

## Sermon Notes

### Daily Bible Readings (March 8-14)

Sun: John 18:12-27 Jesus Arrested, Bound, Denied  
 Mon: Psalm 17:1-15 Entrusting Yourself to God  
 Tues: Genesis 1:26-31 Made in the Image of God  
 Wed: Deuteronomy 7:6-9 His Treasured Possession  
 Thurs: Lamentations 3:19-33 Yet This I Call to Mind  
 Fri: Romans 8:31-39 Nothing Can Separate Us  
 Sat: John 21:15-19 Restored by the Same Fire

## Life Notes

### Steps to the Cross #3: Jesus is Abandoned John 18:12-27

#### Opener:

When have you been let down by someone or something you really trusted? What did that experience do to your ability to trust?

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

- Read John 18:12-14, 19-24.** In one night, the religious institution, the legal system, and Peter all fail Jesus. What does this tell us about human loyalty?
- Read Psalm 17:1-2, 7.** What does it look like to entrust your case to God when human systems fail you?
- Read Genesis 1:26-27, Deuteronomy 7:6, and 1 Peter 2:9.** How does God describe your worth and value? What does it mean that despite this, we continually turn away from Him?
- Read Lamentations 3:19-23.** What is the significance of the word "yet" in verse 21? How does Jeremiah hold grief and hope at the same time?
- Read Romans 8:35-39.** How does the resurrection prove that the Father's hesed — His steadfast, covenant love — actually held for Jesus? How does that promise extend to us?

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

- Which layer of Jesus's abandonment — the institution, the system, or the closest friend — most mirrors something you have personally experienced?
- Peter followed Jesus to the courtyard but warmed himself at the wrong fire. Where in your own life are you close to Jesus in routine but keeping a safe distance when it costs something?
- God has been let down by His people since Genesis 3 — and the *hesed* held every time. How does knowing God understands that pain change the way you bring your wounds to Him?
- Jeremiah chose to call something true to mind in the middle of the rubble. What do you need to deliberately "call to mind" about God this week in the middle of something hard?
- Jesus restored Peter at the same charcoal fire where the denial happened. Where do you need Jesus to meet you — not to condemn, but to restore?

## Upcoming Week

### Sunday, March 8

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

**3pm Carlos Feliciano Concert, WC**



### Monday, March 9

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
 12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, C4  
**1:30pm Estate & Planned Giving Seminar, B7**

### Tuesday, March 10

10am Esperanza Bible Study, C5  
**1pm Dementia Care Partner Seminar, CH**  
 1:30pm Mary Bible Study, meets in home  
 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5

### Wednesday, March 11

9-11:30am Food Pantry  
 10am Men's Bible Study, C1  
 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4  
 1pm Bell Rehearsal, CH  
**4pm Lenten Worship, WC**  
**5pm Soup Supper, FH**  
 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC

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

### Thursday, March 12

10am Prayer Group, B7  
 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5  
 4:30pm Dinner @ Syrup & Salt (off-site)

### Friday, March 13

OFFICE CLOSED

### Saturday, March 14

8am Men's Bible Study, C5  
**11am Annual Spring Luncheon/Mosaic, FH**  
 4pm Worship, WC

**MOSAIC**  
Real life. Real possibilities.  
mosaicinfo.org

**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 crises, as well as aging adults. Ticket purchase deadline: March 8th

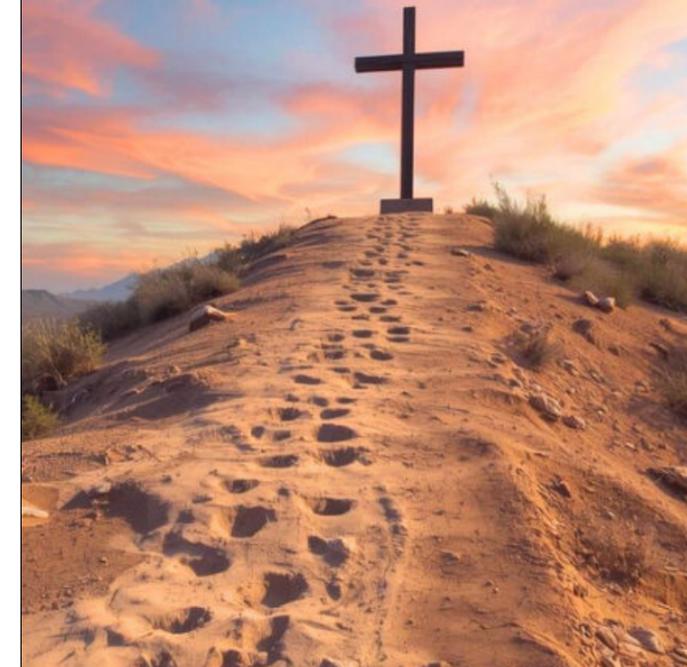
### Victory Lutheran Church

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 Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8am-4pm



VictoryLutheran\_Guest  
 Password: Victory\_46

# STEPS TO THE CROSS



MARCH 7 & 8, 2026

## Jesus is Abandoned John 18:12-27



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor  
 Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor  
 Dirk Duhstine, Chaplain  
 Kristin Holton Prouty, Director of Worship & Music



Connect with us!



## GOD TIME: Grief is Love

### Suellen Palya, GriefShare Lead Facilitator

Grief is Love. We feel the pain of grief because we loved so much. Grief is a journey we take when our loved one leaves this life on earth to enter the Heavenly Home as promised by Jesus when He said, "I go to prepare a place for you." (John

Our Grief Journey includes many days and ways we realize we are left behind to live our remaining days without our loved one. These times are confusing with normal thoughts of denial, shock and sometimes shame. Death may have been a natural process as a result of medical trauma, accidental trauma as in the recent event of Pastor Renée Bennett's son, Hunter, or death by suicide or murder. It is trauma, nonetheless, in all events. You are not alone. GriefShare is a place for you to learn how to grieve well, to find your purpose for living and get to know yourself as a worthwhile individual created by God to live in joy and peace.

GriefShare is a 13-week program with each session standing on its own. You may begin with any session, relate to others who are there for the same reason you come and possibly find peace and comfort. We get it because we have been there, done that by the grace of God, our loving comforter. Our next 13-week program will begin April 20-July 20. We meet Monday's at Victory Lutheran from 12:30-2:30pm, learn from videos and share from the heart. Please join our team; we welcome you because Grief is love!



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



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

## GO TIME: Orchard: Africa Fundraiser Dinner

Saturday, March 21 @ 5:30pm

**Get your tickets today at the Welcome Desk!** 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. 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. 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! 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 \$20 available at the Welcome Desk.



Also, 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.

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



## GATHER TIME: Worship Best Practices — Welcome & Greeting

Gathered worship is one of God's great gifts to His people. We don't just go to church—we are the Church: the communion of saints, coming together in public to worship the Lord as one.

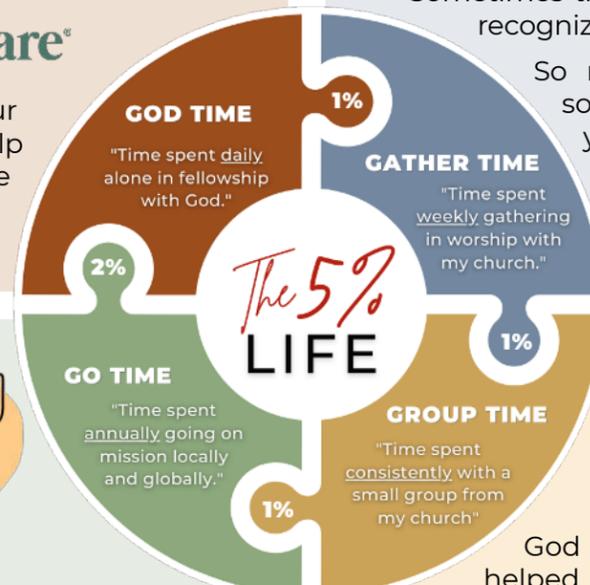
In the New Testament, the word for "church" is ekklesia (ἐκκλησία). Simply put, it means an assembly—a real, visible gathering. God's people show up, together, because He has gathered us around His Word.

That's why worship at Victory is more than a service you attend. It's a family you belong to. We come to hear God's Word together. We join our hearts in prayers that are honest and substantive. We lift our voices in song—not as an audience, but as participants. We want worship to be reverent and ordered, yet never cold—responsive to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

And we do it with joy. "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD!'" (Psalm 122:1). You can see it in the smiles at the door, and you can hear it in the greeting time—energetic, cheerful, and (let's be honest) a little noisy.

Sometimes the most important moment of worship is simply being seen—recognized—and receiving a word of blessing that day.

So next time we greet one another, be intentional. Look for someone you don't know—someone new or alone. Introduce yourself, learn their name, and help them feel like they belong. God may use you—right there in worship—as a living expression of His welcome, gently pointing them to Jesus.



## GROUP TIME: Meet Our Staff

### Diane Snyder, Church Administrator

*"We make our own plans, but the LORD decides where we will go."*  
Proverbs 16:9

God has blessed me with wonderful opportunities to serve Him. I have helped plant three churches - in California, England, and Minnesota. And I've served on leadership teams for Life Together Churches and for Lutheran Evangelistic Movement which combined my passion for being the church outside the building.

When I turned 60 I asked the Lord for a new season. Unlike previous life decisions, I didn't get a specific leading but believed God would use me wherever I went. Where did I want to go? Back to the southwest! I sent my resume to everyone I knew in California and Arizona. I quickly had two job offers in California and potential tenants for my condo in Minnesota. The decision seemed to be made for me, so I booked a moving van and gave notice at my job, although my boss never accepted it because he said that God was telling him something different. Then 12 days before the moving van arrived, a neighbor had a major water event that flooded my condo. I lived with torn up floors, stained ceilings, and stacked boxes ready to move for four months. During that time, I said "no" to both jobs and the potential tenants found other accommodation. The work was completed the same week my boss left. I told the Lord that it was time for an open door for me! Then came a call from Pastor Todd about a position at Victory and the rest is history.

My favorite part of working at Victory is, quite honestly, you! I love my interactions with all of you that come in serving, laughing, listening, praying, and sometimes even crying together. There is a reason for all the changes, transitions, and heartaches, and God is faithful to work in and through us wherever He calls us. Together on the journey with you, Victory...

