

## Sermon Notes

### Daily Bible Readings (February 22-28)

Sun: John 11:17-27 — Faith in the Waiting  
Mon: John 11:32-44 — Tears and the Command  
Tues: Isaiah 53:1-6 — A Man of Sorrows  
Wed: Ezekiel 37:1-14 — Valley of Dry Bones  
Thurs: Romans 8:9-17 — The Spirit Who Gives Life  
Fri: Psalm 130 — Out of the Depths  
Sat: Revelation 21:1-5 — All Things New

## Life Notes

### Steps to the Cross #1: "Jesus Raises Lazarus" John 11:14-15, 17-27, 39-44

#### Opener:

When has waiting for something longer than expected actually changed the outcome—or changed you?

#### Go Deeper: (Exploring the Bible)

1. **Read John 11:17-27.** How does Jesus shift Martha from a future hope ("the last day") to a present reality ("I am the resurrection")?
2. **Read John 11:33-35 and Isaiah 53:3-4.** What does Jesus' intense emotion tell us about how God feels about death and suffering?
3. **Compare John 11:43 with Genesis 1:3 and Ezekiel 37:4-5.** What pattern do you see when God speaks?
4. **Read Hebrews 4:15-16.** How does the scene at Lazarus's tomb show that Jesus "sympathizes with our weaknesses"?
5. **Read Romans 8:11.** How does connecting Lazarus's story to this promise change the way you view the "dead places" in your own life?

#### Live It: (Applying to Our Lives)

1. Where are you struggling to trust who God is because of what you're experiencing?
2. Have you ever felt the weight of thinking you "didn't believe hard enough"? How does Martha's story speak to that?
3. Jesus wept at a grave He was about to open. Where do you need permission to grieve and trust at the same time?
4. What's one area of your life where Jesus might be saying, "Roll the stone away"? What makes that feel risky?
5. Jesus told the crowd, "Unbind him and let him go." Who in your life needs help stepping into freedom? What's one thing you could do this week?

## Upcoming Week

### Sunday, February 22

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

### Monday, February 23

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
**10am Hunter Bennett's Memorial (Livestream), WC**  
12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, C4  
4pm Confirmation Class, C1

### Tuesday, February 24

1:30-3pm Book Club, B7  
7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5

### Wednesday, February 25

**9am Feed My Starving Children Bus leaves @ 8am**  
9-11:30am Food Pantry  
10am Men's Bible Study, C1  
12:30pm AI-Anon, C4  
1pm Bell Rehearsal, CH  
**4pm Lenten Worship, WC**  
**5pm Soup Supper, FH**  
6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC  
8pm AA Meeting, C5

### Thursday, February 26

10am Prayer Group, B7  
11am AI-Anon Meeting, C5

### Friday, February 27

OFFICE CLOSED

### Saturday, February 28

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 | VictoryLutheran.com  
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8am-4pm



VictoryLutheran\_Guest  
Password: Victory\_46

# STEPS TO THE CROSS



FEBRUARY 21 & 22, 2026

## Jesus Raises Lazarus John 11:17-44



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor  
Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor  
Renée Bennett, Discipleship Pastor  
Dirk Duhlstine, Chaplain  
Kristin Holton Prouty, Director of Worship & Music



Connect with us!



## GOD TIME: A Message from Your Council President

As we move forward into this year at Victory Lutheran, I reflect on how God has truly blessed me—and more importantly, how He has blessed this church and all who welcome Him as our Savior. God richly blessed this congregation in 2025, and we trust His loving hands will continue to guide and comfort us throughout 2026.

Two years ago, my wife Lupe and I joined Victory after our very first visit. We experienced a vibrant, loving community that welcomed us with smiles and warm handshakes. That welcome made our decision easy and continues to remind us that Jesus is present at Victory as we walk this joyful journey together. From our clergy and staff, to the Music Ministry, to the strong emphasis on discipleship, volunteerism, and Victory Forward, the spirit across our church family reflects genuine care and a desire for all to know the love of Christ more deeply.

As the newly elected President of your Church Council, and on behalf of the entire Council, thank you for your generous contributions of time, talents, and treasures. In a world filled with uncertainty and competing priorities, your faithfulness makes a difference. During 2025, the Council had concerns about meeting our budget goals, but through your year-end generosity, we were able to finish the year meeting our financial commitments. Thank you for helping keep Victory a healthy and forward-thinking community. The year ahead brings new opportunities for each of us to grow in our walk with Jesus. I look forward to serving alongside our Victory family. With your prayers and support, we will continue to grow stronger. Your Council remains committed to valuing your gifts and carefully stewarding both the daily needs and the future vision of Victory, trusting God for what He has planned.

Larry Hellem  
Victory Council President

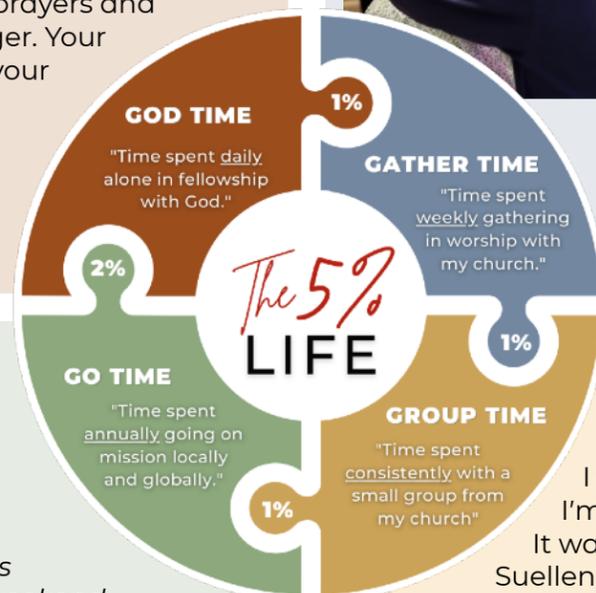


Victory Council 2026

## GATHER TIME: Ash Wednesday Service Highlights



Ash  
Wednesday



## GO TIME: Thank You for Your Help - Texas Flooding

Last summer Victory Lutheran collected an offering for those affected by the horrendous flooding in Texas. Thanks to your generosity, we raised **\$9,495.00** for the cause. Their needs are ongoing and Zion Lutheran Church wanted to offer their gratitude for our generous donation. Here is an excerpt from their 'thank you' letter:

*"Your donation will be used in support of both the first responders and the individuals directly affected by the Hill Country Flood disaster that occurred over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. We are assisting those affected by the floods in the towns of Hunt, Ingram, Kerrville, Comfort, and Center Point.*

*We are providing gift cards (Walmart, Home Depot, Lowe's, Valero, Visa, and American Express) as well as checks so individuals can purchase the items they need to bring some semblance of normalcy back into their lives and start to rebuild.*

*Please know that your contributions, and those of others as well, are so greatly appreciated.*

*Every dollar of the donations we receive will be spent directly in support of those in need."*

Thank you, Victory, for helping those in need!



## GROUP TIME: GriefShare Testimonies

Tom & I had been attending Victory Lutheran for years, and when he died I knew about GriefShare, but felt I didn't need it.

I tried to do this journey by myself but one day I knew I needed help.

I'm so happy I came to GriefShare.

It was so comforting and helpful.

Suellen and Blair were so wonderful and helped me so much. Then I realized I needed a purpose in my life & decided GriefShare was where I wanted to be.

It has really changed my life. ~ Gail Pankow

I live in Oregon in the summer and Arizona in the winter with my husband Jerry. I had 2 sons and 4 step daughters and 6 wonderful grandchildren. We have been married for 38 years. I first came to GriefShare in the fall of 2022. I lost my younger son, Tim in September of 2021. It was devastating and I didn't feel I was progressing and was getting more depressed so my step daughter suggested a grief share group. That is when I found this wonderful group at Victory Lutheran. It has helped me so much and I have made wonderful friends who understand my feelings and emotions.

I have been a facilitator for about 2 months. I help greet people at the door and try to make them feel welcome. I am hoping to give back to others who are going through the grief process and share my journey to give them the hope that I now have. ~ Lorna Calhoun



Katherine, Gail, Lorna & Suellen