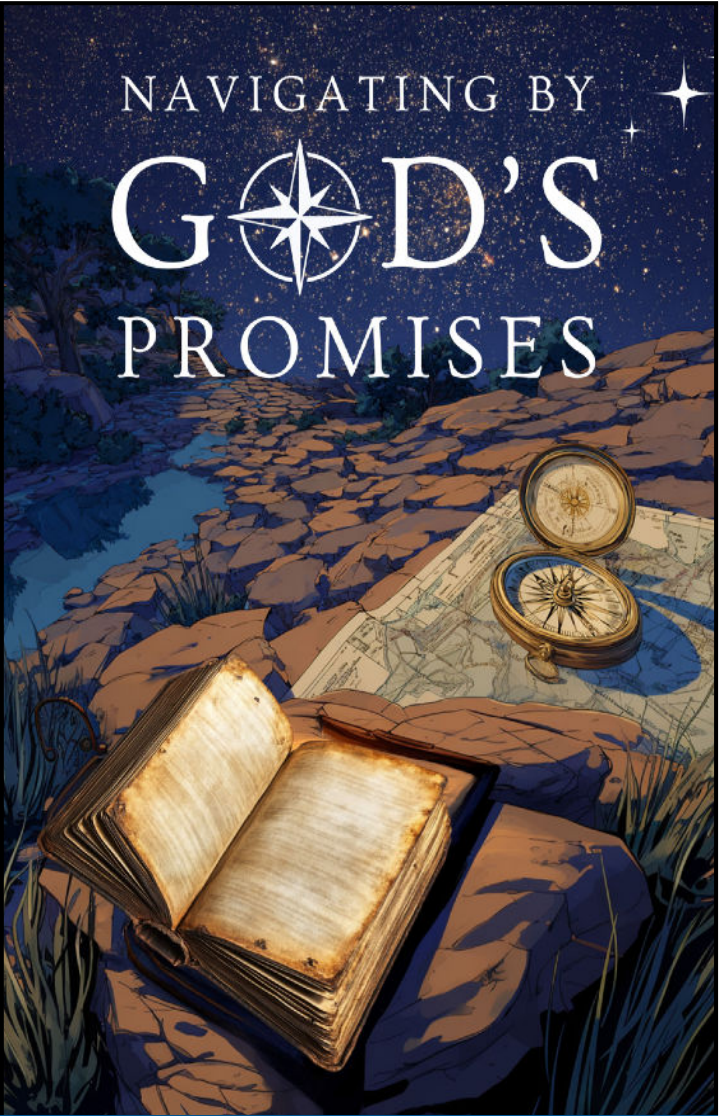


Sermon Notes

Life Notes

Upcoming Week



August 16 & 17, 2025

“PLAGUES THAT PREACH”
Exodus 9:13-16



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



Connect with us!



Sunday, August 17
8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH
8am Worship & Communion, WC
9:30am Worship, WC
11am Contemporary Worship, WC

Monday, August 18
9-11:30am Food Pantry
4pm Confirmation Class, C1

Tuesday, August 19
3pm Council Meeting, B7
6:30pm Women's Bible Study, C1
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5
7pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event (off-site)
Movie - Titanic, Bus leaves @ 6:25pm

Wednesday, August 20
9-11:30am Food Pantry
10am Men's Bible Study, C1
12:30pm Al-Anon, C4
1pm S.A.F.E. Singles Event
Movie - Titanic (off-site)
8pm AA Meeting, C5

Thursday, August 21
10am Prayer Group, B7
11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5
11:30am Stephen Ministry, C4

Friday, August 22
OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, August 23
8am Men's Bible Study, C5
4pm Worship, WC

CH = Chapel
FH = Fellowship Hall
C5 = Fireside Room
NR = Nursery
WC = Worship Center
C4 = Community Room



Victory Lutheran Church
5946 E. University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85205
hello@victorylutheran.com
480-830-5024
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8am-4pm
VictoryLutheran.com



VictoryLutheran_Guest
Password: Victory_46

Navigating by God's Promises #2:
“Plagues that Preach”
Exodus 9:13-16

Opener:
Recall a time in your life when it truly was a miracle that you were spared from harm.

Go Deeper: *(Exploring the Bible)*

1. What does Romans 9:14-18 reveal to you about Who God is? Do any parts of this passage make you feel uncomfortable? Why?
2. Read Exodus 7:3-4. What first comes to mind when you read that “God hardened pharaoh's heart?” Now read Exodus 7:5 What does this passage say about why God hardened Pharaoh's heart?
3. Read Ezekiel 11:19-20 How does God transform hearts? Why does He do this?
4. Who is someone in the Bible that has a changed heart? How did this change of heart affect their life?

Live It: *(Applying to Our Lives)*

1. What's your “default” belief: that we have free will to choose God and therefore have a changed heart, or that this can only happen to us through the Holy Spirit?
2. Have you ever had a moment in your life when you wanted to shout at God, “That's not fair!” After reading the story of Exodus has your opinion of God's fairness changed? If yes, how?
3. In what ways is God currently working in your life to soften your heart?

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 (August 17-23)

Sun: Romans 9:14-18 God Has Mercy
Mon: Exodus 7:3-4 Hardening the Heart of Pharaoh
Tues: Exodus 7:5 They Will Know I Am the Lord
Wed: Ezekiel 11:19-20 God Transforms Hearts
Thurs: Luke 19:1-10 Salvation to Zacchaeus
Fri: Acts 26:1-18 The Lord Changes Saul's Heart
Sat: Psalm 51:10-12 Create in Me a Clean Heart

*The readings selected come from the Narrative Lectionary calendar.

GOD TIME: God's Promises Prevail Even in the Darkest of Times
Pastor Renée Bennett

It seems that no sooner had I been ordained, May 18, then I was whisked away to be at my mother's bedside in Florida. I barely had time to thank all of you at Victory for your love and support during my ordination process and then I was having to ask for your prayers and support as my mother became suddenly ill and then died less than two weeks later. As the oldest, I instantly went from being her daughter, to her caregiver, to her hospice liaison and then her Pastor, her funeral organizer and then her estate trustee. Through it all, I saw God's hand navigating me. God knew that because of my recent ordination I would be able to be ready to deliver to my mom her last communion bread and wine and hold a church service for her on Pentecost Sunday as well as to lead bedside prayers with my siblings. Because of my recent ordination, God knew that my mom's Episcopal church would recognize my calling and her Pastor would allow me to deliver the sermon at her funeral.



God navigated me through the perilous waters of trying to be attentive to grandchildren and children and sibling's grief. God led me beside the still waters of assurance that He was with me during the stress of going through a lifetime of memories and packing up and selling her house in FL from here in Arizona. All praise goes to God that He brought a cash buyer and we sold the house in 3 weeks.

My Victory Family (and that's what you are to me) has truly been with me every step of the way. I know so many of you have lost loved ones and so you have been anchors for me when I have felt that I was drifting into dark waters. Grief isn't a one and done thing. It ebbs and flows. Tears will continue to fall at really weird times, but I know that God is with me and so are all of you. I will always be so grateful for all of your cards and your prayers and your sincere wishes during this really difficult time. God bless you and thank you.

GO TIME: Christmas Stocking Club

Did you know that the Victory campus is home to a special local outreach called the Christmas Stocking Club?

Founded 20 years ago by Carol Taddon, the club began with just 300 handmade stockings. Today, dedicated volunteers create stockings that are given to underprivileged children through local churches, food banks, low-income elementary schools, and the Gilbert Lions Club.

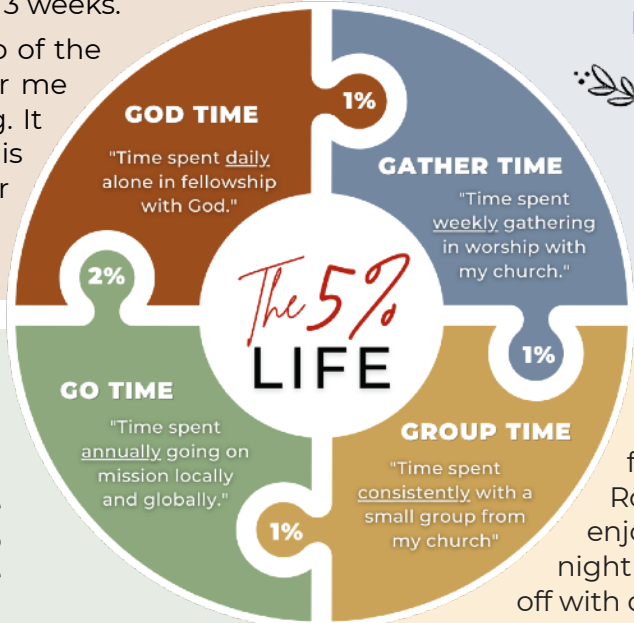
The process is a team effort: stockings are cut, traced, colored, or painted, and then a few talented ladies take them home to sew. The last touch of sparkle is placed on the stockings during the weekly meeting. In the past, the club also stuffed the stockings with gifts, but since we no longer have storage space, we now focus on making the stockings, and our partner organizations fill them for the children they serve.

We have about 50 volunteers—some helping year-round, others joining in the winter months. The group meets Fridays at 10am-noon in the Victory Courtyard, Room (C5).

If you would like to help decorate stockings, contact Mary Lou Burgess at mburg37114@aol.com.



In loving memory
Carol Taddon, founder



GATHER TIME: National Grandparents Day
September 6 & 7, 2025

Grandparents Day takes place on the first Sunday of September after Labor Day. It was proclaimed as a national holiday by President Jimmy Carter on August 3, 1978. Grandparents Day is a wonderful way to honor grandparents and celebrate their critical role in the family.

We know many of you like to brag on your grandchildren, so send us a photo of you with the grandkids/great-grandkids! A slideshow presentation will be shown the weekend of September 6 & 7.

Send your photo (maximum of 3) to Eileen at ehernandez@victorylutheran.com. Please include your FIRST & LAST NAME to display with the photo.

Deadline: September 1, 2025.

"Children's children are
a crown to the aged,
and parents are the
pride of their children."
Proverbs 17:6



GROUP TIME: Diamondbacks Faith & Family Night

On Friday, 40 members from Victory Lutheran Church enjoyed a fun evening at the Diamondbacks game against the Colorado Rockies. We cheered as the Diamondbacks won 6-1, all while enjoying unlimited soda, hot dogs, chips, popcorn, and peanuts. The night didn't end with the final pitch—it was Faith & Family Night, capped off with an energetic and inspiring concert by Christian artist Tauren Wells.

