

ALLELUIA HE IS RISEN

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday* 4pm & 6pm
Good Friday Cantata 4pm & 6pm
Stations of the Cross Experience
April 17 & 18, 3-8pm

EASTER SERVICES

Outdoor Sunrise* 6am
Traditional 8am, 9:30am
4pm Saturday
Continental Breakfast 6:45-7:45am
Contemporary & Children's Church 11am
*with communion

Learn more at: victorylutheran.com/easter
or scan the QR code above



SCAN ME



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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VictoryLutheran.com



EASTER CHANGES EVERYTHING

“Because I live, you also will live.” - John 14:19

Every year, Easter comes like sunrise—and every year, we need it just as much as the year before.

On April 4 and 5, we will gather to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We will sing with joy and hear again the good news that the tomb is empty. Jesus Christ is risen indeed. But Easter is not just a weekend we celebrate. It is the truest thing about every day that follows.

That is why Jesus' words in John 14 matter so deeply: “Because I live, you also will live.” He does not speak in the past tense, as if resurrection were only something to remember. He speaks in the present. Jesus lives now. He is not merely a figure from history, but the risen Lord who is still present with His people—still forgiving, still leading, still strengthening, still calling, still comforting.

That means Easter reaches far beyond the sanctuary. It speaks into hospital rooms, grieving hearts, uncertain futures, quiet disappointments, and all the ordinary places where daily life unfolds. The resurrection means your sins are forgiven, your future is secure, and even death does not get the final word.

Easter is not the end of the story. It is the turning point that gives meaning to all of life. Because Jesus lives, we do not simply look back with gratitude; we walk forward with hope.

As we make our way to Easter, I hope you will join us throughout Holy Week for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Stations of the Cross, and our Easter weekend services—including our 6:00 a.m. Sunrise Service. Come and walk the story with us all the way to the empty tomb—and the living hope that is ours in Christ.

Christ is risen!

Pastor Todd Mathison
Pastor Todd Mathison



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** in the Welcome Center..



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 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
480-830-5024
hello@victorylutheran.com

Pick up your Invite Cards in the lobby!

STEPS TO THE CROSS

April 4 & 5 - "Believing Is More Than Seeing" - John 18:1-18

On Easter morning, Peter and John see the empty tomb and begin to believe something extraordinary has happened, yet John tells us they still did not understand from Scripture that Jesus had to rise from the dead. Mary, for her part, is given something even greater—the risen Jesus standing right in front of her—and still she does not recognize Him until He calls her by name. That is why Easter matters so much for us today: saving faith is not produced merely by seeing evidence or grasping facts, but by the living Christ who comes to us through His Word, opens our hearts to understand the Scriptures, and personally calls us from sorrow, confusion, and unbelief into resurrection faith.

NEW SERIES: NEVER BEYOND HIS REACH

No wound is too deep, no past too broken, and no life too far gone for the Savior who still seeks, restores, and saves. *Never Beyond His Reach* proclaims the relentless mercy of the risen Jesus, who keeps drawing near to people in fear, grief, failure, doubt, and darkness. Again and again, these resurrection accounts show that faith is not something we stir up on our own, but a gift Christ creates as He comes to us through His Word, His presence, and His grace.

April 11 & 12 - "Cleopas Plus One" - Luke 24:13-16, 27-32, 35

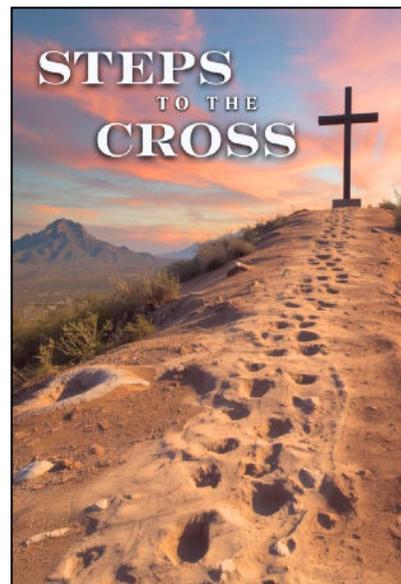
On the road to Emmaus, two grieving disciples walk with the risen Jesus without realizing He is the very One they need most. As He opens the Scriptures and then makes Himself known in the breaking of the bread, their sorrow gives way to burning hearts, opened eyes, and living faith. Even today, Jesus comes near to confused, weary people through His Word and His gifts, proving that His people are never beyond His reach.

April 18 & 19 - "Thomas" - John 18:24-29

Thomas is not beyond Jesus' reach, even in his doubt, because the risen Lord comes to him personally and gives what Thomas could never produce for himself. Jesus does not tell him to work up more confidence or manufacture stronger belief, but comes with His wounds, His Word, and His peace—and through that gracious encounter creates the faith He seeks. That is our hope as well: faith is not something we achieve for Jesus, but a gift He gives as He comes to His fearful and faltering people.

April 25 & 26 - "Peter" - John 21:15-19

Beside another charcoal fire, Peter learns that not even his denial has placed him beyond the reach of the risen Jesus, who comes not to shame him, but to restore him. With each question and each word of forgiveness, Jesus reaches into Peter's failure, calls forth love where there had been fear, and entrusts him once again with the care of His sheep. That is the hope of this Gospel: our sin may wound us deeply, but it cannot put us beyond the reach of the Savior who still forgives, restores, and calls His people forward.

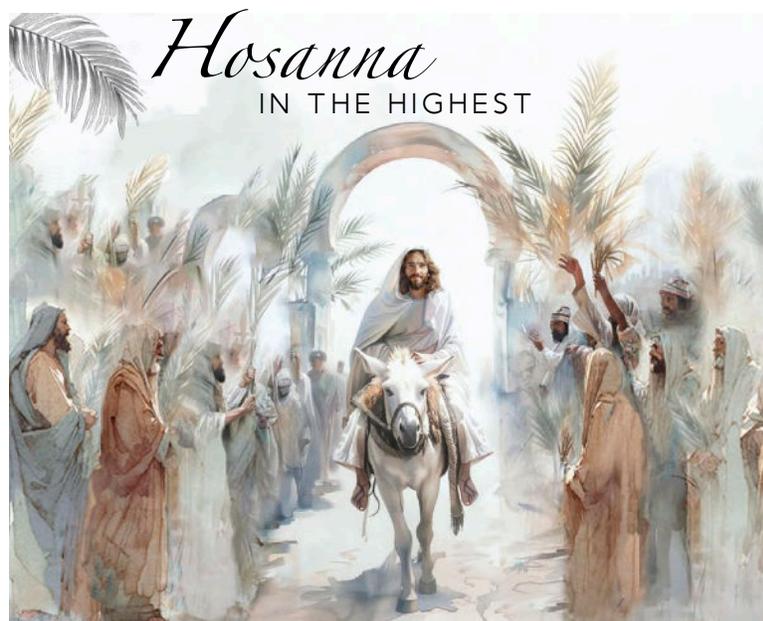


WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your voice matters deeply to us — and to the future of Victory Lutheran. If you haven't already, we are asking everyone 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 — it only takes a few minutes and your input makes a real difference. Paper copies are available at the Welcome Center upon request.



Welcome

Welcome Heidi Somers to the Victory staff! As our new Church Bookkeeper Heidi will take on the accounts receivable role previously done by Kathy Michel who is retiring at the end of April. Heidi will also do accounts payable and payroll that has been done by Diane Snyder, as Diane will take over Kathy's other duties. Please stop by the office during the week to meet Heidi and welcome her to Victory!

MEET HEIDI SOMERS

My husband Jim and I moved to Arizona from Massachusetts six years ago. We had been vacationing in Arizona for 20 years with our two children and knew someday we would call Arizona home.

MY FAITH BACKGROUND:

Jim and I were very involved in our church back in Rowley, Massachusetts. I don't think there was a position that one of us didn't have. For me the most meaningful work was chaperoning and assisting the Youth Group. I felt my own Youth Group shaped me when I was young and I wanted to make sure it would be there for others.

SCRIPTURES THAT I TURN TO OFTEN:

John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Psalms 121 - *I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

MY FAMILY:

Family is everything to me, and my husband I feel incredibly blessed that both our children married people we love and respect and fit seamlessly into our lives. They are our ultimate travel/adventure buddies, and we have seen some very beautiful places in our travels with them.



OTHER THINGS THAT INTEREST ME:

I love landscape/garden design; the challenge of taking the worst part of a yard and making it the first thing you want to see after being away.



THANK YOU KATHY MICHEL

Since 2017 Kathy has served the Lord and Victory with passion, professionalism, and purpose! Members and visitors have interacted with Kathy on a daily basis in a variety of ways including class registrations and check-ins, giving records, and changes in membership, to name a few. Kathy also coordinated baptisms, weddings, and funerals with great care. Her exceptional gifts, years of experience, and tender heart were enhanced by her infectious smile and sense of humor. With her longevity on staff and at Victory, she has often been relied upon for her knowledge of people and events and "how

Please join us in celebrating Kathy Michel on **Sunday, April 26, 9-11am**

In the Fellowship Hall

We want to send her off on her adventures with appreciation and love.

we do things at Victory". Besides her roles on staff, Kathy has also coordinated Family Promise for many years, is an usher at the 11am service, and steps in to serve wherever needed.

Kathy is retiring at the end of April and plans to travel with her husband, Lance. Lance is also a dedicated volunteer who ushers with Kathy, is the leader of the Medical Emergency Response Team, and volunteers at the Food Pantry.



Genealogy: I can trace my roots to the first crusades! It is interesting to see how roots have played a role in shaping our world.

Music: Jim and I love live music. We often host "Music on the Patio" on Sunday afternoons in cooler months. It's a BYOG (guitar) event and to me a nice old-fashioned way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

Thrifting reimaged: Creativity for me is like oxygen. I enjoy perusing thrift stores and creating something new out of something discarded.

I am thrilled to be part of the Victory Lutheran Team and getting to know all of you!

Heidi Somers

Melodías de Puerto Rico - Carlos Feliciano

March 8, 2026

Thank you to everyone who joined us on Sunday for *Melodías de Puerto Rico*. It was a beautiful afternoon celebrating the island's rich musical and poetic traditions.

We are especially grateful to tenor Carlos Feliciano and pianist-composer Luis Rodríguez for sharing their extraordinary talent and passion. Their performance of Puerto Rican art songs and folk rhythms made for a truly memorable experience.



"Being transformed by our joyful and loving church"

- Sermon Series (p. 4)
- Holy Week Line-up (p. 3)
- Concert Recap (p. 6)



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

- Small Groups (p. 12)
- Victory Book Club (p. 14)
- GriefShare: Loss of Spouse (p. 13)
- Quilters Group (p. 15)
- Victory Connections (p. 18 & 19)



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

- Orchard: Africa Fundraiser (p. 13)
- Stephen Ministry (p. 8 & 9)
- Women's Ministry Luncheon (p. 15)

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

- Estate & Planned Giving Seminar (p. 14)

Have You Picked Up Your Packet Yet?

Last month I shared something personal — the story of losing my dad, and how even the smallest amount of preplanning made a difference for our family in those first difficult hours of grief. I talked about the gift that documenting your final wishes is for the people you love, and I invited you to stop by the office and pick up a funeral planning packet to get started. I want to come back to that this month — because if you haven't picked one up yet, this is your gentle nudge.

A Reminder Worth Repeating

Life moves fast. We read something that resonates, we intend to act on it, and then the week gets away from us. I understand that completely. But this is one of those things that is genuinely worth circling back to, because the window to do it thoughtfully — without urgency, without pressure, without grief clouding every decision — is right now, while life is good and the people you love are near.

Proverbs 21:5 tells us that *"the plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty."* There is no more diligent act of love than sitting down while you have the time and the clarity to document exactly what you want, so that your family never has to guess.

If you picked up a packet last month — wonderful. If it is still sitting on your kitchen counter, this is your sign to open it. And if you haven't stopped by the office yet, please do. It costs you nothing but a little time, and it gives your family everything they will need in one of the hardest moments of their lives.

Funeral planning packets are available in the Welcome Center. Just stop by during office hours — no appointment, no pressure, take it home and work through it at your own pace.

Something New Worth Knowing About

While we are on the topic of honoring the end of life well, I want to make sure our entire congregation is aware of something that not everyone may know we have right here at Victory — our **Columbarium**. Located just outside our Worship Center on the church grounds, our Columbarium provides a sacred and dignified place of interment for cremated remains. Individual niches are available for

purchase, and for many families, the idea of having a loved one's remains resting close to the community of faith they called home is a source of real and lasting comfort.

Think about what this place means to you. The worship, the relationships, the milestones of faith you have marked within these walls and on these grounds. Our columbarium offers the opportunity for that connection to continue — a resting place that is not distant or unfamiliar, but close to everything that mattered most.

For those who are preplanning, this is absolutely worth exploring as part of that conversation. And for families who have recently experienced a loss, please know that this option is available to you as well.

A Hope That Makes All of This Possible

None of us would be able to have this conversation — calmly, openly, without dread — apart from the hope we carry as followers of Jesus. The promise of John 11:25 is the foundation under everything: *"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."*

Because of that promise, planning for the end of our lives is not an act of fear. It is an act of faith. It is trusting that God holds what comes next, and loving our families enough to

handle what we can while we are still here to do it.

Don't put it off any longer. Pick up your packet. Ask about our columbarium. And give the people you love the gift of knowing you thought of them — all the way to the end.

To learn more about our Columbarium and available niches, reach out to Kathy Michel in the church office at kmichel@victorylutheran.com. She is happy to answer your questions and help you explore whether this is the right choice for you and your family.

In Christ,



Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor



Stephen Ministries 50th Anniversary Celebration • February 21, 2026

On February 21st, twelve of our Stephen Ministers and leaders attended the 50th-anniversary celebration of Stephen Ministry in Phoenix. This ministry has been an integral part of the Victory family for 30 years; in fact, our church may hold the longest continual Stephen Ministry program in the United States.

Rev. Kenneth Haugk and his wife founded the ministry with nine church members trained to supplement pastoral care. The program is named after Saint Stephen, one of the seven deacons in the early church who distributed aid to those in need (Acts 6:5).

As Dr. Haugk steps down as Executive Director to focus on expanding the ministry's scope, he is succeeded by Justin Schlueter, who shares the same down-to-earth passion for the mission. The mission that is rooted in Ephesians 4:12-13: *"to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ."*

At the celebration were immediately struck by the genuine warmth and care shown by the large team that traveled from St. Louis to Phoenix. Beyond their impressive competence, their passion for building a more caring world was truly inspiring. They spoke on many important subjects including: 1. What Jesus teaches us about empathy. 2. How to relate to those who are grieving. 3. How our congregation can help combat the mental health crisis. 4. How to care for those with cancer and their loved ones. 5. How to support someone who is a full-time caregiver.

The future for Stephen Ministries looks promising. They have trained over 600,000 Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders in more than 14,000 congregations and we are fortunate to be involved in such a Christ like and essential ministry.

If you have any questions, please contact one of our Stephen Leaders, (Dirk Duhlstine, Anne Mathison and Carol Masslich) or check out stephenministries.org. **Victory will begin training new Stephen Ministers this fall!**



Stephen Ministry Leaders

Chaplain Dirk Duhlstine • dduhlstine@victorylutheran.com • 480-660-5231

Anne Mathison • mathisonanne@gmail.com

Carol Masslich • carolnobl@icloud.com



Christ caring for people through people

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry "Open House"

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."
- Galatians 6:2

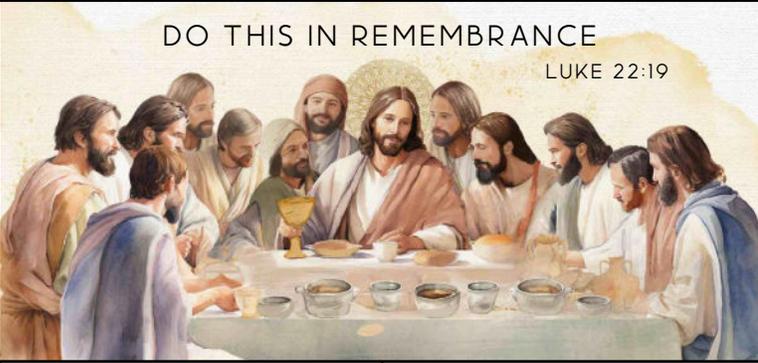
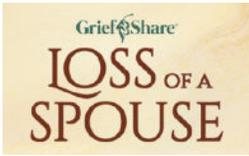
Thank you to everyone who joined us for our recent Stephen Ministry Open House. It was a meaningful time of connection, encouragement, and learning as we gathered to explore how we can better care for those facing illness and crisis.

During this special event, attendees engaged in a thoughtful discussion on "7 Ways to Care During a Major Medical Crisis," gaining practical, Christ-centered tools to support loved ones and members of our community during life's most difficult moments. Together, we reflected on the importance of offering our presence, listening with intention, and resisting the urge to "fix" situations, choosing instead to walk alongside others with compassion.

We also shared helpful insights on hospital visitation, including simple but important dos and don'ts, and provided an introduction to Stephen Ministry—highlighting how this vital ministry serves as a source of comfort and care within our church family.

We are truly grateful for each person who attended, asked questions, and showed a heart for caring ministry. Your presence made the time rich and impactful. If you were unable to attend but would like to learn more about Stephen Ministry or how to get involved, we would love to connect with you. Please feel free to reach out to one our Stephen Ministry Leaders.



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
<p>DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE LUKE 22:19</p> 		<p>MONTH OF APRIL WATER DRIVE</p> 	<p>1 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, CH 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p>
<p>5 EASTER WEEKEND 6am Outdoor Sunrise 6:45-7:45am Continental Breakfast, FH 8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC 9:30am Children's Church, NR 11am ContemporaryWorship,WC 11am Children's Church, NR</p>	<p>6 OFFICE CLOSED 9-11:30am Food Pantry</p>	<p>7 6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5 7:30pm "Always...Patsy Cline" (offsite), Bus leaves @ 6:30pm</p>	<p>8 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, CH 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p>
<p>12 8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC 9:30am Children's Church, NR 11am ContemporaryWorship,WC 11am Children's Church, NR 12:30pm Discovering Victory</p>	<p>13 9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30-2:30pm GriefShare Loss of Spouse, C4 4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p> 	<p>14 10am Esperanza Bible Study, C5 11:30am Lunch @ Red Mountain Café (off-site) 1:30pm Mary Bible Study, meets in home 6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>15 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p>
<p>19 8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC 9:30am Children's Church, NR 11am ContemporaryWorship,WC 11am Children's Church, NR 12:30pm Discovering Victory</p>	<p>20 9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4 1:30pm Estate & Planned Giving Seminar, B7 4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p>	<p>21 8:30-2:30pm Quilters, FH 3pm Council Meeting, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p> 	<p>22 8:30-11:30am Quilters, FH 9am Feed My Starving Children, Bus leaves @ 8am 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p>
<p>26 8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9-11am Farewell Reception for Kathy Michel, FH 9:30am Worship, WC 9:30am Children's Church, NR 11am ContemporaryWorship,WC 11am Children's Church, NR 12:30pm Discovering Victory</p>	<p>27 9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4 4pm Confirmation Class, C1</p>	<p>28 1:30-3:00pm Book Club, B7 6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p> 	<p>29 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC</p>

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



THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 MAUNDY THURSDAY 9:30am Women's Ministry Board Meeting, C1 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 GOOD FRIDAY 3-8pm Stations of the Cross, FH 4pm Good Friday Cantata, WC 6pm Good Friday Cantata, WC 	4 EASTER WEEKEND 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
9 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5	10 OFFICE CLOSED	11 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
16 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4	17 OFFICE CLOSED	18 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
23 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5	24 OFFICE CLOSED	25 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
30 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5	1 - MAY OFFICE CLOSED 7:30pm "She Loves Me" Show (offsite), Bus leaves @ 6:30pm	2 - MAY 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC

MAY EVENTS



May 6

Prayer & Praise Worship Service, 4pm

May 12

Women's Bible Study Group Combined, 9:30am

May 19 & 20

Quilters, 8:30am

May 25 - Office Closed
Memorial Day

May 30 & 31

Noisy Offering



Victory's Weekly bulletin

In case you missed any of the stories or would like to read again, you go to below to read or share!

victorylutheran.com/the-pulse/

If you have a story to share of healing, praise, gratitude, serving in a mission or ministry at Victory, please send to

hello@victorylutheran.com.
(250-300 word limit)

C1 = Luther Room
 C4 = Community Room
 CH = Chapel
 CY = Courtyard
 FH = Fellowship Hall
 LB = Lobby
 PC = Prayer Chapel
 WC = Worship Center



DON'T WAIT UNTIL LIFE FALLS APART

One of the easiest mistakes to make in the Christian life is to assume we can build meaningful friendships later. Later, when life slows down. Later, when we have more time. Later, when we finally need people. But that is usually not how life works.

Most people do not go looking for a strong Christian support system when life is calm. They start looking when the diagnosis comes, when grief hits, when the marriage is strained, when loneliness deepens, or when faith feels harder to hold onto. And in those moments, what we need most is not a room full of strangers. We need people who already know us, care about us, pray for us, and will walk with us. That kind of support has to be built before the crisis arrives.

That is one of the great blessings of Small Groups. At Victory, "Group Time" is bigger than just one format. It includes small groups, discipling huddles, Bible studies, and serving teams, because we believe you were not made to go through life alone. Victory even puts it in a memorable challenge: give 1% of your month—about seven hours—to intentional Christian community. It is a small investment that can strengthen the other 95% of your life in powerful ways.

For some people, that starts in a Bible study, where friendships grow around God's Word. For others, it looks like a small group built on prayer, conversation, encouragement, and shared life. And for others, it begins on a serving team. Sometimes the people you serve beside become your "posse"—the people who know your heart, notice when you are missing, encourage your faith, and stand with you when life gets hard. Serving shoulder to shoulder has a way of turning ministry into community, and community into a lifeline.



The beautiful thing is that this does not have to be complicated. At Victory small groups are people growing in faith together through honest conversation, encouragement, and a deeper walk with God. We also encourage you to begin with people you may already know—neighbors, coworkers, golf buddies, card-playing friends, gym friends, and others who could benefit from doing life together.

So do not wait until life falls apart to wish you had Christian people around you. Join a Bible Study now! Step into a Small Group now. Serve on a team now. Let God start building your circle now, so that when life gets heavy—and it will—you already have brothers and sisters in Christ beside you.

To learn more about joining or hosting a group, contact Pastor Denton
hello@victorylutheran.com | 480-830-5024

Visit: victorylutheran.com/smallgroups





Be On A Mission Team That Changes Lives South Africa Mission Trip: September 4-14, 2026

For 15 years, Victory has been blessed to partner with **Orchard: Africa**, a Christ-centered ministry that exists to equip the church to care for the vulnerable. Through local churches and pastors already serving in under-resourced communities, Orchard brings practical help and the hope of Christ to people in both rural and urban South Africa. Their work focuses on Food & Agriculture, Care, Education, and Ministry. The church is the platform, the programs are the tools, and hope in Christ is the message.

**"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 also want to celebrate the generosity of our Victory family through last month's **Noisy Offering**, which raised **\$2,485.60** in support of this mission partnership. Thank you! Your gifts help strengthen a mission that is thoughtful, effective, and deeply rooted in local communities through leaders who are truly "feet on the ground" every day.

Victory has supported Orchard not only through financial gifts and donated resources, but also by sending volunteer teams regularly to South Africa. Most recently, through Own This Impact, we helped fund the construction of an Impact Center. Now we are preparing to send another mission team to **Cape Town, South Africa, September 4-14, 2026.**

Seriously pray about going. This is more than a trip. More than sightseeing. More than an excursion. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to step into something with eternal meaning. You will be a blessing to others, but you will also be changed yourself. God has a way of using these experiences to stretch our hearts, deepen our faith, and open our eyes to His work in the world.

This invitation is for both our year-round and seasonal people. In fact, previous teams have included folks who summer elsewhere, and we can help arrange travel from and back to the airport of your choice so you can connect with the team in South Africa. And especially for those who have ever thought, *Maybe someday—*

now may be the time to go, while you are still able-bodied and able to make the trip. The mission projects and schedule are well suited for a congregation like Victory.

So please pray about joining Pastor Todd and Anne on this mission venture. It will bless you as much as you will be a blessing to others.

To learn more, email hello@victorylutheran.com or call the office at 480-830-5024. We would love to talk with you, pray with you, and answer any questions you may have. **Brochures** are available in the Welcome Center.



**Watch Video >
The Orchard — How We Got Our Name**

Estate & Planned Giving Seminars
by Mark Johnson

Unlocking your Legacy



ESTATE & PLANNED GIVING SEMINAR

Sponsored by VLC Foundation

MONDAY, APRIL 20 @ 1:30-3:00PM

This will be the final estate planning seminar of the season—so don't miss your opportunity to take advantage of this valuable time. Join us for an engaging and informative session with Mark Johnson, a trusted expert who has helped guide countless individuals and families through the estate planning process. In a warm and approachable setting, you'll gain practical insight into wills, trusts, charitable giving, and more—equipping you to make confident decisions about your future. Whether you're just beginning or updating an existing plan, this seminar offers the clarity and peace of mind you need to secure your legacy.

**SIGN UP
in the
Welcome
Center!**

Biblical Perspective on Estate Planning

Avoid Probate

Reduce Estate Taxes

Leave Gifts for Your Favorite Charity

Individual Consulting Opportunity



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

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

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

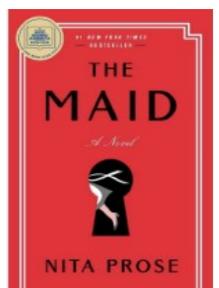
Register online at:

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

VICTORY BOOK CLUB | APRIL 28 @ 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 "The Maid" by Nita Prose. Molly the Maid's orderly life is upended the day she finds a wealthy hotel guest dead in his bed and the police are targeting her as a suspect. Her friends unite with her to find clues and solve the mystery of what really happened before it's too late.

Note: This will be the last meeting of the season. We will resume in the fall.



Women's Ministry Spring Luncheon March 14, 2026



WINTER SCHEDULE
(October-April)
2nd Tuesday of the Month

Esperanza Bible Study

2nd Tuesday @ 10:00am, Room C5
Sandy Tran, Chair
763-291-5837

Mary Bible Study

2nd Tuesday @ 1:30pm
Meets in home (call for location)
Gayle Schmidt, Chair
612-867-2679

Current study is "Bad Girls of the Bible"
by Liz Curtis Higgs.
Books available for
purchase in the front office.

VICTORY QUILTERS APRIL 21 & 22

Tuesday, 8:30-2:30pm
Wednesday 8:30-11:30am

We meet the 3rd Tuesday and
Wednesday of the month at 8:30am. On
Tuesday, we break for a potluck lunch
at noon. Come when you can, stay as
long as you can; everyone can cut, sew,
pin and tie knots. You do not need to be
a church or circle member to attend.
Bring a friend!

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



THANK YOU

Guest speaker Traci Gruenberger from Mosaic, "The Associates" barbershop quartet, M&M Catering, Janice Hammerstrom for providing piano music, all the donors for our raffle items, and to each of you who attended and supported this luncheon.

BOTTLED WATER DRIVE MONTH OF APRIL

Support local
outreaches that we
serve by donating a
case of water!



Victory Lutheran Church
VOLUNTEERS

*Being and Making Disciples
for Jesus Christ*

GET INVOLVED



Scan Me

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Let's find the place where God is calling you to serve with gladness!

As Christians, we have the awesome opportunity to serve our holy God in so many ways! He gives each of us unique gifts and calls us to use them to bless others. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

Serving others is not only beneficial for the soul but also brings joy and fulfillment. We'd love for you to discover this joy! No matter your age or skill set, God can use you in a meaningful way. Let us know how you would like to get involved. To learn more or to volunteer, just send us an email to hello@victorylutheran.com. Or, you may also fill out a pamphlet at the Welcome Desk or scan the QR code above to fill out online.

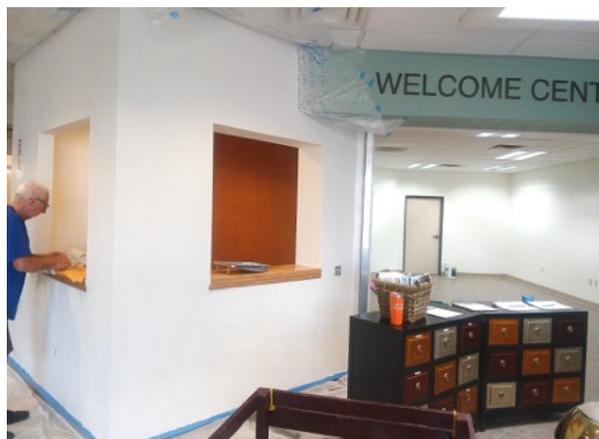
Welcome Center Remodel

Many "oohs and aahs" were heard on Sunday morning, March 15th. As people entered the church that morning they were welcomed by a now very welcoming Welcome Center. What used to essentially be a storage area is now a bright, clean, and inviting space. Our desire was that it would be functional and feel new and fresh while at the same time look like it's always been there. We believe we were successful in our efforts. Inside the Welcome Center is an information display wall that includes our monthly newsletter, the annual report, Council meeting minutes, as well as information on our ministries and events. There are also two kiosks where people can sign up to get involved — one newly branded "Victory Connections" is for upcoming events and the other for all things discipleship including classes, small groups, and serving opportunities. There is also a comfortable lounge area where people can catch up with a friend. Coming soon: a lending library! Please bring your Christian books - fiction and non-fiction - to share with others. Come check it out!

Thanks to Roger Anhorn, Jeff Bennett, Mike Ludlum, Dean Senne, Daniel Curran, Eileen Hernandez, and Diane Snyder, as well as our generous donor, for making it all happen!



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER



AFTER



SOMETHING GOOD IS GROWING AT VICTORY

*S.A.F.E. is expanding its doors and its name — introducing Victory Connections,
a wider community open to everyone.*

Connecting People. Enjoying Life. Growing Faith.

For the past two years, a group of Victory members has been quietly doing something beautiful. They have shared meals, attended shows, packed food for neighbors in need, and — more than anything — shown up for each other. You may have known them as S.A.F.E. (Singles Activity Fellowship Events). That community is still very much alive. But something is changing, and it is a very good change. Beginning this spring, S.A.F.E. is expanding its doors and its name. Welcome to Victory Connections — a community open to every VLC member, whether you are single, married, widowed, or somewhere in between. The spirit has not changed. The table has just gotten bigger.



What Is Victory Connections?

Victory Connections provides fun, accessible activities outside of church — open to all VLC members, their families, and friends. The group exists to build friendships across every part of our congregation, ease loneliness and isolation, and serve our broader community together. Whether you come solo or with a spouse, there is a place for you here.

The group gathers at different times throughout the month for dinners, outings to local shows and events, and a food packing service project that has quietly become one of the most beloved parts of their rhythm together. These are not just activities — they are on-ramps to friendship for people who might not otherwise cross paths within a congregation our size.

Why Now, and Why the New Name?

Honestly, because loneliness does not only affect singles. Couples can feel isolated too. Newer members can feel like outsiders in a congregation with deep, established friendships. And family members and friends of VLC members have long wanted a natural way to connect with our community without jumping straight into a weekend service. *Victory Connections* is the answer to all of that. It is low-barrier by design. You do not need to be a long-timer. You do not need a particular relationship status. You just need to show up.

Leading the Way

Victory Connections is led by Judy Bailey, who brings both a shepherd's heart and a genuine gift for making people feel welcome the moment they walk through the door. She is the right person to lead this community into its next chapter, and we are grateful for her vision and enthusiasm.

Come Join Us

If you have ever thought "I should get more connected at Victory" — this is your moment. Bring a friend. Bring your spouse. Bring someone who needs a reason to leave the house. Scripture reminds us that it is not good to walk through life alone — and *Victory Connections* exists to make sure fewer people at Victory ever have to.

Get Connected — "Whether you come solo or with a spouse, there is a place for you here."

Judy Bailey, Victory Connections Leader

Questions? Reach out directly to judithmbailey@hotmail.com.



VICTORY CONNECTIONS

Connecting People. Enjoying Life. Growing Faith.

APRIL

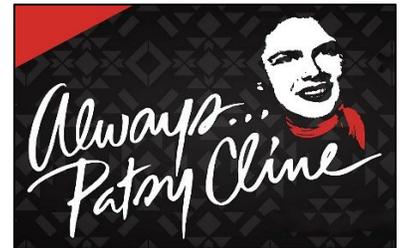
EVERYONE WELCOME! INVITE YOUR FRIENDS!

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

Events This Month:

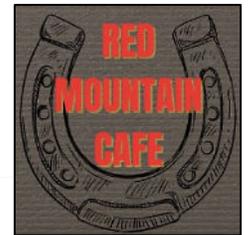
Always...Patsy Cline (Off Site – Bus Optional)
Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 pm (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)
Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert

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. We'll hear many of Patsy's unforgettable hits such as "Crazy," "I Fall to Pieces," "Sweet Dreams" & "Walking After Midnight." 27 songs in all!
(Tickets for this event are no longer available.)



Lunch at Red Mountain Café (Off Site – No Bus)
Tuesday, April 14, 11:30 am, 4410 E University Dr, Ste 106, Mesa

Enjoy lunch with friends. Pick from a wide range of lunch and dinner options, including soups, salads, sandwiches, burgers, melts and – of course – desserts. Prices in the \$10-\$15 range. **Sign up by Sunday, April 12th.**



Feed My Starving Children (Off Site – Bus)
Wednesday, April 22, Packing Session 9:00-11:00 am (Bus leaves at 8:00 am)
1100 W Grove Parkway, Tempe

FMSC provides free children's meals distributed to schools, churches, orphanages and community centers around the world. Join us on the 4th 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, April 19th.



Next Month:

She Loves Me
(Off Site – Bus Optional)
Friday, May 1, 7:30 pm (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)
Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert

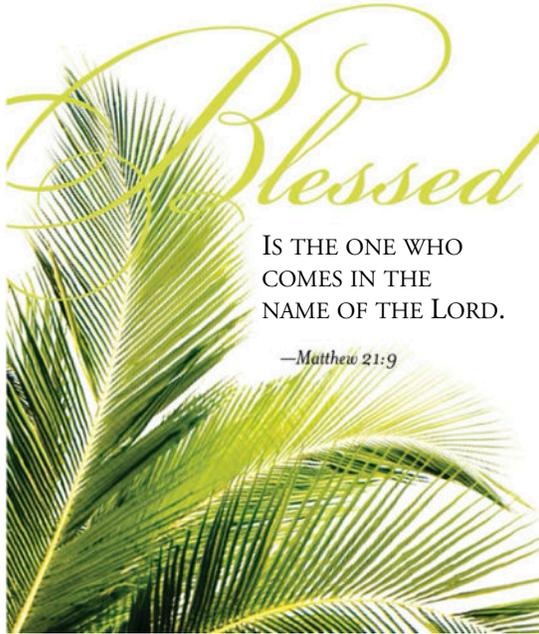
This romantic musical, set in a charming 1930s Budapest parfumerie, tells the story of two feuding colleagues who are unaware they're secret pen pals. A classic show, with delightful songs and heartwarming moments, *She Loves Me* is a perfect blend of humor and love, and the inspiration for the film "You've Got Mail", which featured Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan.

Tickets are \$45, and the bus is \$7. Sign up by Sunday, April 12th.
Pay \$52 if you are taking the bus, or \$45 if you're not taking the bus.

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.



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



IS THE ONE WHO
COMES IN THE
NAME OF THE LORD.

—Matthew 21:9

NEAR THE CROSS

Jesus, keep me near the cross,
There a precious fountain;
Free to all, a healing stream,
Flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

[Refrain]

In the cross, in the cross
Be my glory ever,
Till my ransomed soul shall find
Rest beyond the river.

Near the cross, a trembling soul,
Love and mercy found me;
There the Bright and Morning Star
Shed His beams around me.

Near the cross! O lamb of God,
Bring its scenes before me;
Help me walk from day to day
With its shadow o'er me.

Near the cross! I'll watch and wait,
Hoping, trusting ever;
Till I reach the golden strand,
Just beyond the river.

Fanny Crosby (1896)

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.

NEED SOME DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT?

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

Easter Worship

Learn more at VictoryLutheran.com/easter
Or scan the QR code with your smart phone's camera and tap on the link.

