

Sermon Notes

Life Notes

Easter Weekend: "Believing Is More Than Seeing" John 20:1-18

Opener:

What is one time you were looking right at something and still did not recognize it at first?

Go Deeper: *(Exploring the Bible)*

1. What do Peter and John see in the tomb, and why is John 20:9 such an important verse in the story?
2. Why do you think Mary does not recognize Jesus at first, even though He is standing right in front of her?
3. What changes the moment Jesus says, "Mary," and why is that the turning point of the passage?
4. How does Romans 10:14-17 help explain what is happening in John 20?

Live It: *(Applying to Our Lives)*

1. When have you known the facts about God but still struggled to trust Him personally?
2. How can grief, fear, or disappointment make it harder to recognize what Jesus is doing in your life?
3. What does it mean to you that Jesus knows His people and calls them by name?
4. What helps you stay near the voice of Jesus in His Word when life feels confusing or heavy?

Daily Bible Readings (April 5-11)

Sun:	John 20:1-18	Called By Name
Mon:	Romans 10:14-17	Faith Comes Hearing
Tues:	Psalms 16:8-11	You Will Not Abandon
Wed:	Isaiah 53:10-12	Light After Suffering
Thurs:	Luke 24:25-32	Hearts Burning
Fri:	John 10:27-30	My Sheep Hear
Sat:	1 Corinthians 15:20-22	What It Means That Christ Is Risen

Upcoming Week

Sunday, April 5 - **EASTER WEEKEND**

6am Outdoor Sunrise with Communion
 6:45-7:45am Continental Breakfast, FH
 8am Worship, WC
 9:30am Worship, WC
 11am Contemporary Worship, WC
 11am Children's Church, NR

Monday, April 6

OFFICE CLOSED

9-11:30am Food Pantry

Tuesday, April 7

6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7
 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5
 7:30pm "Always...Patsy Cline" (off-site)
 Bus leaves @ 6:30pm

Wednesday, April 8

9-11:30am Food Pantry
 10am Men's Bible Study, LR
 12:30pm AI-Anon, C4
 1pm Bell Choir Rehearsal, WC
 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal, WC

Thursday, April 9

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

Friday, April 10

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, April 11

8am Men's Bible Study, FS
 4pm Worship, WC

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



Victory Lutheran Church

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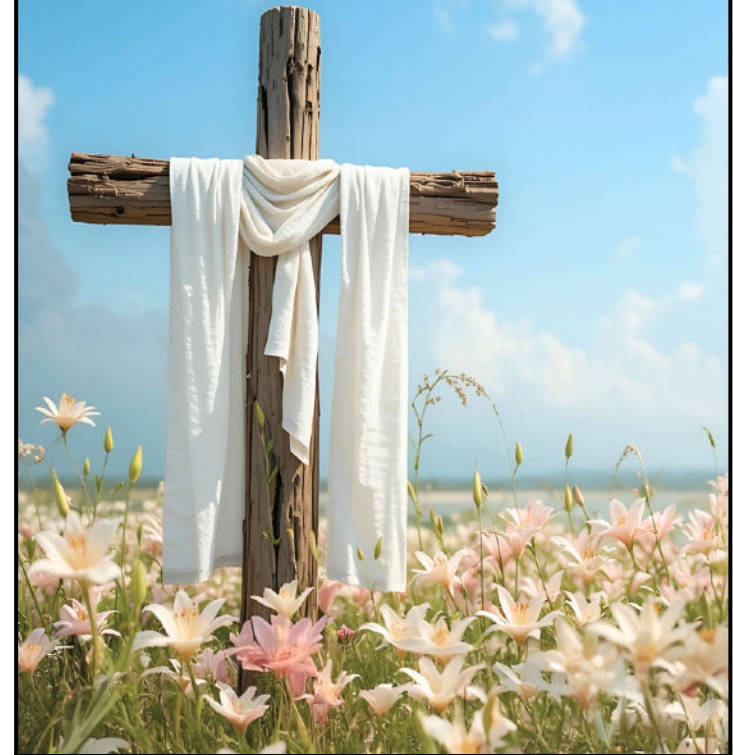
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs, 8am-4pm
 Closed on Fridays

VictoryLutheran.com



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 Password: Victory_46

ALLELUIA HE IS RISEN



APRIL 4 & 5, 2026

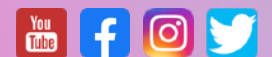
Believing Is More Than Seeing John 20:1-18



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



Connect with us!



GOD TIME: Believing Is More Than Seeing

Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor

On Easter morning, Mary Magdalene stood near the empty tomb crying. Then she turned and saw Jesus standing there—but she did not recognize Him. Not until He spoke her name.

This is such an important Easter moment. Because it reminds us that faith is not just about seeing evidence. It is not just about gathering facts. It is not even about trying harder to believe. Faith comes when the risen Jesus speaks personally into our darkness, our sorrow, and our confusion.

Mary had the risen Christ right in front of her, and still she did not know it was Him. Grief can do that. Fear can do that. So can disappointment. Sometimes life hurts enough that even when hope is near, we struggle to see it.

Maybe that is where you are this Easter. Maybe you come with strong faith and deep joy. Thanks be to God. But maybe you come carrying sadness, questions, guilt, or uncertainty. Maybe you are not even sure what you believe. Then this part of the Easter story is for you. Jesus did not shame Mary for her tears. He came near. And then He said, "Mary." In that moment, everything changed.

This is the good news of Easter: Jesus Christ is alive, and He still comes near to people who are hurting, searching, doubting, or weary. He still speaks forgiveness. He still brings hope. He still calls people by name.

And because He lives, grief does not have the last word, guilt no longer has a claim on you, and death has lost its victory — because Jesus lives.

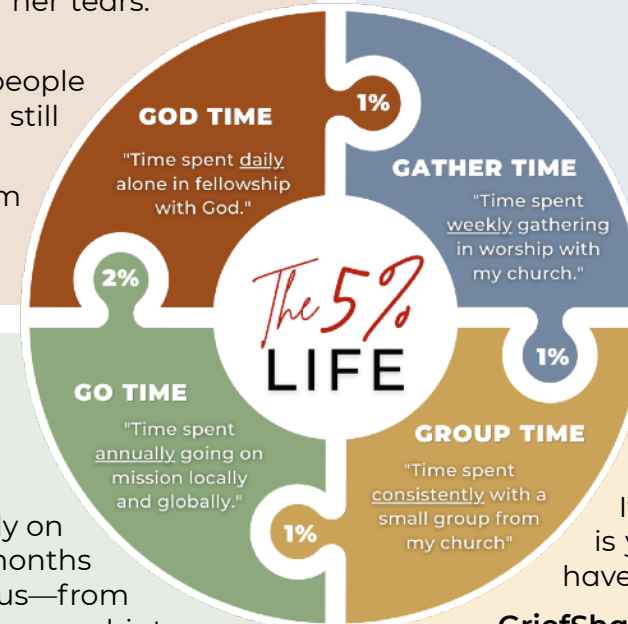
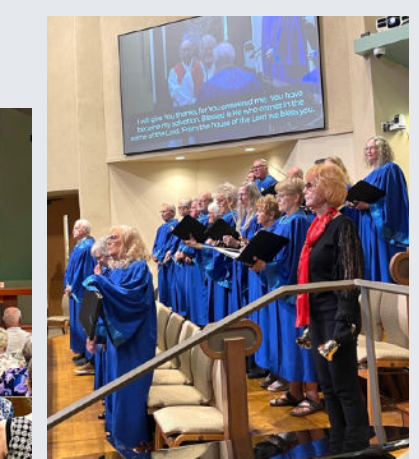


GATHER TIME: Palm Sunday Recap

Last week, our Palm Sunday message reminded us that Jesus was not the kind of king people expected—He came humbly, not with power, but with purpose. While the crowd celebrated Him, they did not yet understand that His true glory would be revealed through the cross, where His death would bring life, like a seed that had to fall to the ground to produce many more.



WORSHIP CENTER



GO TIME: Where Jesus Wept and Love Still Calls

Eileen Hernandez

"As [Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it." - Luke 19:41



This Resurrection Sunday, I find myself reflecting not only on the empty tomb, but on the path that led there. Two months ago, I was in Israel and walked in the footsteps of Jesus—from the Mount of Olives down to the Garden of Gethsemane, and into the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. I even sat on the southern steps where Jesus would have taught and entered the city. It was truly an experience of a lifetime. But as I looked out over the city, I felt a deep sadness.

Jesus once stood on that same hillside and wept (Luke 19:41). He longed to gather His people like a hen gathers her chicks (Luke 13:34), yet they were unwilling. He knew the cost of their rejection. Today, the Temple that once stood there is completely gone, and in its place stands the Dome of the Rock (as Islamic shrine)—a reminder of what was lost.



Garden of Gethsemane

And yet, how often does Jesus long to gather us, to love us, to draw us close—yet we turn away? How often do we miss His peace? Even when we choose our own way, He still calls us back. His arms are still open. His invitation still stands. This Easter, may we come under His wings, receive His love, and live as people of the resurrection. He is risen. He is risen indeed!

GROUP TIME: Upcoming Events — Save the Date!

Discovering Victory: Your Invitation to Go Deeper
Three Sundays — April 12, 19, 26 from 12:30-2:30pm

If you've been attending Victory and wondering, "What's next for me here?"—this class is your answer. If you've been a member for years but never took this class—we'd love to have you join us too.

GriefShare: "Loss of Spouse" Seminar, April 13, 12:30-2:30pm

Widowed? Do you dread the lonely days and nights? Unsure of how you'll go on? At GriefShare, you will 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.

Quilters Group, April 21 & 22, 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 member to attend. Bring a friend!

Feed My Starving Children (off-site), April 22, 9:00-11:00am

FMSC provides free children's meals distributed to schools, churches, orphanages and community centers around the world. You may stand and package food, or sit and label it. The church bus for this event is free. Sign up in the Welcome Center by April 19th.

Patriotic Picnic & Potluck: July 5, 12:00pm

We provide a selection of chilled beverages and live entertainment; you bring the food! Let's all celebrate the gift of freedom God has granted us is the USA.

Diamondbacks: Faith & Family Night, August 21, 6:40pm

Join the D-backs vs. Cincinnati Reds and hundreds of churches across Arizona at Chase Field for Faith & Family Night! Special music performance by Matthew West following the game. Including "All-You-Can-Eat-Seats".

UPCOMING
EVENTS

