



Happy
Father's
Day!
June 21, 2026

WORSHIP SCHEDULE**SATURDAY**

4pm Traditional

SUNDAY

8am Traditional with Communion

9:30am Traditional

I will instruct you and teach you
in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my loving
eye on you. — Psalm 32:8

Dear Victory family,

June has arrived, and with it comes the familiar rhythm of summer in Arizona. The days get warmer. The pace shifts a little. Some of our church family has headed north for a season, while many of us settle in here together, grateful for air conditioning, good fellowship, and the steady grace of God that meets us in every season.

At Victory, summer may feel a little quieter, but it is still full of life. We will gather for **Prayer & Praise on Wednesday, June 3, at 4:00 p.m.** We will come before the Lord with songs, prayers, burdens, gratitude, and trust. On **Monday, June 8, at 10:00 a.m.**, we will show **Bonhoeffer: Pastor. Spy. Assassin.** It's the story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German pastor and theologian who wrestled deeply with what faithfulness required in the face of Hitler and the evil of the Nazi regime. It is a powerful film about courage, conviction, conscience, and the cost of standing for what is right when silence is no longer faithful.

Our **Women's Bible Study** will meet on **Tuesday, June 9, at 9:30 a.m.**, and our **Quilters** will gather on **June 16 and 17 at 8:30 a.m.** These may seem like simple gatherings, but God often does beautiful work through simple things: prayer, Scripture, friendship, service, and time spent together in Christ.

We can be deeply grateful for the anchor we have here at Victory: God's inspired Word, a deep love for Jesus Christ, and an embrace of the grace He has so wonderfully given us. We experience that grace when we gather in worship, when we hear and learn from God's Word, when we lift our voices through beautiful music, and when we sit together in fellowship, small groups, Bible studies, and even simple conversations over coffee. Those moments matter. They steady us. They remind us who we are and Whose we are.

With you in Christ,

Pastor Todd Mathison
Pastor Todd Mathison

"The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land... You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail." — Isaiah 58:11



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
hello@victorylutheran.com
VictoryLutheran.com





Even in the Slow Season, Small Groups Still Matter

Summer in the Valley has a way of scattering us. Whether you're escaping the heat for a few weeks up north, traveling with family, or just trying to survive the season without melting — schedules shift, routines break, and suddenly the room where your group normally gathers feels a little emptier, or doesn't gather at all for a while. That's okay. That's actually pretty normal.

But here's what's worth holding onto this summer: the relationships you've built in your small group don't go on pause just because your meeting schedule does.

The writer of Hebrews puts it simply: *"Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another."* (Hebrews 10:24–25) That word "encouraging" in the original

language carries the idea of coming alongside someone — being present with them, not just in a room, but in their life. Summer is actually a great season to practice that.

If your group is taking a break for a few weeks, use this season intentionally. Reach out to a fellow group member you haven't connected with in a while — not to talk about the curriculum, just to check in. Grab coffee. Send a text. Pray for them by name. The rhythm of community doesn't require a set night on the calendar; it just requires a little intention.

If your group is still meeting and the room looks thinner than usual, resist the temptation to feel like something is wrong. Some of the most meaningful conversations happen in smaller gatherings. When it's just four people instead of twelve, there's more room for honesty, more space for prayer, more opportunity to go deeper than the discussion questions. Let the smaller table be a gift rather than a disappointment. Jesus, after all, did some of his most profound teaching with a handful of people gathered around him — not a crowd.

Either way — whether you are meeting faithfully through the summer or hitting pause until fall — what you're part of matters more than you might realize. Small groups are where the Sunday sermon becomes a Monday conversation. They are where people stop being attenders and start becoming family. They are where grace gets lived out in real time.

We will be gearing up for a strong fall season, and we would love to see every group come back refreshed and ready to go deeper together. Until then, enjoy the summer — wherever it takes you — and keep the community alive, even in the slow season.

In Christ's Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denton Bennet".

Pastor Denton Bennet



To learn more about joining or hosting a group,
contact Pastor Denton
dbennet@victorylutheran.com

480-830-5024 xt. 115

Visit: victorylutheran.com/smallgroups

VICTORY



FORWARD

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED ALONG THE WAY

Victory Forward began with a gift and a question. The gift came first, when our Victory Foundation made a \$10,000 lead grant to begin planning for the possibility of launching a new church site. The question followed: Is this what God wants us to do? That gift, joined by more than \$40,000 in generous congregational support, allowed us to pray, plan, and prepare with greater intention.

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the help of our consultant, Pastor Brian LaMew, we looked carefully at what might lie ahead. Since the first meetings with the *Victory Forward* Vision Team throughout the year, the vision grew larger than we first imagined. *Victory Forward* was never only about planting a new site. It became about strengthening who we are right now as a disciple-making church.

Before we could think seriously about expanding, we sensed God calling us to deepen and strengthen Victory here and now. We reviewed five major areas: Discipleship Pathway, Volunteers, Stewardship, Micro-Site, and Multi-Site. Some areas showed strong traction. Some

gave us needed learning. All of it helped sharpen our identity and purpose.

The *Victory Forward* Vision Team and then our Council and staff met together this spring to look back honestly at what we tried, what bore fruit, what needs more attention, what to lay down, and what we have learned along the way.

One thing became clearer: Victory has a unique calling to serve people in the second half of life through Christ-centered traditional worship, Bible-based teaching, and a caring Christian community where people are known, loved, and connected. For *Victory*, growing bigger will come

from doing what we do best and doing more of that.

While the *Victory Forward* campaign has had its season, the ministries that came from it remain essential. We will continue to strengthen these initiatives as God gives us greater clarity, focus, and momentum. Please keep praying that the Holy Spirit would bless our ministries, lead us in mission, and draw us together in mutual love and care.

"Victory Forward was never only about planting a new site. It became about strengthening who we are right now as a disciple-making church."



5

KEY INITIATIVES

- DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY
- VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES
- STEWARDSHIP
- MICROSITE
- MULTI-SITE



1 DISCIPLESHIP

VICTORY



FORWARD

DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY: A Year of Building — and Learning

Just as Jesus called His disciples into a transformative journey, we believe spiritual growth happens best within a clear, supportive framework. Last fall, we introduced our Discipleship Pathway as an intentional roadmap designed to help every person at Victory connect more deeply with Christ, with each other, and with our mission. Our Discipleship Pathway isn't only a path; it is a lifestyle. It isn't about checking boxes—it's about creating meaningful touchpoints where God promises to meet us and where we can authentically grow together.

WHAT WE BUILT

Over the past year, we have made real progress. The pathway begins with *Discovering Victory*, where you'll discover the Gospel foundations, Victory's mission, and your place in our faith family. From there, we encourage everyone to Connect through small groups and community events, Serve using your God-given gifts, and Grow through our Victory Pathway tracks (*Discovering Growth*, *Community*, and *Reach*).

Discovering Victory, our three-week Sunday class offered with lunch, is now up and running as the primary on-ramp into the life of this congregation. It is where you come to explore the Gospel foundations, get to know Victory's mission, and discover your place in this faith family.

Our small groups took meaningful steps forward as well. Group leaders now meet regularly for training and leadership development. We built an online group directory on our website so you can browse and join a group from home. We created in-service connection opportunities and signup tables, and in January we built the pathway directly into our sermon series — so that Sunday morning and the invitation to go deeper were pointing the same direction at the same time.



WHAT WE LEARNED

Not everything we tried worked — and that turned out to be just as important as what did. We ran a couple of entry-point programs that we eventually discontinued because we discovered something worth knowing: **one clear on-ramp is more powerful than several competing ones.** *Discovering Victory* is that on-ramp.

We also heard clearly from our congregation that the hunger for growth is real. You want more pastor-led teaching, deeper small group community, and better-equipped leaders and volunteers. That is not a problem — that is a gift. And it is shaping what comes next.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

As Proverbs 4:18 reminds us, *"The path of the righteous is like the morning sun, shining ever brighter."* That is our prayer for the discipleship pathway at Victory — not that we have arrived, but that we keep walking together toward the light.

YOUR NEXT STEP

If you have never taken a next step in your faith journey here at Victory, now is a great time to start. *Discovering Victory* is open to you. Small groups are forming. Opportunities to serve and grow are waiting.

Where are you on your journey? We are here to help you identify your next step and walk alongside as we grow, strengthening Victory for the future God has planned. Come take a step. We would love to walk with you.



2

VOLUNTEER



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Serving the Lord and His Church

"Me, me, me, me, me!" yelled the grade schoolers when their teacher asked who would like to lead the class out to recess. Well, not all the children. Some watched to see who the teacher would use. Others sat back and hoped with all their might that the teacher wouldn't call on them. Our giftings and personalities are recognizable at an early age. "It takes all kinds!" as they say.

And so it is with serving in the church. There are things to do for those who have gifts of leadership, like to sing in the choir, or read scripture from the front – on the livestream! There are also things to do for those who like to stay behind the scenes like help in the office or prepare communion. And there are ways to serve somewhere in between.

Victory has an awesome group of volunteers! They do all kinds of church-y things like greet people at the front door, hand out bulletins, serve communion, make quilts, lead Bible studies, etc. And there are people who use their craftsmanship to build stages and renovate Welcome Centers. The ministry of Victory happens because of so many people serving!

Part of the Victory Forward initiative was creating natural pathways to get involved. We now have a tri-fold brochure located in the Welcome Center and a website page where one can sign up to volunteer. In January we offered a "Spiritual Gifts" class after which people signed up to get involved. Serving opportunities are discussed during our "Discovering Victory" class. In our recent survey an option was given for people to sign up to serve (we ask for patience as it takes time to contact everyone). And we will offer other special 'on-ramps' to serve throughout the year (watch the newsletter for info).

The point is, Victory Forward helped us organize our opportunities and ways to get involved that help you – the church! – serve the Lord. For more information, please check out the brochure or web page, or ask at the Welcome Center.

"As good stewards of the manifold grace of God, each of you should use whatever gift he has received to serve one another."
(1 Peter 4:10)



Scan Me



3

STEWARDSHIP



STEWARDSHIP: The Joy of Generosity

At Victory, generosity is not a side note. It is part of who we are. Over this past year, one of the clearest ways we have seen God at work has been through the faithful, joyful stewardship of His people. Again and again, this congregation has responded with open hearts and open hands so the mission of Jesus can keep moving forward through Victory.

As part of *Victory Forward*, we worked to keep stewardship grounded where it belongs: in discipleship. That included regular Generosity Talks in worship, online encouragement, a sermon series on generosity, year-end giving invitations shaped by gratitude and vision, and Estate and Planned Giving seminars to help people think prayerfully and wisely about long-term kingdom impact.

And the fruit has been encouraging. When we first began these stewardship efforts, giving was running behind the prior year. By year's end, giving had risen to the same level as the year before. And now, this year, giving is up 10% over the prior year. Praise the Lord!

We have learned a few important things along the way. Consistent biblical teaching matters. When generosity is connected to grace, gratitude, and God's mission, it's not about pressure but about joy. We also learned that discernment matters. Not every good idea fits every season, and wise stewardship means focusing our energy where it can bear the best fruit.

Most of all, we are encouraged. Not simply because of numbers, but because of what those numbers reflect: growing trust, shared purpose, and a church family increasingly ready to invest in what matters most.

Thank you, Victory, for your generous and faithful giving. Your stewardship is strengthening ministry now and helping prepare the way for what God will do next.

4 MICROSITES



MICROSITES: Church to the Community

One of the most unique ideas to come out of *Victory Forward* was the vision for microsites, or simply bringing church closer to people. The heart behind it was clear: take the worship, care, and gospel witness of Victory into residential communities where some people may not be able to come to us as easily.

The vision behind *Microsites* includes:

- Spreading the gospel to more people
- Making worship services more accessible
- Engaging those who may eventually attend Victory in person
- Creating a meaningful spiritual impact in others' lives
- Being and making disciples

That vision became real with the launch of Victory @ Leisure World on November 16, 2025. The opening response was strong and encouraging, and it became clear that there was real warmth, interest, and appreciation for a local gathering like this. Even more encouraging, about six people have since become a regular part of worship at Victory through that microsite connection. The microsite concluded at Easter, as many seasonal residents were leaving for their northern homes, and that timing helped reinforce an important lesson for us.

We learned that a seasonal microsite model appears to be a strong and realistic opportunity for Victory. In communities like Leisure World, that approach fits the rhythm of the people we are trying to serve and the volunteer energy we are able to sustain. Year-round ministry, however, requires far more leadership, staffing, and on-site support than we first realized. We also learned that one key indicator for a future microsite location is this: the retirement community should not already have a seasonal worship service on-site. Where worship is already being offered, the need is different. Where it is not, the opportunity may be much greater.

So we move ahead with gratitude for what was started, appreciation for those who served, and a clearer understanding of what faithful next steps require. The vision still matters, and as the Lord leads, we will keep listening, learning, and looking for the right opportunities to move forward.

5 MULTI-SITE



MULTI-SITE: Looking Forward

Victory Forward began with a simple question: might God be preparing Victory to plant or partner in a new church site in the East Valley?

Over this past year, we took that question seriously. We prayed, researched, mapped communities, studied possible partnerships, and explored where future opportunities might exist. This initiative became less about launching something quickly and more about learning how to be ready if and when God opens the right door.

And we did learn. We gained a much clearer picture of the East Valley, identified several areas of potential opportunity, and explored conversations that at first seemed promising but did not lead to a viable path forward. It felt similar to what the Apostle Paul must have experienced pressing toward the mission frontiers, only to wait until God gave the vision of the man from Macedonia, opening the right door (read Acts 16:6-10). Sometimes clarity comes not only from the doors God opens, but also from the ones He keeps closed.

We also came to see that the real challenge is not vision. The vision remains compelling. The deeper need is readiness. A future site will require the right leadership, stronger congregational ownership, and the kind of organizational capacity that can support healthy expansion without weakening the ministry already happening at Victory.

That may be the most important takeaway of all. This work was not wasted. It helped us rule out assumptions, identify more realistic possibilities, and better understand what a future launch would truly require.

So where does that leave us? In a good place, actually. Not rushed. Not discouraged. But watchful, prayerful, and wiser than we were before. We still believe the Lord may have more in store for Victory beyond our current campus. For now, our calling is to stay faithful, keep the vision alive, and continue strengthening the kind of church that will be ready to step forward when the time is right.

Mother's Day Weekend • May 9-10, 2026



JOIN US **PRAYER & PRAISE**

4pm - courtyard Chapel

Wednesday, June 3

1st Wednesday of the month
A welcoming space to worship in song and experience God's presence.

VICTORY CHURCH



NEW SERMON SERIES: The Recipe of a Godly Life

Looking for the recipe for a full and meaningful life? God has not kept it secret. In His Word, He shows us the ingredients of a godly life: faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection, and love. This is not about self-improvement or trying harder. It is about Jesus Christ, who by His grace saves us, shapes us, and grows these gifts in us. The recipe is clear, and the life He gives is full, fruitful, and deeply worth living.

June 6 & 7, 2026 — Knowledge — Luke 10:38-42

Mary sits at the feet of Jesus while Martha is anxious and distracted, showing us that true knowledge begins not with knowing more, but with listening to the Lord. Proverbs teaches that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, a holy reverence that draws us near to receive His truth, His voice, and His wisdom. This kind of knowledge does not simply fill the head; it forms the heart, steadies the soul, and leads us in the way of life.

June 13 & 14, 2026 — Self-Control — Matthew 4:1-11

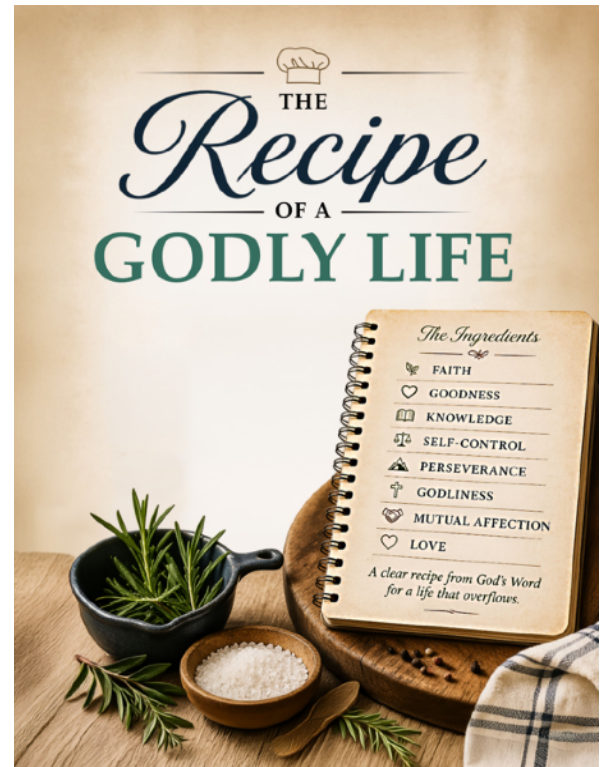
Jesus faces temptation in the wilderness and stands firm by clinging to the Word of God, succeeding where we so often fall. Romans 8 shows that real self-control is not surface-level behavior management, but the Spirit reshaping our minds, desires, and lives from within. Because Christ has overcome temptation for us and now lives in us by His Spirit, we are no longer captive to the old self but are given new strength and a new way to live.

June 20 & 21, 2026 — Perseverance — Luke 9:51-62

Jesus sets His face toward Jerusalem, knowing the suffering and cross ahead, and still He goes forward in love for us. Hebrews calls us to run with endurance by fixing our eyes on Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who has already carried the cross and secured the finish line by grace. On Father's Day, we also thank God for the men who have reflected that kind of quiet, faithful strength: steady love, humble sacrifice, patient endurance, and the grace to keep showing up.

June 27 & 28, 2026 — Godliness — John 15:1-8

Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches," reminding us that godliness begins not with our strength, but with abiding in Him. Paul tells Timothy to train for godliness, yet that training is never about earning God's favor; it is the grace-shaped practice of staying connected to Christ through His Word, Spirit, and promises. Left to ourselves, we drift, but joined to Jesus, His life bears fruit in us and makes us more and more like Him.



Daily Hope —A Simple Way to Share Encouragement

One of the blessings of ministry today is that encouragement can reach people far beyond the walls of our church. A short devotion, a Scripture verse, or a timely word of hope can meet someone right where they are — at home, at work, in a waiting room, or during a difficult season. At Victory, we have a simple and meaningful way to do just that. It is called **Daily Hope**.

Daily Hope is a short devotional message shared throughout the week to encourage faith, point people to Scripture, and remind us that God's promises are for everyday life. It is one of the ways Victory shares the good news of Jesus not only with our congregation, but also with friends, neighbors, family members, and anyone who may need encouragement.

In our recent church-wide survey, we learned that **33% of respondents were not familiar with Daily Hope**. That tells us we have a wonderful opportunity to make this ministry more visible and invite more people to receive it.

You can **subscribe** by texting **victory** to **888-897-5573**.

And here is something simple to remember: **sharing is outreach**. When you forward a Daily Hope devotion, share a post, invite a friend to subscribe, or tell someone about something that encouraged you, you are helping the message of Christ reach another person.

Another meaningful way to support Victory's online outreach is by leaving a **Google review**. Many people look online before visiting a church for the first time. A kind review can help someone feel more comfortable taking that first step.

Scan the QR code or use the link below to leave a review, and consider sharing Daily Hope with someone who could use encouragement today.

https://g.page/r/Cc_npC_9zIqaEBM/review



Scan the QR code above to leave a Google Review!

"Being transformed by our joyful and loving church"

- Sermon Series (p. 8)
- Mother's Day Photos (p. 7)
- Pentecost Photos (p. 17)

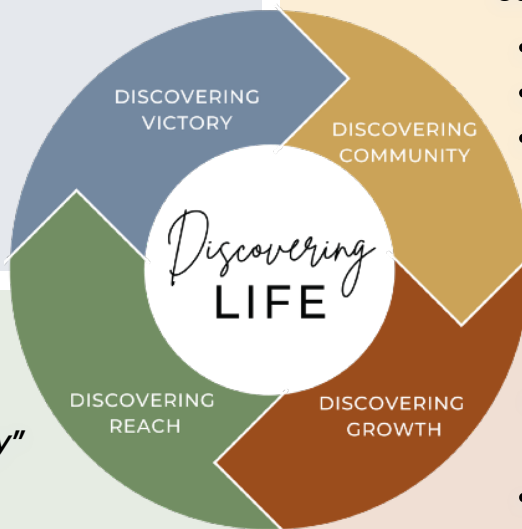


"Building relationships and serving with others in God's family"

- Small Groups (p. 2)
- GriefShare Group (p. 12)
- Quilters Group (p. 12)







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

- Orchard: Africa (p. 12)
- Stephen Ministry (p. 13)



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

- Prayer & Praise (p. 8)
- Daily Hope (p. 9)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
	<p>1</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> 	<p>2</p> <p>6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 4pm Prayer & Praise Worship Service, CH</p> 
<p>7</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC</p>	<p>8</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Movie Matinee, FH 12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>9:30am Women's Ministry Combined Bible Study, C4 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p>
<p>14</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC</p>	<p>15</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:30-2:30pm Quilters, FH 11:30am Lunch at Cozy Corner Cafe (off-site) 3pm Council Meeting, B7 6:30pm "Seekers" Small Group, B7 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8:30-11:30am Quilters, FH 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p> 
<p>21</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p>	<p>23</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9am Feed My Starving Children (off-site) Bus leaves @ 8am 9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4</p>
<p>28</p> <p>8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH 8am Worship & Communion, WC 9:30am Worship, WC</p>	<p>29</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 12:30pm GriefShare, C4</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5</p>	<p>1 - JULY</p> <p>9-11:30am Food Pantry 10am Men's Bible Study, C1 12:30pm Al-Anon, C4 4pm Prayer & Praise Worship Service, CH</p> 

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

THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4	5 OFFICE CLOSED 7:30pm The Wizard of Oz (off-site) Bus leaves @ 6:30pm	6 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
11 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5	12 OFFICE CLOSED	13 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
18 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5 11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4	19 OFFICE CLOSED	20 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC
25 10am Prayer Group, B7 11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 8am Men's Bible Study, C5 4pm Worship, WC



COUNCIL MEETING REPORTS AVAILABLE

The monthly Council Meeting minutes and financial reports are now available for review. You can find them posted on the display board in the Welcome Center. Please take a moment to stay informed on the latest updates.

WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE
VictoryLutheran.com

TEXT2GIVE
text "GIVE" and the amount to 888-897-5573
ex. GIVE50

DROP OFF
M-Th, 8am-4pm

BY MAIL
5946 E. University Dr.
Mesa, AZ 85205

BY PHONE
Use the camera on your phone to scan the QR code below!



2 - JULY
10am Prayer Group, B7
11am Al-Anon Meeting, C5
11:30am Stephen Ministers, C4



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



**Women's Ministry
Combined Bible Study
Tuesday, June 9 @ 9:30am**

During the summer months (May-September) Women's Ministry meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Victory as a combined group. Pastor or Bible Study leader chooses the study.



**Quilters Group
June 16 & 17 @ 8:30am**

Quilters meet the 3rd Tuesday and Wednesday of the month, April thru June, in the Fellowship Hall. On Tuesday, we break for a potluck lunch at noon. Help needed with cutting squares, layering and tying knots. Bring your scissors. Come when you can — leave when you must.



Food Pantry

The Food Pantry provides food boxes on Monday and Wednesdays from 9:00-11:30am. **Leaving for the season?** Your unopened/non-perishable food and toiletry donations are welcome. Please drop them off in the brown bin near the front entry doors during office hours or during weekend worship.



**GriefShare
Mondays, 12:30-2:30pm**

A program for help in your journey through grief after the death of a spouse, child, family member or friend. GriefShare is a special 13-week seminar and support group designed to help you rebuild your life after losing a loved one. Our group is led by caring people who have experienced grief and desire to help you through the difficult days ahead. We know it hurts and we want to help. Each weekly session is designed to be "open," meaning a person can begin attending at any time.

If you would like more information you can find more info about GriefShare on their website at griefshare.org or you may contact:

Suellen Palya 480-325-3410
suellenpalya@yahoo.com

Register online at:
<https://find.griefshare.org/groups/290648>



**Orchard: Africa
2026 Mission Trip Postponed**

"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will act." — Psalm 37:5

After much prayer, conversation, and discernment, we have made the decision to postpone Victory's Orchard: Africa Mission Trip to South Africa from this year to next year.

This was not an easy decision, but we believe it is the right one. A number of those who have been prayerfully considering the trip have run into timing challenges, health concerns, or personal situations that make it difficult to go this year. Those circumstances are personal and varied, and we want to honor them with care.

At the same time, what has encouraged us is that the desire to go has not disappeared. In fact, there is real interest and excitement about participating in a mission trip next year, and postponing gives them the time they need to plan well, heal, prepare spiritually, arrange schedules, and raise the necessary support. So we are not canceling the mission. We are simply giving it more time to grow in the right way.

Victory's partnership with Orchard: Africa remains strong, and our love for this ministry continues. We are grateful for the faithful work Orchard is doing through local churches in South Africa to care for the vulnerable, strengthen communities, and share the hope of Jesus Christ. We look forward to continuing that partnership and inviting more people from Victory to be part of it in 2027.

We will communicate the details for the 2027 Mission Trip well in advance so that those who are interested have plenty of time to pray, plan, and prepare. But we wanted to share this update now, both out of care for those who were considering this year's trip and out of respect for the planning involved.

Please continue to pray for Orchard: Africa, for the churches and communities they serve, and for the team God may be preparing from Victory for next year. We trust that God is still leading. And when the time is right, we look forward to going together in His name.

In His service,
Pastor Todd Mathison *Pastor Todd Mathison*



**Do you have a need?
Can you refer someone
who does?**



Not Alone: Stephen Ministers provide care for those in need:

- Health / Medical issues
- Divorce
- Personal or Spiritual crisis
- Caring for a loved one
- Financial issues / job loss
- Grief / loss
- Loneliness



A Burden Shared

Daily life can bring ongoing struggles that lead to a personal or spiritual crisis.

If you are walking through a difficult season, you don't have to carry the burden by yourself.

Overcoming the Barrier of Pride

Sometimes our own pride is what stops us from asking for help. It can feel difficult to admit when we are struggling, and we may believe we should be able to handle things on our own. Yet Scripture reminds us that we were created for relationship—not isolation.

When We Fear Being a Burden

At times, we don't ask for help because we don't want to be a burden or a bother to others. We may think, *"Everyone else is busy,"* or *"My problems aren't important enough."* But when we withhold our need, we may unintentionally rob others of the opportunity to fulfill part of their God-given calling.

God has asked His people to love one another, to bear one another's burdens, and to walk alongside those who are hurting. When we allow someone to care for us, we are not burdening them—we are inviting them to live out Christ's love. Reaching out is not a sign of weakness; it is an act of trust and obedience, stepping into the community God designed for us.

God never wants anyone to struggle alone. He created love and relationships so that we could encourage one another in the best of times—and especially in the most difficult seasons of life.

Common Struggles We Support

- Broken relationships and family conflicts
- The loss of a loved one
- A recent move or major life transition
- Chronic illness or a new medical diagnosis
- Other challenges that feel overwhelming

How Stephen Ministry Helps

- Christ-centered care: Ministers bring Christ's love directly into your life.
- Confidential care: Your conversations remain strictly private.
- One-to-one support: You are matched with a trained caregiver.
- Weekly meetings: Meet for about an hour each week.

The Role of Your Stephen Minister

- Listening with compassion to your thoughts and feelings.
- Encouraging you through difficult and uncertain days.
- Praying with you and for you.
- Offering faithful presence as they walk alongside you.

Take the First Step

If you—or someone you know—could benefit from the care of a Stephen Minister, please reach out to us today. You were never meant to walk this journey alone

Reach out to a pastor today or to:
Chaplain Dirk Duhlstine
dduhlstine@victorylutheran.com
480-660-5231

WHAT YOU
TOLD US...

CHURCH SURVEY REPORT



2026 CHURCH-WIDE SURVEY RESULTS VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH | MAY 2026

613

People Responded
Your voices matter

73

Net Promoter Score
World-class (70+ = elite)

86%

Feel Connected
Very or somewhat connected

91%

Faith Supported
VLC helps them live their faith

SUMMARY

Earlier this spring, we asked you to tell us the truth about your experience at Victory Lutheran Church. And you did! 613 of you took the time to respond — answering questions, sharing your thoughts, and trusting us with honest feedback. That was beyond what we expected! You gave us one of the most generous and informative pictures of our congregation's health that we have ever had, and we are deeply grateful.

This report is our commitment to you: we heard what you said. We are sharing the results with the whole congregation — the good news and the growth opportunities. This is not just a data report. It is a conversation about who we are and where God is calling us to go. As you read this, know that your responses have already shaped conversations in staff meetings and leadership gatherings. Thank you for trusting us with your truth. No report can capture every individual experience, but we believe these themes give us a faithful and helpful picture of what many of you shared.

"Victory feels like home. The pastors are caring, friendly and their messages are scriptural based. Music is a plus every week. **VICTORY FEELS LIKE HOME.**"

WHAT WE FOUND: STRENGTHS

The clearest message in the survey data is this: Victory Lutheran Church is a place people love. The results are not just good — in several areas, they are exceptional by any measure.

VICTORY PEOPLE ARE ENTHUSIASTIC AMBASSADORS

In the world of organizational health, there's a metric called the Net Promoter Score (NPS). Companies and organizations that score above 50 are considered excellent. Above 70 is elite. Victory Lutheran Church scored 73!

That means an overwhelming majority of our congregation — 479 out of 613 respondents — would enthusiastically recommend Victory to a friend or family member. You are not just members; you are advocates.

YOU VALUE SCRIPTURE-CENTERED PREACHING

Across hundreds of open-ended responses, the language of Scripture came up again and again. 'Bible-based.' 'Gospel-centered.' 'The messages are applicable to life.' Both pastors were praised by name with warmth and specificity.

THE MUSIC IS A MINISTRY IN ITSELF

Music was mentioned in nearly as many responses as preaching — and with the same enthusiasm. The choir and specific musicians were praised repeatedly and by name. For many of you, the music at Victory is not background — it is a primary vehicle of worship.

GENUINE WARMTH IS YOUR REPUTATION

Time and again, respondents used words like 'welcoming,' 'friendly,' 'warm,' and 'like family.' Many of you noted that you felt welcomed from your very first Sunday. That reputation for genuine hospitality is one of Victory's most valuable and irreplaceable assets.

WHAT YOU TOLD US...

CHURCH SURVEY REPORT



MANY OF YOU WANT TO SERVE

One of the encouraging themes throughout the survey was how many of you are already serving — and how many more of you expressed a desire to get involved. In fact, 155 people shared that they already volunteer at Victory, while another 180 responded either “yes” or “maybe” when asked if they would be interested in serving or volunteering. That’s nearly 65% of all you! Across the responses, we saw you actively looking for ways to use your gifts, support ministries, and be part of what God is doing at Victory. Your willingness to volunteer tells us something important about this congregation: many of you do not simply attend Victory — you want to help carry the mission forward. That is deeply meaningful to us.

We are grateful for every person who already serves, often quietly and faithfully behind the scenes. And for those of you who expressed interest in volunteering but have not yet found your place, we want you to know: there is room for you here. Your willingness to serve is a beautiful reflection of a congregation that cares deeply about one another and about the mission God has given us together.

DAILY HOPE IS QUIETLY TRANSFORMING LIVES

For those who receive the Daily Hope devotional, it is clearly making a difference. Respondents describe it as a meaningful daily touchpoint and share it widely. Surprisingly, many respondents (33%) checked that they are not yet familiar with Daily Hope. If you haven't tried Daily Hope, we invite you to sign up — it's one of the quiet strengths of our congregation.



WHAT YOU ASKED US TO WORK ON

A healthy congregation is honest about where it can grow. You were. Here is what you told us you'd like to see more of.

YOU WANT TO GO DEEPER IN YOUR FAITH

The single most consistent request in the entire survey was for more opportunities to go deeper in Scripture and daily faith. You asked for:

- More small groups and Bible studies — 154 people selected this in the survey
- Pastor-led Bible classes on specific topics and books — 128 people
- Practical guidance for daily Christian living — 168 people (the top request)

This feedback tells us something important: you are not simply looking for more programs. You are looking for deeper connection to Scripture, to each other, and to the person of Jesus.

THE 9:30 AM SERVICE, PARKING, AND TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Many of you noted that the Sunday 9:30 AM service —attended by a significant portion of the congregation—can feel overcrowded, particularly during peak winter months. This includes not only seating capacity but also parking lot congestion and difficulty navigating entry and exit during high-attendance periods.

Several of you also mentioned the distance from parking areas to the building, which can be difficult for those with mobility limitations, especially during crowded seasons. While a full church is a positive sign of vitality, these conditions were described as challenging for some of you.

In addition, transportation limitations were mentioned by some of you, particularly for those who no longer drive or have limited mobility. While not a universal concern, it represents a meaningful barrier for a segment of the congregation.

WHAT YOU TOLD US...

CHURCH SURVEY REPORT



SOME PEOPLE STILL FEEL ON THE OUTSIDE

While a large majority of you report feeling connected, 14% of respondents said they feel 'not very' or 'not at all' connected to Victory. A few of you shared honestly that no one has ever approached you during a service, or that the church can feel 'cliquish' from the outside. We want to say clearly: if that has been your experience, we are sorry. We will continue working with our staff and ministry leaders to ensure that each person feels connected.

And we want to say to you: if you're feeling on the outside, please reach out. To us. To a ministry leader. To anyone on staff. We want to know your name. We want to help you find your place.

SOUND AND HEARING ACCESSIBILITY

Some of you also shared difficulties hearing or clearly understanding portions of the service. Mentions of sound clarity appeared across multiple responses, including references to missing parts of sermons or struggling to follow along.

If this has been your experience, we want to sincerely say that we are sorry for the challenges you have experienced. We are committed to continuing to work toward the best solution possible.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

This report is not the end of the conversation. In the months ahead, our staff and leadership teams will continue to review these results and identify practical next steps. Some areas may be addressed quickly, while others will require more time, planning, and congregational participation.

We are paying particular attention to the themes you raised regarding deeper faith formation, relational connection, sound and hearing accessibility, and opportunities to serve. We are grateful for your honesty, and we are committed to continuing this work with care, prayer, and transparency.

Victory Lutheran Church is at a moment of genuine health and real opportunity. The survey told us that you love this place — that it feels like home, that the Word of God is being preached faithfully, that the music lifts your hearts, and that the people around you are your people.

But a healthy congregation doesn't rest on what it has built. It asks: What is God calling us to next? Who isn't here yet that needs to be? Who among us is still on the outside, waiting to be found?

We want to pursue those questions with you — not just as a staff, but as a congregation. Here are three specific ways you can be part of what comes next:

- Sign up for a small group or Bible study when they are announced — your presence shapes the community
- Invite someone. One person. To one service. The data tells us that you are the church's most powerful ambassadors. Use that.
- If you'd like to serve in a new way, or if you've never quite found your place, reach out to any member of the pastoral team. We want to help you find your fit.

Thank you for being Victory Lutheran Church. Thank you for telling us the truth. And thank you for trusting us to respond.

To God be the glory!

Victory Lutheran Church



Pentecost Weekend · May 23-24, 2026



PATRIOTIC POTLUCK

SUN, JULY 5, 11:15AM

We will provide a selection of chilled beverages and you all bring a dish or dessert to share! Let's all celebrate the gift of freedom God has granted us in the USA!

Live Entertainment:
Sonoran Brass Quintet

VICTORY LUTHERAN CHURCH

4th of July — Patriotic Potluck Sunday, July 5 @ 11:15am

We are celebrating American Independence on the fifth of July (Sunday) with an indoor potluck. We will provide a selection of chilled beverages. Bring a favorite dish to share such as: hamburgers, hot dogs, grilled chicken, potato salad, coleslaw, and watermelon will undoubtedly be crowd-pleasers. Don't forget vegetarian and gluten-free dishes. Bring a dessert, if that's your thing.

Live Entertainment

The **Sonoran Brass Quintet** has been captivating audiences for more than two decades with dynamic performances that blend musical excellence, artistry, and entertainment. Known for their rich brass sound and versatile repertoire, the ensemble performs everything from classical masterworks to patriotic favorites, jazz, and contemporary selections, delighting audiences of all ages across the Southwest.

Let's all celebrate the gift of freedom God has granted us in the U-S-of-A.



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

Join the D-backs and hundreds of churches across Arizona at Chase Field for Faith & Family Night! Special music performance by Christian artist, Matthew West, following the game. All-You-Can-Eat-Seats (Sections 221-223) includes unlimited hot dogs, popcorn, peanuts, chips and Pepsi products through 7th inning. Tickets \$60 + \$5 if riding bus. Pay by check or exact cash.

Victory has reserved a total of 50 tickets. Limited seating on bus (28 seats). Bus leaves Victory at 5:15pm or you may want to drive yourself or Park & Ride from the Valley Metro LightRail Station. Come out and support your D-backs as we take on the Reds!

Please note: The Diamondbacks stadium has a "clear bag" policy no larger than 12" x 6". Additionally, fans may also carry a small clutch purse no larger than 4.5" x 6.5". Seat cushions no larger than 18" are permitted. We suggest bringing a clear water bottle to refill.

D-BACKS VS. CINCINNATI REDS

FAITH & FAMILY NIGHT



Friday, August 21, 6:40pm

- All-You-Can-EatSeats (Sections 221-223)
- Tickets \$60
- Limited seating on bus (28 seats)
- Pay at time of sign-up at the Welcome Desk



DBACKS.COM/FAITH

MATTHEW WEST
FAITH & FAMILY
NIGHT

PRESENTED BY *Chick-fil-e*

A VS **REDS** | **AUGUST 21**

Deadline to purchase tickets:
August 2, 2026



VICTORY CONNECTIONS

Connecting People. Enjoying Life. Growing Faith.

JUNE

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.

This Month:

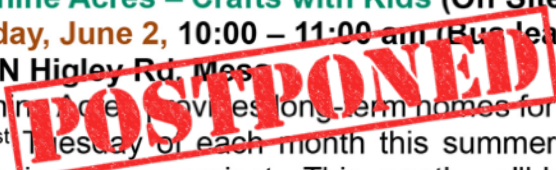
Sunshine Acres – Crafts with Kids (Off Site – FREE Bus)

Tuesday, June 2, 10:00 – 11:00 am (Bus leaves at 9:30 am)

3405 N Higley Rd, Mesa

Sunshine Acres provides long-term homes for children whose families are unable to care for them. On the 1st Tuesday of each month this summer we'll do crafts with the children – their ages will vary depending on our project. This month we'll be making paper chain snakes. No experience or talent required – only patience and enthusiasm! All supplies will be provided. **Sign up by Sunday, May 31st.**

*****Sunshine Acres activity has been postponed for the summer**



The Wizard of Oz (Off Site – Bus Optional)

Friday, June 5, 7:30 pm (Bus leaves at 6:30 pm)

Hale Centre Theatre, 50 W Page Ave, Gilbert

Join Dorothy, Toto, and their friends Scarecrow, Tinman, and Cowardly Lion as they journey down the Yellow Brick Road to the magical Land of Oz, with all the iconic music you know and love from the legendary MGM film.

(Tickets for this event are no longer available.)



Lunch at Cozy Corner Cafe (Off Site – No Bus)

Tuesday, June 16, 11:30 am,

Great breakfast as well as lunch choices. **Sign up by Sunday, June 14th.**



Feed My Starving Children (Off Site – FREE Bus)

Wednesday, June 24, 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.

Sign up by Sunday, June 21st.



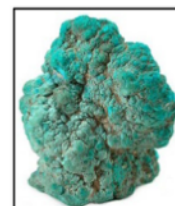
Next Month:

Bill Harrison (Arizona's "Road Scholar") Slideshow Presentation:

Turquoise, Gem of Arizona (On Site)

Wednesday, July 8, 2:00 pm, Victory Lutheran Church – Courtyard Chapel

The story of our state gemstone. **Wear and bring your turquoise jewelry and other items for everyone to see and enjoy! Sign up & pay \$5 by Sunday, July 5th.**



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

Happy Father's Day

JUNE 21-22, 2026

"BLESSED is the man
who trusts in the LORD,
whose HOPE and
CONFIDENCE is in HIM."
Jeremiah 17:7



WORSHIP WITH US!

Saturdays 4pm

Sundays 8am with Communion

9:30am Traditional



WATCH US LIVE @ 9:30am

If you are unable to watch at that exact time,
the service is available to watch on Facebook,
YouTube and online at VictoryLutheran.com.

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