

**LENTEN  
WORSHIP**

Wednesdays @ 4pm  
Soup Suppers @ 5pm

**HOLY WEEK  
SERVICES**

**MARCH 29-APRIL 5**

**PALM SUNDAY**

Saturday 4pm  
Sunday 8 & 9:30am  
Contemporary 11am

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**

4 & 6pm Communion

**STATIONS OF  
THE CROSS**

A Self-Guided Experience  
Thursday & Friday, 3-8pm

**GOOD FRIDAY  
CANTATA**

4 & 6pm Rutter Requiem  
Choir & Orchestra

**EASTER SERVICES**

Sunrise 6am  
Outdoor Communion

Traditional  
Saturday 4pm  
Sunday 8 & 9:30am  
Contemporary 11am

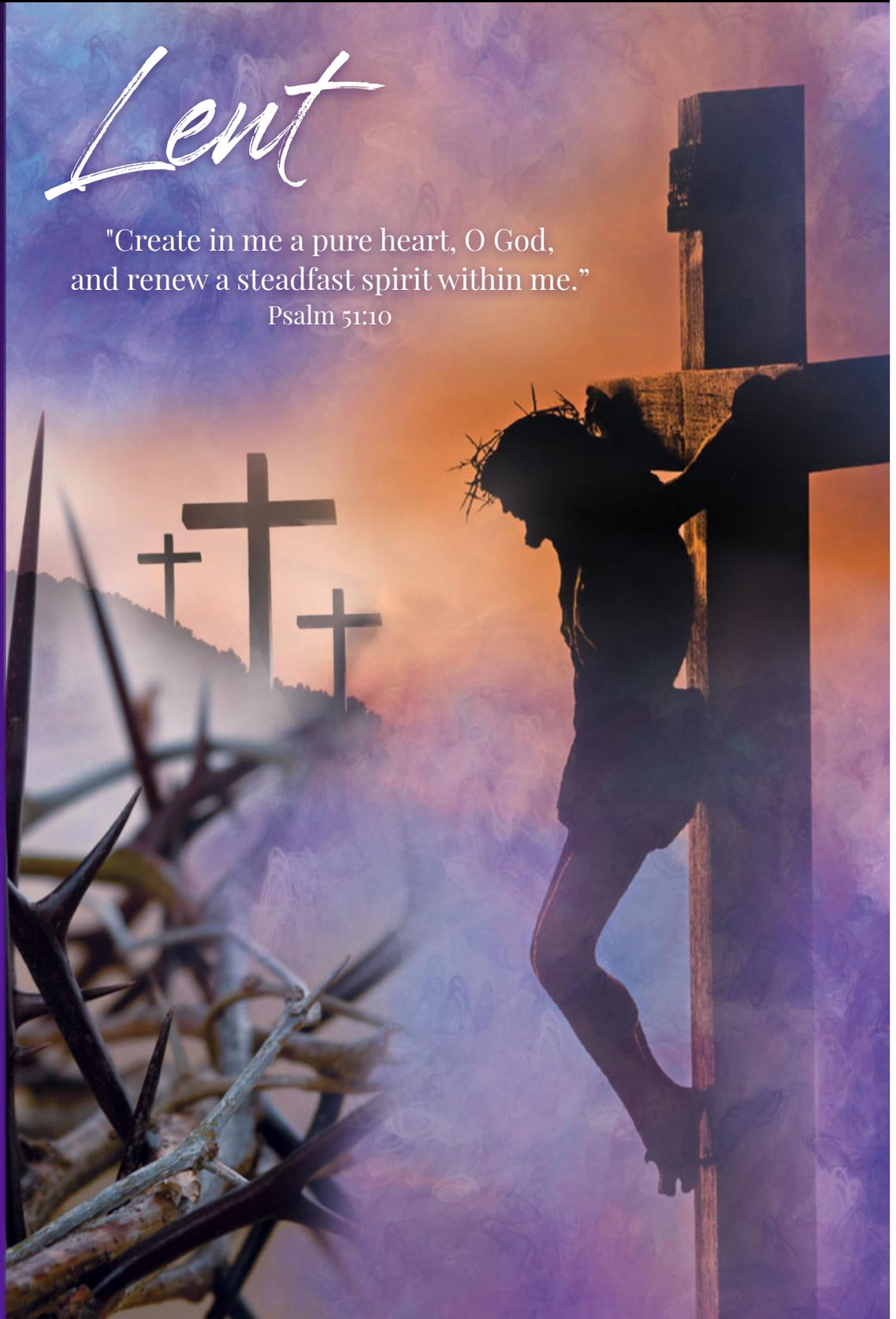
**INVITE CARDS**

Available in the lobby  
Invite a friend or neighbor  
to our Holy Week Services!

# Lent

"Create in me a pure heart, O God,  
and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

Psalm 51:10



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor  
Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor  
Dirk Duhlstine, Chaplain

5946 E. University Drive, Mesa, AZ 85205  
480-830-5024 | Office Hours: M-Th, 8am-4pm  
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## Dear Church Family,

Lent has a way of taking us by the hand and walking us into places we don't always choose on our own: honesty, confession, waiting, and hope. This year, we're taking that journey with a very old companion—the Psalms. Our Lenten devotional, *Out of the Depths: 40 Days of Lenten Reflections from the Psalms*, is an invitation to pray words God has already given His people for every season of life: joy, fear, anger, gratitude, doubt, repentance, and praise. When we don't have the words, the Psalms speak for us.

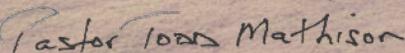
Some of you are walking through green pastures right now. Others feel like Psalm 130—"out of the depths"—where guilt, grief, or sheer exhaustion has made the days feel heavy. The beauty of Lent is that it doesn't ask you to pretend. It simply brings you to Jesus as you are. And it keeps bringing you back to this: the "scoreboard" of your sin doesn't get the final word—because Christ carried that record to the cross.

So let's do this together—day by day and week by week. In our devotional lives, let's open the Psalms, pray honestly, and let God's Word put steel in our faith and tenderness in our repentance. And then let's gather, too: midweek Lenten services and weekend worship, shoulder to shoulder as a church family, following Jesus' footsteps—one scene, one promise, one mercy at a time—until we arrive at His cross.

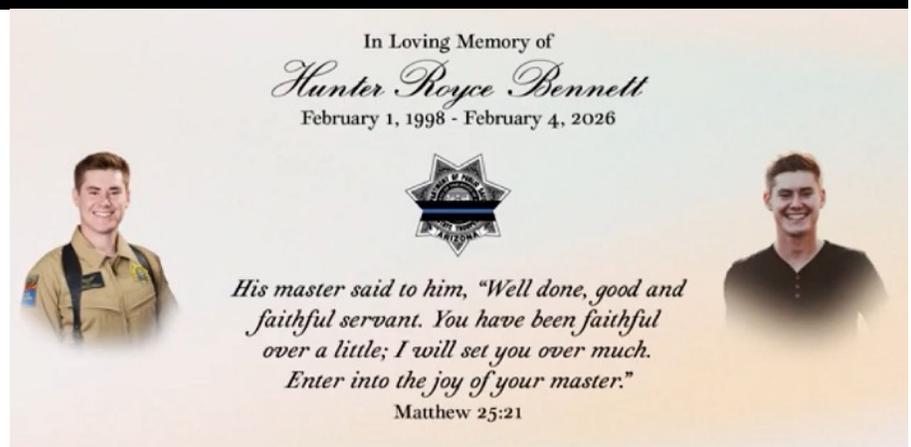
Read slowly. Tell the truth. And then cling—stubbornly—to the better truth: "With the LORD is unfailing love, and with Him is full redemption."

I love you, Victory. I'm grateful to walk this road with you—toward the cross, and all the way to the empty tomb.

Grateful in Christ Jesus,



Pastor Todd Mathison



## IN LOVING MEMORY OF HUNTER R. BENNETT

February 4, 2026, brought a tragedy our hearts still struggle to hold: the downing of Ranger 56, the Arizona Department of Public Safety helicopter, and the deaths of Pilot Robert Skankey and DPS Trooper/Paramedic Hunter R. Bennett—the son of Pastor Renee and Jeff Bennett. The loss is crushing. The questions rise up fast and loud, and so many of them remain unanswered. And it's right here—when the storm is at its worst, when a parent faces what no parent should ever have to face—that faith in Jesus Christ is not merely a comfort we reach for, but an anchor we cling to: the only sure hold that can keep a heart from breaking apart in the waves of grief.

More than 2,000 gathered for Hunter Bennett's memorial — including hundreds from law enforcement — a visible reminder that a single life, faithfully lived, radiates far beyond what years alone can measure. As Colonel Glover said about Hunter, "His years were too few, but his impact was immeasurable." Glover remarked that Hunter himself captured it best when he once spoke of leaving "a name that inspires confidence and a legacy beyond reproach." By every account, he did.

The service held both heartbreak and holy hope. Pastor Renée's words linger: "It's not the number of years that you live but how you live the number of years you're given. Hunter's was too short, but his light was so bright." Jeff reminded us that "Hunter saved a lot of lives that night. To know Hunter was to know a man who truly lived."

In worship the day before, we reflected on John 11 — that when Jesus delays, He is not absent; when Jesus weeps, God is not distant; and when Jesus calls, death does not get the final word. That truth carried weight at Hunter's final call: "11215 is 10-7. Your assignment on earth is completed. Your new assignment is to be with God. Thank you, Hunter. You will be in our hearts and minds forever. God's speed."

The silence, the honor guard, the words "Well done, good and faithful servant. Rest easy, Trooper Bennett. We have the watch from here" — all testified to both grief and gratitude.

Victory was honored to host the livestream so many could participate in remembering Hunter. And we remain committed to what matters most now: steady prayer, quiet presence, and enduring love for Pastor Renee, Jeff, and their family.

Clear skies and tail winds, Ranger 56. Christ has the final word.

## FAREWELL TO PASTOR RENÉE BENNETT

On February 16, 2026, on behalf of Victory Lutheran Church, I accepted Pastor Renee Bennett's resignation from her role as our Discipleship Pastor. While this news brings a sense of loss to our entire Victory family, we receive it with understanding, compassion, and deep gratitude for the two years Pastor Renee faithfully served among us.

Pastor Renée came to Victory on February 1, 2024, and from her very first day, she brought a passionate commitment to proclaiming the Gospel, administering the sacraments, and walking alongside our congregation with genuine love and care. Over these two years, she has been a steady, grace-filled presence — in our pulpits, at our bedsides, teaching confirmation, and in the lives of those navigating grief, illness, and the journey of faith. Her theology was sound, her heart was tender, and her love for this congregation was evident in everything she did.

Pastor Renée's resignation comes not from a desire to leave, but from a place of deep personal need. She and her husband, Jeff, are facing an extremely difficult family situation, and in her own words, she is no longer able to commit to providing "the level of care and support that our Victory family needs and deserves." We honor that honesty. We honor that sacrifice. And we hold her and Jeff in our prayers as they walk through this season.

Pastor Renée leaves us anchored in the same hope she always preached — the promise of Jeremiah 29:11, that God has plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us a hope and a future. That confidence in God's faithfulness is perhaps her greatest gift to us, and it is one we carry forward.

On behalf of the entire Victory family: Pastor Renée, thank you. Thank you for your proclamation of the Gospel, your shepherding of our souls, and your love for a congregation that will not soon forget you. We release you with our blessing, our prayers, and our deepest gratitude. May God continue to meet you and Jeff with His faithful, unwavering grace.

— Pastor Denton and the Victory Lutheran Church Staff



***"Being transformed by our joyful and loving church"***

- Lenten Series & Worship (p. 4)
- Sermon Series (p. 6)
- Holy Week Line-up (p. 7)
- Concert Series (p. 10)

***"Building relationships and serving with others in God's family"***

- Dementia Care Partner Seminar (p. 12)
- Victory Book Club (p. 12)
- GriefShare (p. 13)
- Quilters Group (p. 13)
- Singles Plus Couples Events (p. 15)

***"Extending God's love and Good News locally and globally"***

- Orchard: Africa Fundraiser (p. 11)
- Women's Ministry Luncheon (p. 13)
- "Mosaic" 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

***"Deepening faith daily through God's Word and prayer"***

- Ash Wednesday photos (p. 5)
- Estate & Planned Giving Seminar (p. 12)

VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH • MESA, AZ

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# LENTEN SERMON SERIES: OUT OF THE DEPTHS

**Wednesday, March 4**

**"When Your Bones Ache" - Psalm 6**

There's a weariness that goes deeper than tired—when grief soaks your pillow every night and even your bones feel the weight of sorrow. The psalmist doesn't sugarcoat it: sometimes following God means walking through valleys where tears are your only companion and questions outnumber answers. But even here, especially here, we learn that God doesn't love us less in our weakness; He loves us through it.

**Wednesday, March 11**

**"The Wounds We Carry" - Psalm 38**

What do you do when the weight of your own failures becomes too heavy to bear, when even your closest friends step back, and the silence of heaven feels deafening? This is the raw honesty of Lent—acknowledging that our sin has real consequences, our wounds run deep, and sometimes we stand utterly alone with our guilt. Yet the cross proves that God doesn't wait for us to clean ourselves up; He meets us in our mess with wounds that heal our own.

**Wednesday, March 18**

**"Fading Away" - Psalm 102**

When you feel like you're disappearing—your strength gone, your purpose unclear, your prayers bouncing off the ceiling—you're closer to the cross than you realize. The afflicted one who wrote this psalm felt forgotten, withering away while the world moved on without noticing. This is the cry of everyone who's ever felt invisible, and it's the very place where Jesus became most visible, bearing the weight of our fading into his own body on the cross.

**Wednesday, March 25**

**"Satisfied In You" - Psalm 42**

Why does your soul feel so dry when you're surrounded by people telling you God should be enough? The psalmist's honesty cuts through the pretense: sometimes our thirst for God feels more like drowning in His absence, and our memories of His presence only sharpen the pain of His seeming distance. Lent doesn't promise to quench this thirst immediately—it invites us to bring our desperate, honest longing to the only one who can satisfy it, even when the wait feels unbearable.



## LENTEN WORSHIP

thru March 25, 2026

Wednesdays @ 4pm

Soup Supper @ 5pm

## SOUP SUPPERS

Thru March 25, 2026

Wednesdays @ 5:00pm

During Lent we will be serving Soup Suppers following the 4:00pm worship service.

Gluten-free option available.

\$5 suggested donation.

## DESSERTS

Please bring a pre-cut pie or dessert to help support Lenten Suppers. Listed by the first initial of your last name.

March 4	H-M	March 18	T-Z
March 11	N-S	March 25	TBD

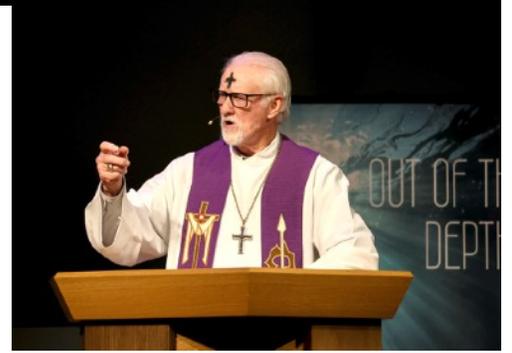
## SOUP MENU

- March 4 – Chicken with Wild Rice & French Onion (GF)
  - March 11 – Chili & Clam Chowder (GF)
  - March 18: Potato with Bacon & Split Pea (GF)
  - March 25: Chicken with Wild Rice & Broccoli Cheese (GF)
- (GF) – gluten free



SCAN ME

Ash Wednesday • February 18



## SERMON SERIES: STEPS TO THE CROSS

During Lent, our weekend worship will focus on Jesus' footsteps to the cross—His cross. But ours, too. We follow Him down that hard road, watching again and again as Jesus' kingdom collides with the kingdoms of this world—Pilate's politics, the high priests' pressure, and the crowd's fear-driven loyalty. God's reign is stronger than all of it, even when it looks powerless in a courtroom and even when "truth" is treated like a nuisance; so Jesus stays obedient, entrusting Himself to the Father and continuing steadily toward the cross. And when the crowd trades faith for Caesar, and Jesus is crucified beneath the mocking sign "King of the Jews," buried quietly in a garden, we're left with this holy tension: it looks like the world has won—but the true power of God's kingdom is already at work, and it's about to be revealed.

**February 28 & March 1, 2026**

### **"Jesus Serves" - John 13:1-17**

On the night Jesus knew His "hour" had come, He took a towel and washed His disciples' feet—showing that serving isn't a side virtue for Him, but the driving force of His Messianic leadership on the way to the cross. Psalm 51 reminds us that before we can serve like Jesus, we first must be washed by Jesus—cleansed by His mercy and given a clean heart. Then He calls us to walk in His footsteps: to take the low place, die to self, and serve others sacrificially as the cross-shaped way of life.

**March 7 & 8, 2026**

### **"Jesus Is Abandoned" - John 18:12-27**

Jesus is led deeper into the high priest's courts—alone, bound, and already tasting the abandonment that will culminate at the cross—while Peter, trying to stay close, ends up distancing himself with three painful denials. Psalm 17 gives voice to what Jesus is living in real time: an innocent sufferer entrusting Himself to the Father—"hear the right, O Lord... show Your steadfast love"—when human strength and human loyalty collapse. And if we see ourselves in Peter (warming our hands by the world's fire, choosing self-preservation over confession), this is the mercy that holds: Jesus is abandoned and denied so that failures like us are not finally forsaken, but called back, forgiven, and made faithful again.

**March 14 & 15, 2026**

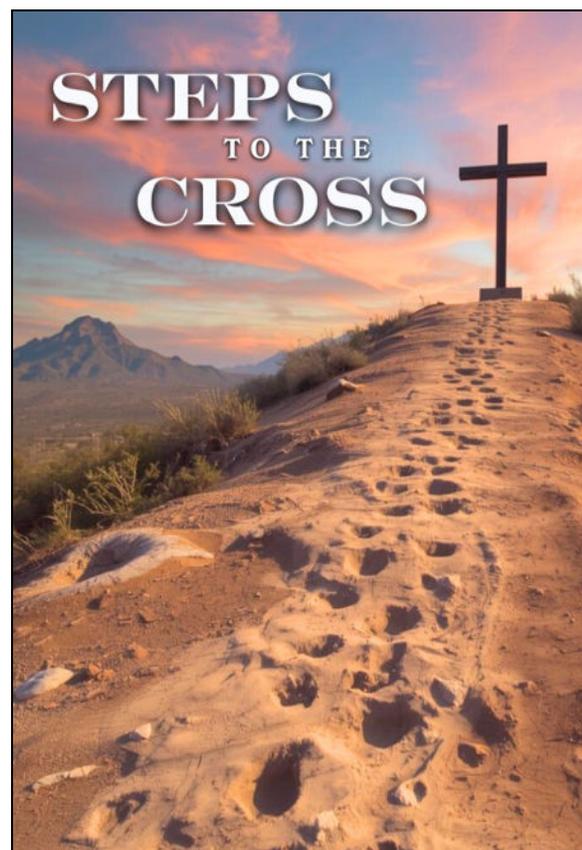
### **"Jesus Before Pilate" - John 18:28-40**

Jesus stands before Pilate—calm, bruised, and steady—while the powers of this world posture and accuse, and He quietly declares that His kingdom is not from this world and that He has come to testify to the truth. Psalm 145 lifts our eyes above the courtroom drama to the deeper reality: the Lord's kingdom is the one that truly endures—an everlasting dominion even when everything looks like it's spinning out of control. And when Pilate shrugs, "I find no case against Him," we hear the strange comfort of the Gospel: the truly innocent King is treated as guilty, so that guilty people like us can be welcomed into His unshakable kingdom of grace.

**March 21 & 22, 2026**

### **"Jesus Is Sentenced" - John 19:1-16**

Jesus' trial reaches its bitter end as the shouts of "Crucify Him!" drown out justice, and yet—through mocking soldiers, a thorny "crown," and Pilate's reluctant words—the truth keeps slipping out: Jesus really is the King. Psalm 146 steadies us here, reminding us not to place our trust in princes or public opinion, because the only ruler who never fails is the Lord who reigns forever and defends the helpless. And this is the comfort that meets us in the chaos: our true King is sentenced in our place, choosing a crown of thorns now so that sinners like us can share His everlasting kingdom later.



# HOLY WEEK

## Holy Week: Journey from Cross to Empty Tomb

Join the Victory community as we journey through the final days of Christ's passion—beginning with the joyful shouts of Palm Sunday and culminating in the glorious celebration of His resurrection on Easter morning. Each

service throughout Holy Week carries a unique atmosphere and invites us into deeper reflection on Jesus' final days and eternal love.

**PALM SUNDAY—A Triumphant Beginning:** Holy Week begins as we wave palm branches and shout "Hosanna!" remembering Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. While the crowds celebrated their long-awaited King, they did not yet understand that the story would soon travel through suffering before reaching victory.

**MAUNDY THURSDAY—Remembering the Last Supper and Garden Prayer:** On Maundy Thursday, we recall the night Jesus reinterpreted the Passover and gave us the meal of remembrance. Following dinner, they went to the Garden of Gethsemane, and there He prayed. He prayed for you. Our services include communion. Then, as the service ends, the stripping of the altar symbolizes the stripping away of Jesus' earthly life.

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS— A Personal Journey:** Stations of the Cross will be open in the Fellowship Hall on both Maundy Thursday and Good Friday from 3–8pm. These interactive stations provide a quiet, contemplative space for personal devotion, with scripture, reflections, and hands-on elements to help you meditate on the sacrifice Jesus made for you. There will be an opportunity to place a nail in the cross as you accept His gift for you.

**GOOD FRIDAY— Eternal Rest, Eternal Light:** Our Good Friday service is a solemn and powerful Tenebrae experience—"tenebrae" meaning darkness. Through the music of John Rutter's "Requiem," choir and orchestra will lead us in a musical service reflecting on the sacrifice of Jesus and hope of eternal life. This unique service includes readings, time for meditation, and reflection. Candles are gradually extinguished, symbolizing the deepening darkness as Christ approached death.

**EASTER SUNRISE—Sonrise!:** Begin Easter morning outdoors at our 6am Sunrise Service, a beloved tradition at Victory. As the sun rises, we celebrate Christ's resurrection with communion, music by our Handbell Ensemble, and a message of hope as the Light breaks the power of darkness. A continental breakfast follows from 6:45–7:45am in the Fellowship Hall.

**EASTER WEEKEND SERVICES—Jesus Is Risen!:** After walking through the sorrow and sacrifice of Holy Week, we gather in joy, hope, and triumph to celebrate the empty tomb and the new life Christ offers. Our lead pastor will be preaching from John 20, and the Traditional Easter services include soloists, choir and brass on Saturday 4pm and Sunday 8am & 9:30am. If you could use extra time to park or want to get a better seat, the 8am service will be exactly the same as 9:30am. Contemporary worship is at 11am. Children's Church is available at 9:30 and 11am.

**WORSHIP WITH US NEAR OR FAR:** If you have family or friends out of town that you would like to invite to worship with us, we will be live-streaming Holy Week. Visit [victorylutheran.com/easter](http://victorylutheran.com/easter) for more information. We look forward to experiencing the journey from cross to empty tomb with you!



Scan the QR code to learn more.



**EASTER**  
AT VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH

EASTER SERVICES  
APRIL 5 • 6AM, 8AM, 9:30AM & 11AM

**MARCH 29 - APRIL 5**

**PALM SUNDAY**  
Traditional - Saturday 4pm | Sunday 8 & 9:30am  
Contemporary - 11am

**MAUNDY THURSDAY**  
4pm & 6pm Communion

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**  
A Self-Guided Experience • Thursday & Friday, 3-7pm

**GOOD FRIDAY CANTATA**  
4pm & 6pm • Rutter Requiem • Choir & Orchestra

**EASTER SERVICES**  
Sunrise • 6am Outdoor Communion  
Traditional - Saturday 4pm | Sunday 8 & 9:30am  
Contemporary • 11am

 [VictoryLutheran.com](http://VictoryLutheran.com)  
480-830-5024  
[hello@victorylutheran.com](mailto:hello@victorylutheran.com)

Pick up your Invite Cards in the lobby!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>1</p> <p><b>COMMUNION WEEKEND</b></p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH</p> <p>8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC</p> <p>9:30am Worship, WC</p> <p>9:30am Children's Church, NR</p> <p>11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p> <p>11am Children's Church, NR</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>10am Men's Bible Study, C1</p> <p>12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> <p>1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, CH</p> <p><b>4pm Lenten Worship, WC</b></p> <p><b>5pm Soup Supper, FH</b></p> <p>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>8pm AA Meeting, C5</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH</p> <p>8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC</p> <p>9:30am Worship, WC</p> <p>9:30am Children's Church, NR</p> <p>11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p> <p>11am Children's Church, NR</p> <p><b>3pm Carlos Feliciano Concert, WC</b></p> 	<p>9</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> <p><b>1:30pm Estate &amp; Planned Giving Seminar, B7</b></p>	<p>10</p> <p>10am Esperanza Bible Study, C5</p> <p>1pm Dementia/Alzheimer Care Partner Seminar, CH</p> <p>1:30pm Mary Bible Study, meets in home</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>10am Men's Bible Study, C1</p> <p>12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> <p>1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, CH</p> <p><b>4pm Lenten Worship, WC</b></p> <p><b>5pm Soup Supper, FH</b></p> <p>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>8pm AA Meeting, C5</p>
<p>15</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH</p> <p>8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC</p> <p>9:30am Worship, WC</p> <p>9:30am Children's Church, NR</p> <p>11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p> <p>11am Children's Church, NR</p>	<p>16</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p>	<p>17</p> <p>3pm Council Meeting, B7</p> <p>6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>10am Men's Bible Study, C1</p> <p>12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> <p>1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p><b>4pm Lenten Worship, WC</b></p> <p><b>5pm Soup Supper, FH</b></p> <p>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>8pm AA Meeting, C5</p>
<p>22 <b>NOISY OFFERING</b></p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH</p> <p>8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC</p> <p>9:30am Worship, WC</p> <p>9:30am Children's Church, NR</p> <p>11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p> <p>11am Children's Church, NR</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p>	<p>24</p> <p>1:30-3:00pm Book Club, B7</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>25</p> <p><b>9am Feed My Starving Children, Bus leaves @ 8am</b></p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>10am Men's Bible Study, C1</p> <p>12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> <p>1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p><b>4pm Lenten Worship, WC</b></p> <p><b>5pm Soup Supper, FH</b></p> <p>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>8pm AA Meeting, C5</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH</p> <p>8am Worship &amp; Communion, WC</p> <p>9:30am Worship, WC</p> <p>9:30am Children's Church, NR</p> <p>11am ContemporaryWorship,WC</p> <p>11am Children's Church, NR</p>	<p>30</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> <p>4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>1 - APRIL</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry</p> <p>10am Men's Bible Study, C1</p> <p>12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> <p>1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p> <p>8pm AA Meeting, C5</p>

# Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8am-4pm, 480-830-5024

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 9:30am Women's Ministry Board Meeting, C1 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4	6 OFFICE CLOSED	7 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 2pm All About Broadway (offsite), Bus leaves @ 12:45pm 4pm Worship, WC
12 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 4:30pm Dinner at Syrup & Salt (off-site)	13 OFFICE CLOSED	14 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 11am Annual Spring Luncheon, FH 4pm Worship, WC  
19 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4	20 OFFICE CLOSED	21 <b>NOISY OFFERING</b> 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC 5:30pm Orchard: Africa Fundraiser Dinner  
26 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 3pm Foundation Meeting, B7	27 OFFICE CLOSED	28 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
2 - APRIL <b>MAUNDY THURSDAY</b> 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 3-8pm Stations of the Cross, FH 4pm Maundy Thursday Svc, WC with Communion 6pm Maundy Thursday Svc, WC with Communion	3 - APRIL <b>GOOD FRIDAY</b> 3-8pm Stations of the Cross, FH 4pm Good Friday Cantata, WC 6pm Good Friday Cantata, WC  	4 - APRIL <b>EASTER WEEKEND</b> 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC

## APRIL EVENTS

- April 2**  
Maundy Thursday  
4 & 6pm
- April 2 & 3**  
Stations of the Cross  
3-8pm
- April 3**  
Good Friday, 4 & 6pm
- April 3 & 4**  
Easter Services
- April 6**  
Office Closed
- April 12, 19, 26**  
Discovering Victory  
12:30pm
- April 13**  
Loss of Spouse, 12:30pm
- April 20**  
Estate & Planned Giving Seminar, 1:30pm
- April 20-July 20**  
GriefShare, 12:30pm
- April 21 & 22**  
Quilters Group, 8:30am



### Have you moved or changed your phone number?

Help us by making sure we have your most current information. Address forms are available at the Welcome Center or you may email Kathy at: kmichel@victorylutheran.com

- C1 = Luther Room
- CH = Community Room
- CH = Chapel
- CY = Courtyard
- FH = Fellowship Hall
- LB = Lobby
- PC = Prayer Chapel
- WC = Worship Center



2025-2026

Victory Concert Series

# Carlos Feliciano Melodías de Puerto Rico Sun, March 8, 3pm

FREE  
CONCERT!

Reception to follow  
Donations appreciated



## Melodías de Puerto Rico - Carlos Feliciano Sunday, March 8 @ 3pm

Experience an afternoon of Puerto Rican lyricism as tenor Carlos Feliciano and pianist-composer Luis Rodríguez present a vibrant program of art songs celebrating the island's poetic and musical traditions. The concert will highlight beloved folk rhythms—including the danza and décima—featuring some of Rodríguez's own evocative compositions. Join us for a performance that honors Puerto Rico's cultural heritage with elegance, passion, and contemporary artistry. Freewill offering and reception to follow.

## Good Friday Cantata - Eternal Rest, Eternal Light Friday, April 3 @ 4 & 6pm

Join us for a solemn Tenebrae service, a moving journey through the darkness of Good Friday. Through John Rutter's *Requiem*, presented by choir and orchestra, we reflect on Jesus' sacrifice and the hope of eternal life. The service includes Scripture readings, moments for meditation, and the gradual extinguishing of candles—an evocative symbol of the deepening darkness as Christ approached death. This powerful evening invites you to pause, remember, and encounter the depth of God's love.

## DISCOVERING VICTORY: YOUR INVITATION TO GO DEEPER

Three Sundays — April 12, 19, 26. One incredible opportunity to discover what God is doing at Victory Lutheran Church.

Whether you've been part of Victory for decades or you're still exploring what it means to call this place home, Discovering Victory is designed for you. This isn't just a membership class—it's the beginning of an intentional discipleship journey, and everyone is invited.

### Who Should Come?

If you've been attending Victory and wondering, "What's next for me here?"—this class is your answer. If you're considering membership but want to learn more first—perfect, come discover. If you've been a member for years but never took this class—we'd love to have you join us. And if you simply want to understand Victory's heart, mission, and vision more deeply—you belong here too.

Here's what's important: **this class is not required for membership, and it's not restricted to those who are new.** It's simply the first step in our discipleship pathway as we live out our mission: To be and make disciples of Jesus Christ. Don't miss this opportunity to discover—or rediscover—what God is doing at Victory.

To register sign up at the Welcome Desk.



## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your voice matters deeply to us — and to the future of Victory Lutheran. We are asking every member of our congregation to take a few minutes to complete a short survey so that we can continue providing ministry that is meaningful, relevant, and excellent for you and your family. Please scan the QR code below or watch for the direct link arriving in your email the first week of March — it only takes a few minutes and your input makes a real difference. Beginning March 7th, workstations will be available at the church if you need assistance completing it, and paper copies will be available at the church office upon request.





**GET YOUR TICKETS!**  
**Orchard: Africa Fundraiser Dinner**  
**Saturday, March 21 @ 5:30pm**

**Save the date for our Orchard: Africa Fundraiser Dinner** — and plan to be there. This evening will remind you why we do mission the way we do it: not as a "project," but as a partnership. For 12 years, Victory has walked alongside Orchard: Africa as they equip local churches to care for the vulnerable through practical, sustainable programs — rooted in the love and message of Jesus and strengthened through their network of Impact Centers, one of which Victory helped to build! Come celebrate what God has done, hear real stories from Victory people who have already been there, and find out how you can be involved — through giving, prayer, and (for some) the next mission team heading to South Africa this year, September 5-13, 2026!

We will be joined by **Brian LaMew from Orchard: Africa**, who will bring an encouraging, clear picture of what's happening on the ground right now — and what your generosity makes possible. Expect an atmosphere that's warm, hopeful, and personal: visual stories from past teams, tangible reminders of our shared history, and a straightforward opportunity to invest in mission that strengthens churches and impacts communities for the long haul. Come ready to bring a friend, come hungry, and come expectant — because this is about more than a dinner. It's about bearing fruit that lasts. Tickets available to purchase for \$20 at the Welcome Center.

*Note: Due to Palm Sunday, Noisy Offering will be a week earlier on March 21-22. Start collecting your change!*

“We develop and equip the local church to be the response to poverty and injustice. The church is our platform, programs are our tools and hope in Christ is our message.” - Orchard: Africa



**We will be hosting a Silent Auction** throughout the evening on March 21st to support this life-changing work. If you have quality items you'd be willing to donate — things that would genuinely bless someone and help fund

the mission — we'd love to receive them. Think gift baskets, experiences, handmade items, gift cards, or services that have real value.

Please contact the church office by March 15th if you have something meaningful to contribute.



Unlocking your Legacy

By Mark Johnson  
Development Consultant  
Recognized for his expertise in Estate planning and charitable gifting

## Estate & Planned Giving Free Seminar

Date: March 9, 2026  
Time: 1:30pm - 3pm  
Location: Victory Lutheran Church Room B7



## ESTATE & PLANNED GIVING SEMINAR

Sponsored by VLC Foundation

MARCH 9 @ 1:30PM

Don't miss this opportunity to shape your legacy and leave a lasting impact! Our presenter, Mark Johnson, is recognized for his expertise in estate planning and charitable gifting. He has presented numerous Estate Planning Workshops in churches around the country and has been a featured speaker at many conferences. Learn about the different aspects of Estate Planning and why you should plan. As you delve into the intricacies of estate planning, you'll find a multitude of compelling reasons to secure your legacy:

- Biblical Perspective on Estate Planning
- Avoid Probate
- Reduce Estate Taxes
- Leave Gifts for Your Favorite Charity
- Individual Consulting Opportunity
- And Much More!

Sign up at the Welcome Desk or register online!

## DEMENTIA/ALZHEIMER CARE PARTNER SEMINAR MARCH 10 @ 1:00PM

As you may know, the neurological condition known as Dementia that affects the brain, causing loss of memory, thinking, and reasoning has life altering effects of many individuals and families. This is a powerful three-part series on Dementia Education.

Session 3 teaches us to master three techniques that will make our days go by faster and will help keep our loved one happy and entertained. Followed by a question-and-answer section at the end of the seminar. **Adult day care is available should anyone have the need for it.** Please sign up at the Welcome Desk so that we may plan appropriately for those who will attend.

Questions? Contact Lynda Buechner at [lyndabuechner@gmail.com](mailto:lyndabuechner@gmail.com)

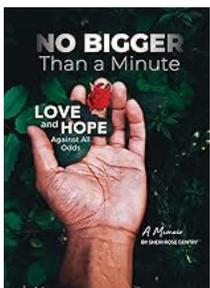


Session 3:  
March 10 @ 1pm

## Dementia | Alzheimer Care Partner Seminar

Educational Series with Tools & Resources

Meets  
2nd Tuesdays of the month @ 1pm

## VICTORY BOOK CLUB | MARCH 24 @ 1:30PM

Love to read books? The Book Club meets monthly on the 4th Tuesday from 1:30-3:00pm. Please come prepared to discuss the monthly book selection "No Bigger Than a Minute: Love and Hope Against All Odds" by Sheri Rose Gentry and Nadia Geagea Pupa. A true story about faith in the most hopeless situation. In Haiti in 1988, the author Sheri Gentry, a young idealistic missionary, risked heartbreak and ridicule to adopt a three-pound newborn whose mother was dying. Led by the Author's mother, Karen Jeske. Books available to pick up in the church office.

## ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON SATURDAY, MARCH 14 @ 11:00AM

Both men and women are warmly invited to our Annual Spring Luncheon. We've got a great program again this year! **Mosaic** serves nearly 5,000 people in 12 states. Services are designed for people with disabilities, mental and behavioral health needs and autism, as well as aging adults. Services are tailored to meet individual needs and goals, allowing people to be as independent as possible. Come learn more about what *Mosaic* is doing!

We will include a silent auction. If you feel led to contribute, we welcome donations of new or homemade gifts. Catered lunch will be served.

**Tickets \$12 | Deadline: March 8th**

### VICTORY QUILTERS

What a great group we had at our February quilting group! Twenty-three ladies came on Tuesday! We made 40 quilts and took them to the Food Pantry on Wednesday. When we delivered them, the Pantry was just opening and there was a line of clients outside. That was one of the few very cool mornings we had. They were so appreciative of the opportunity to receive a quilt.

We appreciate the fabric that has been donated. Many thanks. We will not be meeting in March, but will resume April 21 & 22 at 8:30am.

Dottie Cisek (480-250-6668) | Betty Swanson (480-234-4466)



## 2026 ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON

HOSTED BY WOMEN'S MINISTRY

### Sat, March 14, 11am

**Mosaic** serves nearly 5,000 people in 12 states. Services are tailored to meet individual needs and goals, allowing people to be as independent as possible. Services are designed for people with disabilities, mental and behavioral health needs and autism, as well as aging adults.



## GriefShare

Grief recovery support group



Hope, Healing, and Support.  
You don't have to grieve alone.

**LOSS OF SPOUSE  
1-Day Seminar  
April 13 @ 12:30pm**

[www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org)

## GriefShare®

### "LOSS OF A SPOUSE" 1-DAY SEMINAR MONDAY, APRIL 13, 12:30-2:30PM

**Widowed? Help is here and hope is possible.**

Do you dread the lonely days and nights? Wonder what to do with your spouse's belongings? Feel like your brain is in a fog? Unsure of how you'll go on?

At *Loss of a Spouse* seminar you'll discover other people who understand and have found ways to make it through, why it won't always hurt so much, reasons for hope and practical tips for coping.

**GriefShare: 12-Week Program  
Begins April 20-July 20 @ 12:30-2:30pm**

If you would like more information contact: Suellen Palya at 480-325-3410 or [suellenpalya@yahoo.com](mailto:suellenpalya@yahoo.com)

**Register online at:**

<https://find.griefshare.org/groups/290648>

## A Gift Worth Giving: The Blessing of Funeral Preplanning

I remember the phone call like it was yesterday. My dad was gone, and in an instant, our family was swept into a grief we weren't prepared for. What I didn't expect was how quickly the practical demands of death would press in on us — even in those first raw hours of loss.

While we were still processing the shock, still reaching for one another in disbelief, the questions started coming. What kind of service did he want? Where? Who should speak? What songs meant something to him? What readings? What flowers? Each decision felt impossibly heavy because we were making them through tears, without a roadmap. My dad had shared a couple of wishes with my mom — that he wanted to be cremated and his ashes buried in a cemetery. And I'll tell you, even that small amount of guidance was an anchor in the storm. But the rest of us kids didn't know. It was a surprise to us, and in that moment of grief, even a loving surprise carries weight. We were grateful for what he had shared — and it made us realize just how much more we wished we had known.

That experience changed how I think about one of the most loving things any of us can do for the people we leave behind.

### A Final Act of Love

Preplanning your funeral isn't a morbid exercise — it's a profound gift. It's a way of saying to your children, your spouse, your family: *I love you too much to leave you guessing.*

Scripture speaks clearly about the wisdom of preparation. In Proverbs 21:5, we read, *"The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."* There is a quiet dignity in thinking ahead, in ordering our affairs with care and intentionality. And Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 reminds us that *"there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens — a time to be born and a time to die."* Death is not a surprise to God. We need not be surprised by it either.

The Apostle Paul, writing from prison and facing his own mortality, said with remarkable peace in Philippians 1:21, *"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."* That kind of confidence — rooted in the resurrection hope we share as believers — is exactly what allows us to talk about death without fear, and to prepare for it without dread.

When we preplan, we don't just spare our families from impossible decisions made in the fog of grief. We also get to tell our story one last time. We get to choose the hymns that carried us through hard seasons, the scriptures that anchored our faith, the words we want spoken over us as we are laid to rest. We get to make sure that our funeral service reflects not just who we were, but *whose* we were.

### It's Easier Than You Think

Here at Victory, we want to make this process as simple and meaningful as possible. We have put together a funeral planning packet that will walk you through everything step by step — guiding you through your wishes in a thoughtful and unhurried way, and giving your family the clarity and comfort they will need when the time comes.

Simply stop by the church office to pick up your packet. There is no pressure and no appointment needed — just take one home, fill it out at your own pace, and know that you have given your family one of the most loving gifts imaginable. I genuinely encourage every one of you to

take this step. Don't let your family face what mine faced — scrambling for answers while their hearts are breaking.

### A Hope That Anchors Everything

As Christians, we plan for our funerals from a place of hope, not fear. Jesus said in John 11:25-26, *"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die."* That promise changes everything. It means our funeral services are not just endings — they are declarations of faith, celebrations of a life lived in grace, and a testimony to a resurrection that is coming.

So plan well. Plan with hope. And give your family the gift of knowing exactly how to honor you when that day arrives.

Funeral planning packets are available at the church office. Stop by anytime during office hours to pick yours up.

In Christ,



Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor



# MARCH

## SINGLES – PLUS COUPLES FOR ALL EVENTS!

### EVERYONE WELCOME! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!

#### Events This Month:

*Note: Deadlines to sign up for theater events are typically 2-5 weeks in advance in order to get group discounts and seating together.*

#### All About Broadway (Off Site – Bus)

**Saturday, March 7, 2:00 pm (Bus leaves at 12:45 pm)**

**Queen Creek Arts Center, 22149 E Ocotillo Rd, Queen Creek**

Hear songs by Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, and Rodgers & Hammerstein, and current hits from Hamilton, Mamma Mia, Neil Diamond's Beautiful Noise, Phantom of the Opera, Wicked, Moulin Rouge, Smash and many more! All with a live 10-piece orchestra! (*Tickets for this event are no longer available.*)



#### Dinner at Syrup & Salt (Off Site – No Bus)

**Thursday, March 12, 4:30 pm, 1221 S Gilbert Rd #35, Mesa (SE corner Gilbert and Southern)**

Great menu variety – burgers, sandwiches, dinner salads, and dinners with steak, chicken and seafood entrees and sides, plus appetizers to start and desserts to end a wonderful meal. Prices are around \$15 to \$35 depending on your choices.

**Sign up by Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.**



#### Feed My Starving Children (Off Site – Bus)

**Wednesday, March 25**

**Packing Session 9:00-11:00 am (Bus leaves at 8:00 am), 1100 W Grove Parkway, Tempe**

FMSC provides free nutritious children's meals (containing vitamins, soy protein & dehydrated vegetables) to a network of humanitarian and religious mission partners in some 70 countries around the world. They in turn are responsible for shipping costs and the distribution of the meals to schools, churches, orphanages, community centers, medical clinics and feeding programs. Historically, more than 99% of FMSC meals have safely reached



their intended destinations. You can be a part of this successful program. Join us on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month at the Tempe packing facility – you can stand and package food, or sit and label it.

**The bus is FREE for this event! Sign up by Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

#### Next Month:

*Note: We are now paying the bus driver an hourly rate and also paying VLC a mileage charge for using the bus. Because of this, the charge to ride the bus will now vary depending on where we're going.*

#### Always...Patsy Cline (Off Site – Bus Optional)

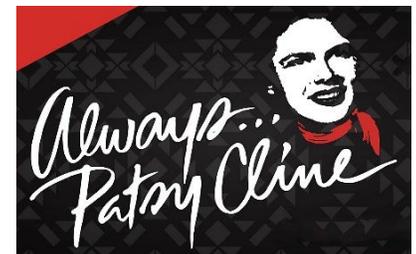
**Tuesday, April 17, 7:30 pm (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)**

**Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert**

This heartfelt musical play is based on a true story about Patsy Cline's friendship with a fan who befriended her in a Texas honky-tonk. Come hear many of Patsy's unforgettable hits such as "Crazy," "I Fall to Pieces," "Sweet Dreams" & "Walking After Midnight." 27 songs in all!

**Tickets are \$45, and the bus is \$7. Sign up by Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup>.**

**Pay \$52 if you are taking the bus, or \$45 if you're not taking the bus.**



**NOTE: All tickets will be handed out on the bus or in the lobby of the event site.**

  
**LENT**  
IS A JOURNEY THAT MOVES US  
TOWARDS THE CROSS



**WORSHIP WITH US!**

Saturdays 4pm

Sundays 8, 9:30 & 11am



**WATCH US LIVE @ 9:30 & 11am**

If you are unable to watch at that exact time, the service is available to watch on Facebook, YouTube and online at [VictoryLutheran.com](http://VictoryLutheran.com).

**NEED SOME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT?**

Subscribe to our daily devotional by texting the word **victory** to **888-897-5573**

*Lenten Worship*

Learn more at [VictoryLutheran.com/lent](http://VictoryLutheran.com/lent)

Or scan the QR code with your smart phone's camera and tap on the link.

